



The University of Texas at Tyler  
**UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMY**

# Student Handbook 2024-2025

First Edition, May 2024

## Notification of Title IX Policy

The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student or employee on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, or any other basis prohibited by law.

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, UT Tyler University Academy does not and is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs or activities. The requirement not to discriminate on the basis of sex extends to the admission of students in education programs or activities and to applicants for employment.

For information on rights or grievance procedures, contact the Title IX Coordinator:

**UT Tyler Title IX Coordinator:** Blake Bumbard [bbumbard@uttyler.edu](mailto:bbumbard@uttyler.edu) 903-565-5760

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

My child and I have been offered the option to receive a paper copy of or to electronically access at [www.uttua.org](http://www.uttua.org) The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct 2024-2025.

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 Superintendent at 903-730-3988.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The UT Tyler University Academy has designated the following information as directory information [See **Directory Information** on page 5 for more information.]:

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

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.

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

Federal law requires that the district release to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, upon request, the name, address, and phone number of secondary school students enrolled in the district, unless the parent or eligible student directs the district not to release information to these types of requesters without prior written consent. [See **Objecting to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education** on page 6 for more information.]

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

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

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

Please note that if this form is not returned with the other materials identifying what the district considers directory information, the district will assume that permission has been granted for the release of this information.

## **Consent/Opt-Out Form**

Dear Parent:

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

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parents;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sexual behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom the student has a close family relationship;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

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

You will be able to inspect the survey or other instruments and any instructional material used in connection with such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

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# PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together can make this a successful year for our students.

The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy 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 University of Texas at Tyler University Academy 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.uttua.org](http://www.uttua.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 or watching the recorded versions found at [www.uttua.org](http://www.uttua.org). Changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters or other communications. The district reserves the right to modify provisions of the Student Handbook at any time, whenever it is deemed necessary. Notice of any revision or modification will be given as is reasonably practical under the circumstances.

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

If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact the Superintendent at 903-730-3988.

Also, please complete and return to your child's campus the following forms included in this handbook distributed at the beginning of the year or upon the student's enrollment:

1. Acknowledgement Form OR Acknowledgement of 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.

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.uttua.org](http://www.uttua.org).



# **SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS**

This section of the University of Texas at Tyler University Academy 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 investigators 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.

Unless an opt-out form is on file teachers may display 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 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; or
- When it relates to media coverage of the school.

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

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

Corporal punishment—spanking or paddling the student—may be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with state law, although the University of Texas at Tyler University Academy will not use this form of discipline on any student. [See policy 400.140 Student Safety.]

### **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 within the scope of the individual's professional responsibilities.

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 Director.

## **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. This "directory information" will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of a student's directory information. This objection must be made in writing to the campus Director 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 this handbook.]

The district has identified the following as directory information: [See policy 400.060 FERPA.]

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- E-mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Most recent school previously attended
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height, if a member of an athletic team
- Enrollment status

- Student identification numbers or identifiers that cannot be used alone to gain access to electronic education records

If you object to the release of the student information included on the directory information response form, your decision will also apply to the use of that information for school-sponsored purposes, such as the honor roll, school newspaper, the yearbook, recognition activities, news releases, and athletic programs.

### **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 this handbook 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.

#### ***“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 policy 400.120 Health.]

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

## **REMOVING A STUDENT FROM INSTRUCTION OR EXCUSING A STUDENT FROM A REQUIRED COMPONENT OF INSTRUCTION**

### **Human Sexuality Instruction**

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality.

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

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

In accordance with state law, you will be provided a summary of the curriculum before it is presented. The University Academy utilizes a curriculum called ESTEEM which progresses through age-appropriate lessons from grades 5 – 12.

As a parent, you are entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, you may remove your child from any part of the human sexuality instruction with no academic, disciplinary, or other penalties.

### **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 400.80 Required Instruction and Graduation.]

### **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 policy 400.80 Required Instruction and Graduation.]

### **Religious or Moral Beliefs**

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

### **Tutoring or Test Preparation**

Based on informal observations, evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests, or results from diagnostic assessments, a teacher may determine that a student is in need of additional targeted assistance in order for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills.

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

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

## **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.

## **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,
- Student evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns,
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child, and
- Teaching materials and tests used in your child's classroom.

A federal law, known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older, or who is attending an instruction of postsecondary education. These rights 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 campus Directors; teachers, district 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 conjunction with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses information, it has designated as 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 Campus Director is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The Campus Director 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 3900 University Blvd., Tyler, Texas 75799.

**Attention: Jo Ann Simmons (University Academy)** The addresses of the Campus Directors' offices are:

Tyler Campus: 3900 University Blvd., Tyler, Texas 75799

Longview Campus: 3201 N. Eastman Rd., Longview, Texas 75705

Palestine Campus: 100 University Blvd., Palestine, Texas 75801

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



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

Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course or on an examination is handled through the general complaint process found in policy (PG-1.10). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy.

The district's policy regarding student records found at [policy 400.060 FERPA] is available from the campus Director's or Superintendent's office or on the district's Web site at [www.uttua.org](http://www.uttua.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 undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

## **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>.

### **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 Campus Director at least ten district business days before bringing the service/assistance animal on campus.

### **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 available to all students including a process based on Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). The implementation of MTSS 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 Sammie Broussard, Director of Special Education, at 903-730-3996.

### **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 needs services and supports under Section 504 to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as defined in federal law.

The designated person to contact regarding a referral for evaluation applicable to Section 504 is the Campus Director.

[Also see policy 400.110 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.]

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

Topics in this section of the Student Handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Where possible, the topics are also organized to alert you to the applicability of each topic based on a student's age or grade level. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact the Superintendent at 903-730-3988.

### **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.** A student's attendance record can be reviewed in Skyward Family Access.

## **Compulsory Attendance**

### ***(Age 18 and Older)***

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year. If a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the district may revoke the student's enrollment. The student's presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. [See policy 400.040 Tuition, Attendance, & Fees.]

### ***(Between Ages 6 and 18)***

State law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 18 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.

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.

## **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.

### **(Secondary Grade Levels)**

In addition, a junior or senior student's absence of up to two days related to visiting a college or university will be considered an exemption, provided this has been authorized by the board under [policy 400.040 Tuition, Attendance, & Fees], the student receives approval from the campus, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed. For verification, University Academy requires an attendance form from the institution visited. This form can usually be obtained at the enrollment office of the institution.

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

- A student serving as an early voting clerk, provided the district's board has authorized this in [policy 400.040 Tuition, Attendance, & Fees], the student notifies his or her teachers, and the student receives approval from the campus Director prior to the absences, and
- A student serving as an election clerk, if the student makes up any work missed.
- An absence of a student in grades 6–12 for the purpose of sounding “Taps” at a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran will also be excused by the district.

### **Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance (All Grade Levels)**

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. Both the child and parent are held responsible for unexcused absences. After too many unexcused absences, the school must notify the parent. A compulsory attendance notification will be sent to the parent if a student has unexcused absences on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period or three days or parts of days without an excuse during a four-week period. Notice it says, “parts of days”. That means that leaving school early, or arriving after the first bell has rung, even if the child attended for some of the day, can count as an absence. The compulsory attendance letter gives the parent notice that the student has accumulated too many unexcused absences (and should not have any future absences) and gives the parent a chance to correct the child's attendance record.

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

A court of law may also impose penalties against both the student and his or her parents if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student:

- Is absent without excuse from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, or
- Is absent without excuse on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period.

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

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

[See policy 400.040 Tuition, Attendance, & Fees.]

### **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade**

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 campus Director, 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 Campus Director, 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.

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 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 [See policy 400.040 Tuition, Attendance, & Fees.]

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 a full year.

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

The district must submit attendance of its students to the TEA reflecting attendance at a specific time each day. Official attendance is taken at a set time each morning. Please contact the appropriate campus for the exact time.

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

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

When a student is absent from school, the student—upon arrival or return to school—must bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence; this may also be accomplished through electronic communication from the parent's email address on file. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law.

The campus will document in the student's attendance records whether the district considers the absence 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**

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than 3 consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the 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 Campus Director 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 400.040 Tuition, Attendance, & Fees.]

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

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

obtained from the office, which the student will need to submit to DPS upon application for a driver license.

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

The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy 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;
- Information compiled by TEA for the submission of a federal report card that is required by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

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

TEA also maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability>.

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

An End-of-Year Awards Ceremony will be held at each campus to recognize students with specific awards and honors.

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

Bullying refers to a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that (1) has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student; (3) materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school. Bullying includes cyberbullying.



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, campus Director, 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.

A copy of the district's policy is available in the campus Director'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 300.120 Grievance Process].

### **STOPit**

The district will utilize the STOPit program to provide students an anonymous safe way to report inappropriate behaviors, communicate concerns with administrators, and document all incidents. Parents and/or students who abuse the STOPit program will be disabled as users and/or face consequences in accordance with the parent/student code of conduct.

## **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

UT Tyler University Academy offers career and technical education programs in STEM and Multidisciplinary fields. Admission to these programs is based on being on track to meet Foundation High School Program, House Bill 5, state requirements for high school graduation as well as any prerequisite courses needed depending on the chosen field.

It is the policy of UT Tyler University Academy not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the

Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

UT Tyler University Academy will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

For information about your rights and grievance procedures, contact the Title IX Coordinator and/or the Section 504 Coordinator.

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

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

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

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at [www.uttua.org](http://www.uttua.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 Campus Director 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/parent/positive/talk/child\\_abuse.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/talk/child_abuse.html)
- <http://taasa.org/resources-2/>
- [http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG\\_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml)
- [http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG\\_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml)

Reports of abuse or neglect may be made to:

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

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

A student's class rank will not be calculated or reported except for the top 10 percent of a given class. Class rank will not appear on any student's transcript. Students in the top 10 percent will receive a Certification of Class Rank from the District.

A student who transfers in prior to the last two high school years shall receive weight for courses taken in accordance with the UTTUA grade point scales, when courses align. The student with the highest weighted GPA at the end of the final semester, after dual credit scores are received from the University, will be named Valedictorian and be provided a Highest-Ranking Graduate Certificate to be used for tuition at a Texas public institution of higher education. The student with the second highest GPA will be named Salutatorian. Both the Valedictorian and Salutatorian must be full-time high school students and have completed four full years of academics (three-year graduates are not eligible for these honors). The Valedictorian and Salutatorian must be continuously enrolled at the University Academy during their 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade years.

Calculations will be made to 3 decimal places. Under no circumstance will the UA award more than one Highest Ranking Graduate Certificate unless there is an exact tie. Only dual credit classes taken from an institution with a current MOU on file with University Academy are considered honors classes and given weight on the dual credit grading scale; all other college-level coursework will be weighted on the standard 4.0 scale.

In extraordinary circumstances, such as public calamity or officially declared disaster, the Superintendent has the authority to award the local honorific “Valedictorian” to more than one student. The Superintendent’s decision to award more than one student the “Valedictorian” honorific will not affect the calculation of GPA or the awarding of the Highest-Ranking Graduate Certificate, as noted above.

## **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. Exceptions may be made occasionally by the college and career counselor for students in grades 11-12 who meet specific criteria and receive parental consent to enroll in less than a full-day’s schedule. The UT Tyler University Academy supports a college going culture with the expectation of students taking math and science courses each year during high school. Requests for class schedule changes will not be processed after the first two weeks of the school year, or the first two weeks of the semester for semester courses.

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

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

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

The University of Texas at Austin may limit the number of students automatically admitted to 75 percent of the University’s enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshman. For students who are eligible to enroll in the University of Texas at Austin during the summer or Fall 2024 term, the University will be admitting the top six percent of the high school’s graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through a holistic review process.

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

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

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

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

- Certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include dual credit courses.
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with an institution of higher education in which the University Academy has a current MOU in place.

All of these methods have eligibility requirements and must be approved prior to enrollment in the course. Please see the college and career counselor for more information. Depending on the student's grade level and the course, a state-mandated end-of-course assessment may be required for graduation. In order to be enrolled in dual credit courses students are expected to have a minimum 3.0 GPA, to have obtained the minimum TSIA2 scores for the course and to perform well in previous dual credit courses. If a student fails a dual credit course (D or below) then they are exempt from future participation for at least the next semester. Additionally, course credit is subject to the 90% attendance rule, see Attendance section for details.

It is important to keep in mind that not all colleges and universities accept credit earned in all dual credit or AP courses taken in high school for college credit. UTTUA works to ensure courses align with a student's designated degree plan at UT Tyler. Students and parents should check with their prospective college or university to determine if a particular course will count toward the student's desired degree plan at that institution.

## **COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS (All Grade Levels)**

Usually, student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed informally by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or Campus Director. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled easily, the board has adopted a standard complaint process in the district's policies (PG-1.10). A copy of this policy may be obtained in the Superintendent's office or on the School Board webpage at [www.uttua.org](http://www.uttua.org). Should a parent or student feel the need to file a formal complaint, the parent or student should file a written complaint within the timelines established in policy (PG-1.10). In general, the student or parent should submit the required complaint form to the Campus Director. If the concern is not resolved, the required appeal form must be sent to the Superintendent. If still unresolved, the parent may submit a final appeal form to be presented to the Board of Trustees. The applicable forms are located on the School Board webpage under the PG-1.10 Public Complaints policy.

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

### **Applicability of School Rules**

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

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

## **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.

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

## **COUNSELING**

### **Personal Counseling**

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

The district college and career counselor is available to students and parents to talk about the importance of post-secondary education and how best to plan for post-secondary education, including appropriate courses to consider and financial aid availability and requirements.

#### ***(High School Grade Levels)***

High school students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a district college and career counselor, or Campus Director to learn more about course offerings, graduation requirements, and early graduation procedures. Each year, high school students will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next school year and other information that will help them make the most of academic and CTE opportunities, as well as information on the importance of postsecondary education.

The district college and career counselor can also provide information about entrance exams and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission, financial aid, housing, and scholarships as these relate to state colleges and universities. The college and career counselor can also provide information about workforce opportunities after graduation or technical and trade school opportunities, including opportunities to earn industry-recognized certificates and licenses.

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

As a parent, if you are concerned about your child's mental or emotional health, please contact the Campus Director for potential services/resources that may be of assistance. The district employs a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) who is available to provide emotional and behavioral support through the district behavioral tiered system, as well as services in crisis situations. The LSSP also provides psychological services for qualifying students through the special education and 504 programs. Written consent is required to be obtained prior to providing specific intervention.

(Todos los niveles)

Como padre, si usted está preocupado por la salud mental o emocional de su hijo, por favor contacte al director de la escuela para posibles servicios o recursos que podrían ayudarles. El Psicólogo Especialista en Asuntos Escolares (LSSP) empleado del distrito está disponible para proveer apoyo emocional y de comportamiento a través del sistema de comportamiento que el distrito ofrece a diferentes niveles, al igual se ofrecen servicios en situaciones de crisis. El LSSP de la escuela también ofrece servicios psicológicos para estudiantes que califican a través del servicio de educación especial y programas 504. Un consentimiento escrito es requerido antes de poder obtener esta intervención específica.

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

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

A student in grade 9-12 who is enrolled in a dual credit course with UT Tyler, will receive high school credit for a "D" and above. If a student receives an "F" in a dual credit course the first semester, he/she must score at least an 81 in an on-level course the second semester to receive credit for the year. This only applies to dual credit courses where the semester is ½ of a one-year high school credit class.

## **CREDIT BY EXAM**

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

A student who has previously taken a course or subject—but did not receive credit or a final grade for it—may, in circumstances determined by the campus Director 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 district college and career counselor 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.

Any fees associated with the credit by exam for credit or attendance recovery are the responsibility of the student.

**\*\*Please also see the Attendance for Credit section.**

### **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 2024-2025 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. In this case, 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 College and Career Counselor no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. All assessments must be completed by June 30 in order to be able to enroll in the appropriate grade courses for the upcoming school year.

#### ***(Students in Grades 1-5)***

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

#### ***(Students in Grades 6-12)***

A student in grade 6 or above will earn course credit with a passing score of at least 80 on the exam, a scaled score of 50 or higher on an exam administered through the CLEP, or a score of 3 or higher on an AP exam, as applicable. A student may take an exam to earn high school course credit no more than twice. If a student fails to achieve the designated score on the applicable exam before the beginning of the school year in which the student would need to enroll in the course according to the school's high school course sequence, the student must complete the course.

### **CREDIT RECOVERY/GRADE REPLACEMENT**

A minimum score of 70 is required for a student to receive credit for a course. A student may retake the class, choose credit by exam, or participate in a campus approved credit recovery program. On the student's transcript, courses that are repeated will receive a "P" or "F" and credit will be awarded for the "P." The previous failing grade in the course will remain on the transcript and the "P" or "F" will not impact the GPA.

Students are not allowed to repeat a class that has already been awarded credit. Grade replacement is not allowed in high school, even when the previous grade was a failing grade.



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

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from sexual assault, stalking, 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 campus Director's office and in the Superintendent's office or on the website at [www.uttua.org](http://www.uttua.org) [policy 400.140 Student Safety].

### **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 sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, Campus Director, or other district employee. This can be done verbally, in writing, or through the district's StopIt! app. The report may be made by the student's parent.

Title IX related offenses should be reported to:

### **Title IX Coordinator**

Blake Bumbard  
[bbumbard@uttyler.edu](mailto:bbumbard@uttyler.edu)  
903-565-5760

Upon receiving a report of prohibited conduct as defined by [policy 400.140 Student Safety], 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 400.140 Student Safety] 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 400.140 Student Safety], 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 400.140 Student Safety].

## **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 may delay up to 10 days.

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

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

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

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with [policy 300.120 Grievance Process].

If the district's investigation finds a false report was filed appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

## **DISCIPLINE (All Grade Levels)**

Upon enrollment, a thorough review of each student's discipline history will be conducted. This review will require parents to provide 3 years of discipline records from the child's previous school. If records are not available, the parent must meet with the Campus Director to further discuss. If a student is found to have a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems under TEC Chapter 37, Subchapter A offense during the previous three school years, the students' enrollment will be revoked.

Refer to the Student Code of Conduct for more information on the district's discipline policy.

## **DISTANCE LEARNING (All Grade Levels)**

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

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

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

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

Depending on the TxVSN course in which a student enrolls, the course may be subject to the "no pass, no play" rules. In addition, for a student who enrolls in a TxVSN course for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment is required, the student must still take the corresponding EOC assessment.

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

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

### **School Materials**

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

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

### **Non-school Materials**

#### ***(From Students)***

Students must obtain prior approval from the Campus Director before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing any 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.

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 the Superintendent or designee.

## **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 at the campus Director's discretion, the dress promotes the value of students as a part of a professional community of learners and that it is not distracting to others.

If the campus Director 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 parent or designee must bring an acceptable change of clothing to the school. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

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

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

The district permits students to possess personal mobile telephones and other electronic devices such as netbooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable computers. These devices are expected to be used for approved instructional purposes only. Devices in the student's possession that are not being used for approved instructional purposes must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing.

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.

Students that have their telecommunication device out on campus without permission, will receive a documented warning from the teacher. If the student has the phone out on campus without permission after the initial warning, the phone will be confiscated. The parent will be required to collect the phone from the front office and pay a \$5 fee. Continued misuse of the cell phone policy may result in further disciplinary action, which could ultimately result in the suspension of the cell phone on campus.

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student or the student's parents will be disposed of after the notice.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel.

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

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

Students are permitted to possess or use personal electronic devices such as video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, e-readers, laptops, or other electronic devices at school as long as they are being used for instructional purposes. If the student is found to be using such devices for other than instructional purposes AND the teacher did not give permission to do so, the teacher may collect the device and/or involve the Director for recurring misuse of the technology device. Parents may be contacted to collect the device from the school at the end of the school day.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal electronic device may be searched by authorized personnel.

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, laptops, or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook). 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. The district will issue a school email account that reflects the legal name of the student in Skyward. 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.

All district issued devices that are signed into a school issued email account will be monitored and filtered by a web content filter. Even with this level of filtering, the district cannot guarantee that students will not access inappropriate content. As with any other technology resource, a student's use of the Internet is ultimately the responsibility of the student and of the student's parent or legal guardian.

## **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 <https://txcss.txstate.edu/tools/courses/before-you-text/>, 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, such as illegal torrenting, will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of expulsion.

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

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

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

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

The district will follow the UIL guidelines in regard to student eligibility and participation in extracurricular activities offered through The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy. 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 certain extracurricular activities, including all competitions, 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 10 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.

## **Offices and Elections**

Certain clubs, organizations, and performing groups will hold elections for student officers.

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

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

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for lost or damaged textbooks and devices.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Fees for optional dual credit courses.
- In some cases, a fee for a course taken through the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN).
- Credit Recovery Courses

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 Superintendent.

## FOOD SERVICE (All Grade Levels)

### Breakfast

Each campus will have a concession stand open each morning; students can purchase a Brown Bag Breakfast:

- Concession is open from 7:30 am to 7:50 am.
- **Brown Bag Breakfast** consists of a grain, fruit, juice, and a water for \$1.50. Those who qualify can receive a Brown Bag Breakfast for free. A qualifying Income Survey must be on file for the current year.
- If your financial situation changes at any point during the year you may submit a new Income Survey. Please contact your Front Office or visit <https://www.uttua.org/departments/food-service>.

Each student is given a keypad code to account for purchased meals and payments. **Parents should apply funds to their student's account through Skyward Family Access, cash transactions should be limited.** If your student's balance falls under \$3.00, you will be notified by email and continue to get emails until the balance is over \$3.00. If you opt out of the daily email system, you forfeit your notifications of account balances. Students are not allowed to charge to their account.

### Lunch

- Each student needs to bring a daily sack lunch. No refrigerator or microwave will be available to the students. Students should also bring their own utensils.
- 
- Lunch deliveries by outside vendors (i.e.: Pizza Hut, Dominos, etc....) are not allowed for any reason.
- Lunch deliveries by parents are only allowed if extenuating circumstances occur and arrangements have been made with the front office.
- Due to limited seating and classroom space, parents will not be allowed to eat breakfast and/or lunch with their child.

## FUND-RAISING (All Grade Levels)

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. Requests must be made to the Campus Director.

## GANG-FREE ZONES (All Grade Levels)

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a

location in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

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

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

<b>• Credits Earned</b>	<b>• Classification</b>
6 minimum, 7+ expected	Sophomore
12 minimum, 14+ expected	Junior
18 minimum, 21+ expected	Senior
24 minimum, 28+ expected	Graduate

## GRADE POINT AVERAGES (GPA)

Students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the Fall of 2020, 2021, and 2022:

	<b>Core Subjects and PLTW*</b>	<b>Dual Credit (Must Have MOU On File)</b>
<b>Numeric</b>	<b>4.0 Scale</b>	<b>5.0 Scale</b>
97-100	4.0	5.0
93-96	3.75	5.0
90-92	3.5	5.0
85-89	3.25	4.0
80-84	3.0	4.0
75-79	2.5	3.0
70-74	2.0	3.0
65-69	1.5	2.0
60-64	1.0	2.0
0-59	0.0	0.0

Students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the Fall of 2023 and thereafter will be under this numeric grading scale. The numeric grading scale will be used to calculate rank, grade point averages and academic awards.

	<b>Core Subjects and PLTW*</b>	<b>Dual Credit (Must Have MOU On File)</b>
<b>Numeric Grade</b>	<b>Numeric Grade</b>	<b>Numeric Grade plus 10 points</b>

Examples		
100	100	110
99	99	109
98	98	108
97	97	107
96	96	106
95	95	105
94	94	104
93	93	103
92	92	102
91	91	101
90	90	100
89	89	99
88	88	98
87	87	97
86	86	96
85	85	95
84	84	94
83	83	93
82	82	92
81	81	91
80	80	90
79	79	89
78	78	88
77	77	87
76	76	86
75	75	85
74	74	84
73	73	83
72	72	82
71	71	81
70	70	80
69	69	79

68	68	78
67	67	77
66	66	76
65	65	75
64	64	74
63	63	73
62	62	72
61	61	71
60	60	70
59	59	69
58	58	68
57	57	67
56	56	66
55	55	65
54	54	64
53	53	63
52	52	62
51	51	61
50	50	60

**\* 1 taken in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade also counts in the high school GPA and earns high school credit. This is the 4.0 conversion scale, which will only be used for college and scholarship applications. This applies to students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the fall of 2023 and later.**

	<b>Core Subjects and PLTW*</b>	<b>Dual Credit (Must Have MOU On File)</b>
<b>Numeric Grade</b>	<b>4.0 scale</b>	<b>5.0 scale</b>
Examples		
100	4.0	5.0
96	4.0	5.0
99	4.0	5.0
98	4.0	5.0
97	4.0	5.0
96	4.0	5.0

95	4.0	5.0
94	4.0	5.0
93	4.0	5.0
92	4.0	5.0
91	4.0	5.0
90	4.0	5.0
89	3.9	4.9
88	3.8	4.8
87	3.7	4.7
86	3.6	4.6
85	3.5	4.5
84	3.4	4.4
83	3.3	4.3
82	3.2	4.2
81	3.1	4.1
80	3.0	4.0
79	2.9	3.9
78	2.8	3.8
77	2.7	3.7
76	2.6	3.6
75	2.5	3.5
74	2.4	3.4
73	2.3	3.3
72	2.2	3.2
71	2.1	3.1
70	2.0	3.0
69	1.9	2.9
68	1.8	2.8
67	1.7	2.7
66	1.6	2.6
65	1.5	2.5
64	1.4	2.4
63	1.3	2.3

62	1.2	2.2
61	1.1	2.1
60	1.0	2.0
59	.9	1.9
58	.8	1.8
57	.7	1.7
56	.6	1.6
55	.5	1.5
54	.4	1.4
53	.3	1.3
52	.2	1.2
51	.1	1.1
50	0	1.0

### **Unweighted GPAs**

Required for some scholarship and college/university applications. Calculated on a standard 4.0 scale. Meaning all courses, including those under the Dual Credit Grading Scale, receive no more than a 4.0 GPA.

Dual Credit courses receiving a letter grade are scored as: A = 4.0    B = 3.0    C = 2.0    D = 1.0

### **Weighted GPAs**

Used to determine class rank for Top 10 percent as well as most scholarship and college/university applications. Calculated based on a 4.0 scale with additional weight being added based on the rigor of coursework, with higher level courses earning higher GPA as noted in the chart above. The GPA is made up of courses from all scales and then averaged.

### **Honors Courses**

When completing scholarship and college applications, UT Tyler Dual Credit courses will be considered “honors courses” when this category is the only option on the form.

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

It is our belief that grades should reflect the student’s knowledge of the standards. Teachers are able to take 10% percentage points off for late work. However, all additional 21st Century Skills will be assessed on the 21st Century Skills rubric that will be updated at the end of each PBL (or unit in math) and at the end of each 9-weeks. A standards-based rubric should be completed at the end of every PBL as well. Grades are weighted as follows:

Grades 2-7\* Formative 40% Summative 60%

Grades 8-12 Formative 20% Summative 80%

*\*If a 7th grade student is placed in a course that receives high school credit, such as GTT, the course will follow the 8-12 grading weights of 20% formative and 80% summative.*

Students may turn in, as well as resubmit formative assessment work multiple times, up until the time of the summative test that assesses the formatives. Formatives cannot be redone at home. Summative assessments, except for tests, cannot be resubmitted. Tests can only be resubmitted once. Steps for retaking tests: 1) Make Corrections, 2) Learning conference(s), 3) Re-take the Test. It is teacher discretion whether a student can retake a test.

**\*\*Students in high school courses cannot retake tests. Please assist students in gathering any work missed due to absences**

For a Dual Credit course, students must follow the grading guidelines provided by the professor.

### **Semester Exams (High School courses only)**

Semester Exams will be given in each course where a student is receiving high school credit in which case the class is a core course (Math, Science, ELA, Social Studies) and it is a non-Dual credit course. Students may earn exemption from the semester exam by having no more than 3 absences in the course as well as maintaining an 85 or above average in the course. Semester exams will be weighted separately at 10% of the overall semester average. Teachers may require every student to take the exam regardless of exemptions; however, students who are exempt can choose whether to have the semester exam weighted into the semester average or for it to have no weight into the semester average.

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

### **Requirements for a Diploma Beginning with the 2015-2016 School Year**

Beginning with students who entered grade 9 in the 2015–16 school year, a student must meet the following requirements to receive a high school diploma from the district:

- Complete the required number of credits established by the state and any additional credits required by the district;
- Complete any locally required courses in addition to the courses mandated by the state;
- Achieve passing scores on certain end-of-course (EOC) assessments or approved substitute assessments, unless specifically waived as permitted by state law; and
- Demonstrate proficiency, as determined by the district, in the specific communication skills required by the State Board of Education.
- Complete instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation for students in grades 7 through 12 at least once.
- Receive instruction in grades 9-12 on proper interaction with peace officers during traffic stops and other in-person encounters.



Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, Sec. 28.0256 of HB 3 requires each student to complete and submit a free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or a Texas application for state financial aid (TASFA). A student is not required to complete the form if:

- The student's parents, or guardian sign a form obtained from the college and career counselor. This form can be signed by the student if he/she is 18 or older.
- The college and career counselor authorizes the student to decline completing the FAFSA for good cause as determined by the college and career counselor.

### **Testing Requirements for Graduation**

Students are required, with limited exceptions and regardless of graduation program, to perform satisfactorily on the following EOC assessments: English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and United States History. A student who has not achieved sufficient scores on the EOC assessments to graduate will have opportunities to retake the assessments. State law and state rules also provide for certain scores on norm-referenced national standardized assessments to substitute for the requirement to meet satisfactory performance on an applicable EOC assessment should a student choose this option. See the college and career counselor or the Campus Director for more information on the state testing requirements for graduation.

If a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an EOC assessment, the district will provide remediation to the student in the content area for which the performance standard was not met. This may require participation of the student before or after normal school hours or at times of the year outside normal school operations.

### **Foundation Graduation Program**

Every student in a Texas public school who entered grade 9 in the 2014-2015 school year and thereafter will graduate under a new program called the "foundation graduation program." Within the foundation graduation program are "endorsements", which are paths of interest. The University Academy offers two endorsements; Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and Multidisciplinary Studies. Endorsements earned by students will be noted on the student's transcript and diploma. The foundation graduation program also involves the term "distinguished level of achievement", which reflects the completion of at least one endorsement and Algebra II as one of the required advanced mathematics credits. A personal graduation plan will be completed for each high school student. State law and rules prohibit a student from graduating solely under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement unless, after the student's sophomore year, the student and student's parent are advised of the specific benefits of graduating with an endorsement and submit written permission to the college and career counselor for the student to graduate without an endorsement. A student who anticipates graduating under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement and who wishes to attend a four-year university or college after graduation must carefully consider whether this will satisfy the admission requirements of the student's desired college or university.

Graduating under the foundation graduation program will also provide opportunities to earn "performance acknowledgments" that will be acknowledged on a student's diploma and transcript. Performance acknowledgments are available for outstanding performance in

bilingualism and biliteracy; in a dual credit course; on an AP exam; on the PSAT, ACT-Aspire, SAT, or ACT exam, which are national exams; or for earning a nationally or internationally recognized license or certificate. The criteria for earning these performance acknowledgments are prescribed by state rules, and the college and career counselor can provide more information about these acknowledgments.

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

As a STEM school, it is the practice of University Academy that every high school student is enrolled in math and science courses each year of high school. This prepares the student for a successful postsecondary experience.

### **Personal Graduation Plans for Students Under The Foundation Graduation Program**

A personal graduation plan will be developed for each high school student who is subject to the requirements of the foundation graduation program. The district encourages all students to pursue a personal graduation plan that includes the completion of at least one endorsement and to graduate with the distinguished level of achievement. Attainment of the distinguished level of achievement entitles a student to be considered for automatic admission to a public four-year college or university in Texas, depending on his or her rank in class. The school will review personal graduation plan options with each student entering grade 9 and his or her parent. Before the end of grade 9, a student and his or her parent will be required to sign off on a personal graduation plan that includes a course of study that promotes college and workforce readiness and career placement and advancement, as well as facilitates the transition from secondary to postsecondary education. The student's personal graduation plan will denote an appropriate course sequence based on the student's choice of endorsement.

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

### **Graduation Ceremony Regalia:**

- UA students will wear a gown of blue and an orange and white tassel for their blue mortar board.
- Valedictorians and Salutatorians are signified with a medallion.
- National Honor Society members wear an NHS collar.
- Honor Scholar status (final GPA of 3.75+) is signified with a stole.
- Dual Credit Scholars (earned 36+ hours of college credit) wear a blue/orange/white cord, and Dual Credit Participants wear a blue and white cord.

- Other cords/stoles may be worn by the graduate to signify various other achievements and recognitions, such as the child of a military parent, blood donor, or member of a student organization.

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

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

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

## **HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

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

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she won't be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools are required to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods of time as identified in state rules. For example, if your child has a fever over 100.4 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. In addition, students with stomach illnesses such as diarrhea and/or vomiting, must stay home until they are diarrhea and/or vomit free for 24 hours without diarrheal/vomiting suppressing medications. A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.

In accordance with our no phone policy, students should not be contacting parents from their own device. If a student feels they should contact their parent for health related/illness matters, they should request to speak with the school nurse, or school nurse designee, who will assist in contacting the parents.

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 District nurse can provide information from TDSHS on these notifiable conditions.

Contact the school nurse or Director 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, [www.cdc.gov/meningitis](http://www.cdc.gov/meningitis), and the Department of State Health Service [www.dshs.texas.gov/meningitis](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/meningitis).

\* Please note that the TDSHS requires at least one meningococcal vaccination when entering the 7th grade, 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 District nurse for more information, as this may affect a student who wishes to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus.**

### **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 Director 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 [policy 400.120 Health].

### **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. Senate Bill 1566 states "Notice of Lice" requires school boards to adopt a policy requiring an elementary school nurse who determines or otherwise becomes aware that a student enrolled in the school has lice, to provide written or electronic notice of that fact to the parent of the child with lice as soon as practicable but not later than 48 hours. The "Notice of Lice" must also be given to the parent of each child assigned to the

same classroom as the child with lice not later than the fifth school day, but the notice cannot identify the child who has lice.

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

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

## **Physical Activity Requirements**

### ***(Elementary School)***

In accordance with [policy 400.080 Required Instruction & Graduation] 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 Director.

### ***(Junior High/Middle School)***

In accordance with [policy 400.080 Required Instruction & Graduation] the district will ensure that students in middle or junior high school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters or at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within each two-week period for at least four semesters.

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

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

The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy is committed to encouraging healthy students and therefore has developed a board-adopted wellness [policy 400.120 Health] and corresponding plans and procedures to implement the policy. You are encouraged to contact the Superintendent 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 Director to

obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

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

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, including electronic cigarettes or any other electronic vaporizing device, while on school property at any time or while attending an off-campus school-related activity.

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of all tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes or any other electronic vaporizing device, by students and others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the Student Code of Conduct and policy 400.140 Student Safety.]

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

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's Asbestos Management Plan is available in the Superintendent's office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact Jo Ann Simmons, the district's designated asbestos coordinator, at 903-730-3988.

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

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

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the 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 Jo Ann Simmons, the district's IPM coordinator, at 903-730-3998.

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

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's homeless education liaison at 903-566-6139.

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

Students are expected to engage in home assignments each school day. For more information regarding the expectations of home assignments, please contact your child's teacher.

## IMMUNIZATION (All Grade Levels)

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the TDSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at [https://www.dshs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/LIDS-Immunizations/pdf/pdf\\_stock/EF11-13140.pdf](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/LIDS-Immunizations/pdf/pdf_stock/EF11-13140.pdf) The form must be filled out correctly and in its entirety. Please note, adding additional items to the form after it is received from TDSHS will void the form and it will not be accepted. The District Nurse can assist with filling the form out correctly. The form must be notarized by a Texas Public Notary and submitted to the Director 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 400.120 Health, TDSHS website:  
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm>.]

## LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES (All Grade Levels)

### Questioning of Students

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the Director 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 Director 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 Director ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents unless the interviewer raises what the Director considers to be a valid objection.
- The Director ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the Director 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 Director 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 Director will immediately notify the Superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the Director considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the Director 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 regard to a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

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

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

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

- For students in elementary and middle school, a parent or otherwise authorized adult must come to the office and sign the student out. Please be prepared to show identification. Once an identity is verified, a campus representative will then call for the student or collect the student and bring him or her to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, we cannot allow you to go to the classroom or other area unescorted to pick up the student. If the student returns to campus the same day, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student back in through the main office upon the student's return. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required.
- For students in high school, the same process will be followed. If the student's parent will authorize the student to leave campus unaccompanied, a note provided by the parent must be submitted to the main office in advance of the absence, no later than two hours prior to the student's need to leave campus. A phone call received from the parent may be accepted, but the school may ultimately require a note to be submitted for documentation purposes. Once the office has received information that the student's parent consents to the student leaving campus, a pass will be issued to the student to hand to his or her teacher with the necessary information. The student must sign out through the main office and sign in upon his or her return, if the student returns the same day. If a student is 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor, the student may produce a note on his or her own behalf. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will be required.
- If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse or other district personnel determines that the student should go home, the nurse will contact the student's parent and document the parent's wishes regarding release from school. Unless directed by the parent to release the student unaccompanied, the parent or other authorized adult must follow the sign-out procedures as listed above. If a student is allowed to leave campus by himself or herself, as permitted by the student's parent, or if the student is age 18 or is an emancipated minor, the nurse will document the time of day the student was released. Elementary and Middle School students must be picked up by a parent authorized adult.

## **During Lunch**

Students will not be allowed to leave campus during lunch hours. The campus is considered a closed campus.

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

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

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

## **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS (All Grade Levels)**

A student with limited English proficiency (LEP), sometimes referred to as an Emergent Bilingual (EB) in certain state statutes and state rules, 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 a LEP student. 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 the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Ongoing assessments will be conducted to determine a student's continued eligibility for the program.

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. For a student up to grade 5, a Spanish version of STAAR may be administered. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered annually to all LEP students.

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

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

A "lost and found" collection box is located on campus, contact your front office for location. If your child has lost an item, please encourage him or her to check the lost and found box. The district discourages students from bringing to school personal items of high monetary value, as

the district is not responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of each semester.

## **MAKEUP WORK**

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

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

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner. Students will have two days for each day absent to make up the work missed during the absence(s). Once this time period has lapsed, the assignment grade(s) will be replaced with a zero.

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 regard to the state laws surrounding “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 timelines approved by the Director and previously communicated to students.

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

Parents are strongly encouraged to work with their medical provider to schedule medical appointments and the administration of medicine before school and/or after school.

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 400.120 Health], 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.
  - Non-prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request from their health care provider.

- 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 can 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 diabetes, asthma, or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may be permitted to possess and use prescribed diabetic, 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 diabetic, asthma, or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day, the student and parents should discuss this with the school nurse or Director.

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 Director for information. [See policy 400.120 Health.]

## **Narcan and Epinephrine**

As referenced in Texas Education Code, Section 38.223, the district will maintain the unassigned emergency medications Narcan and Epinephrine to use in the event of a suspected opioid overdose or exposure to an undiagnosed allergen resulting in anaphylaxis.

## **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 400.120. Health.]

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

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, as required by law, The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy 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 designated youth programs.

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: Blake Bumbard, Title IX Coordinator, 3900 University Blvd., Tyler, TX 75799; 903-565-5760; [bbumbard@uttyler.edu](mailto:bbumbard@uttyler.edu)
- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Jo Ann Simmons, Superintendent, 3997 University Blvd. Tyler, Texas 75799, 903-730-3988.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the Superintendent, Jo Ann Simmons, 903-730-3988.

[See policy 400.110 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.]

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (All Grade Levels)**

### **Working Together**

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Your involvement 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 college and career counselor or Director 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.

- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, college and career counselor, or Director, please call the school office 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.
- Becoming a school volunteer.
- Participating in campus parent organizations and committees.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement.
- Serving on a committee to assist the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction and other wellness issues.
- 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 Director.
- 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 policy 500.020 Texas Open Meetings Act for more information.]

### **Parent Involvement Coordinator**

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs, may be contacted at 903-727-2326.

## **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS**

The State of Texas requires that children enrolled in any public or private school have their hearing, vision, and spines screened for proper development. These screenings will be performed by the District Nurse. The results of these screenings may indicate that your child may need to follow up with a physician. Referrals to physicians are made as needed and parents are urged to obtain appropriate medical care following a school screening referral.

Documentation of the follow up with your child's physician should be returned to the school. If you do not have insurance or cannot afford care, please contact the District Nurse as they may be able to assist you with referrals for free or affordable care. If you do not wish the District Nurse to perform the screenings on your child, you may substitute a professional examination by a health care provider of your choice. Documentation of the professional examination **must** be provided to the District Nurse.

## **PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE (All Grade Levels)**

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 Director to excuse their child from reciting a pledge.

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

[See policy 400.080 Required Instruction & Graduation for more information.]

## **PRAYER (All Grade Levels)**

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

## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district.

If a student in grades 2-8 fails two or more core courses, they will be considered for retention and a Grade Placement Committee will review student records to make a final determination. Additionally, course credit and grade retention are subject to the 90% attendance rule, see Attendance section for details.

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.

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

In order to be promoted to grade 9, students enrolled in grade 8 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 8 assessment in English.

If a student in grade 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 8 assessment.



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

Certain students—some with disabilities and some with limited English proficiency—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the Director or special education director.

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

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student at the middle school or junior high level who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment or is determined by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9. The PGP will be designed and implemented by a college and career counselor, teacher, or another staff member designated by the Director. The plan will, among other items, identify the student's educational goals, address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and outline an intensive instruction program for the student. [For additional information, see the Director] For a student receiving special education services, the student's IEP may serve as the student's PGP and would therefore be developed by the student's ARD committee.

### **(High School Grade Levels)**

To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards or receive a “D” in a dual credit course from UT Tyler.

A student in grades 9-12 will be advanced a grade level based on the number of course credits earned.

Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments.

## **REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES (All Grade Levels)**

Report Cards with each student's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are made available through the Skyward at least once every 9 weeks. Parents have access to their child's weekly grades electronically. Students are also able to view their grades electronically as well. Parents are highly encouraged to view their child's performance electronically.

At the end of the fourth week of a nine-week grading period, parents will be given an electronic progress report accessible through Skyward Family Access. If the student receives a grade lower

than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent may be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject.

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the Superintendent 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.

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 Campus Director.

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will be used to determine whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in a class or subject. Parents will be notified if their student is required to attend tutorials.

## **SAFETY (All Grade Levels)**

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

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the Director, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the Director 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.

### **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.

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will alert the community in the following ways:

District website, email, automated calling service, and/or local media.

## **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.

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 from 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, 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 permission to be out of the classroom for any purpose. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Cafeteria Services**

Each campus will have a concession stand open each morning, students can purchase a Brown Bag Breakfast or individual items. 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 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 water. See the campus office 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.

## **Library**

The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy library is online. For more information, contact the Campus Director.

## **Meetings of Non-Curriculum-Related Groups (Secondary Grade Levels)**

Student-organized, student-led non-curriculum-related groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the Director before and after school.

## **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 (All Grade Levels)**

Students' desks 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.

Searches of desks 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.

### **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 as well as personal devices connected to the campus server for Wifi connection.

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.

### **Vehicles on Campus (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

A student has full responsibility for the security and content of his or her vehicle parked on university property and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. [See also the Student Code of Conduct.]

Vehicles parked on university property are under the jurisdiction of the campus police. School, district, and university officials and/or campus police may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable suspicion to do so, with or without the permission of the student. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the student's parent will be contacted. If a search is also refused by the student's parent, the school will turn the matter over to law enforcement. The school may, in certain circumstances, contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.

### **Student Parking Permits (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

Students must have a permit to park on campus. Permits are \$20 per year (\$10 for a replacement). Students can purchase their permit at the Front Office, they must show proof of a valid driver's license. By parking on University property, the student is subject to all University rules/regulations. The University's Campus Police will issue citations for violations. Serious violations can result in confiscation of the permit, and a permit may not be reissued to the student. Students and Parents/Guardians should be aware of University Traffic, Parking and Safety Regulations found at: <https://www.utt Tyler.edu/police/files/parking-rules-regulations.pdf>.

### **Trained Dogs (All Grade Levels)**

The campus police may 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 personal property and the areas around vehicles parked on university 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, locker, or a vehicle to which a trained dog alerts may be searched by school, district, and university officials and/or campus police.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS (All Grade Levels)**

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

### **Aiding Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services**

For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts and open enrollment charter schools must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or

behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). The implementation of MTSS has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts and charter schools to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individual(s) listed below to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine if the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

#### Special Education Referrals:

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

Please note that a request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Districts and charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.

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

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

Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply.

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

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

Contact Person for Special Education Referrals:

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services is:

Contact Person: Director of Special Education

Phone Number: 903-730-3996

Section 504 Referrals:

Each school district or charter school must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's or charter school's Section 504 program. Districts and charter schools must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals:

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is:

- Tyler Campus 504 Coordinator at (903) 730-3988
- Longview Campus 504 Coordinator at (903) 663-8219
- Palestine Campus 504 Coordinator at (903) 727-2326

Additional Information:

The following websites provide information and resources for students with disabilities and their families.

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

Based on guidance from the Department of Education *Office for Civil Rights (OCR)* and Texas Education Agency (TEA), “If schools are closed, but the district continues to provide educational opportunities to the general student population during the closure, the school must ensure that students with disabilities also have equal access to the same opportunities, including the provision of FAPE. The district must ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in the student's IEP.”

In the event of a school closure in which educational opportunities to the general education student population are provided, parents will be contacted to discuss implementation of their child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 service plan.

### **Cómo ayudar a aquellos estudiantes que tienen dificultades de aprendizaje o precisan servicios de educación especial o de la Sección 504**

Para aquellos estudiantes que tienen dificultades en el salón de clases normal, todos los distritos escolares y las escuelas autónomas de inscripción abierta deben contemplar servicios de tutoría y compensatorios, y otros servicios de apoyo académico o conductual que estén disponibles para todos los estudiantes, incluido un proceso basado en la Sistema de Apoyo de Múltiples Niveles (MTSS). La implementación de la MTSS tiene el potencial de impactar positivamente en la capacidad de los distritos y escuelas autónomas de satisfacer las necesidades de todos los estudiantes con problemas.

Si un estudiante está experimentando dificultades de aprendizaje, sus padres pueden comunicarse con la(s) persona(s) mencionada(s) más abajo para obtener información sobre el sistema general de remisión o control de la educación general de la escuela para los servicios de apoyo. Dicho sistema vincula a los estudiantes con una variedad de opciones de apoyo, entre las que se encuentra la remisión para que se realice una evaluación de educación especial o una evaluación de la Sección 504 con el fin de determinar si el estudiante necesita asistencia, adaptaciones o servicios específicos. Los padres pueden pedir una evaluación para los servicios de educación especial o de la Sección 504 en cualquier momento.

#### Remisiones de educación especial:

Si los padres solicitan, por escrito, al director de servicios de educación especial o a un empleado administrativo del distrito escolar o de la escuela autónoma de inscripción abierta que se realice una evaluación inicial para recibir servicios de educación especial, el distrito o la escuela autónoma deben responder dentro de los 15 días lectivos después de haber recibido la solicitud. En ese momento, el distrito o la escuela autónoma deben entregar a los padres notificación previa por escrito respecto de si están de acuerdo o no en evaluar al estudiante, además de enviarles una copia de la *Notificación de salvaguardas procesales*. Si el distrito escolar o la escuela



autónoma están de acuerdo en evaluar al estudiante, también deben darles a los padres la oportunidad de prestar su consentimiento por escrito para la evaluación.

Por favor tenga en cuenta que una solicitud para una evaluación de educación especial puede hacerse verbalmente y no necesita hacerse por escrito. Los distritos y escuelas “chárter” deben seguir cumpliendo con todas las notificaciones previas por escrito y los requisitos sobre las salvaguardas procesales de la ley federal para identificar, localizar y evaluar a los niños que se intuya puedan ser niños con alguna discapacidad y que necesite educación especial. Sin embargo, una petición verbal no requiere que el distrito o la escuela “chárter” respondan dentro del periodo establecido de los 15 días escolares.

Si el distrito o la escuela autónoma deciden evaluar al estudiante, deben completar la evaluación inicial y el informe de la evaluación dentro de los 45 días lectivos posteriores al día en que reciban el consentimiento por escrito de los padres para evaluar al estudiante. Sin embargo, si el estudiante se ausenta de la escuela por tres días lectivos o más durante el período de evaluación, dicho período se extenderá la misma cantidad de días lectivos que el estudiante haya faltado.

Existe una excepción al plazo de 45 días lectivos. Si un distrito o una escuela autónoma reciben el consentimiento de los padres para la evaluación inicial entre los 35 y 45 días lectivos previos al último día de clases del año, deben completar el informe escrito y proporcionarles una copia del mismo a los padres, a más tardar, el 30 de junio de dicho año. No obstante, si el estudiante falta a la escuela tres días o más durante el período de evaluación, no se aplica la fecha límite del 30 de junio, sino que se aplica el plazo general de 45 días lectivos más prórrogas por ausencias de tres días o más.

Al completar la evaluación, el distrito o la escuela autónoma deben proporcionar a los padres una copia del informe de evaluación en forma gratuita.

Hay disponible información adicional sobre educación especial del distrito o la escuela autónoma en el documento complementario titulado *Guía para padres sobre el proceso de admisión, revisión y retiro*.

#### Persona de contacto para las remisiones de educación especial:

La persona designada para contactar en relación con las opciones para un estudiante que experimente dificultades de aprendizaje o en relación con una remisión a evaluación para recibir servicios de educación especial es:

Persona de contacto: Special Education Coordinator

Número de teléfono: (903) 730-3996

#### Remisiones de la Sección 504:

Cada distrito escolar o escuela autónoma debe tener estándares y procedimientos en vigor para la evaluación y colocación de estudiantes en el programa de la Sección 504 del distrito o la escuela autónoma. Además, los distritos y las escuelas autónoma deben implementar un sistema de salvaguardas procesales que incluya una notificación, una oportunidad para que los padres o tutores examinen los registros relevantes, una audiencia imparcial en la que puedan participar los padres o tutores y en la que haya representación por parte de un abogado, y un procedimiento de revisión.

Persona de contacto para las remisiones de la Sección 504:

La persona designada para contactar en relación con las opciones para un estudiante que experimente dificultades de aprendizaje o en relación con una remisión a evaluación para recibir servicios de la Sección 504 es:

Persona de contacto: Campus Administrator

Número de teléfono: (903) 730-3998

Información adicional:

Los siguientes sitios web ofrecen información y recursos para los estudiantes con discapacidades y sus familias.

- [Marco legal del proceso de educación especial centrado en el niño](#)
- [Red de colaboradores y recursos](#)
- [Centro de Información de Educación Especial](#)
- [Texas Project First](#)

Cierre de la escuela y programas especiales

Basado en la guía del Departamento de Educación Oficina de los Derechos Civiles y la Agencia de Educación de Texas (TEA), "Si las escuelas están cerradas, pero el distrito continúa proveyendo oportunidades educativas a los estudiantes durante el cierre, la escuela deberá asegurarse que los estudiantes con discapacidades también tengan el mismo acceso a las mismas oportunidades, incluyendo la provisión de FAPE. El distrito debe asegurar, hasta lo máximo posible, cada estudiante con una discapacidad puede ser provisto de educación especial y los servicios relacionados e identificados en plan individual del estudiante (IEP)."

En el caso del cierre de las escuelas en las cuales los alumnos de educación general son provistos con oportunidades educativas, los padres serán contactados para discutir sobre la implementación del plan individual de su hijo (IEP) o el plan 504.

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

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

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

Many colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. Students are encouraged to talk with the college and career counselor early during their junior year to determine the appropriate exam to take; these exams are usually taken at the end of the junior year. The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and ACT-Aspire are the corresponding preparatory and readiness assessments for the SAT and ACT, and more information can be obtained on these assessments from the college and career counselor.

Note that participation in these assessments may qualify a student to receive a performance acknowledgment on his or her diploma and transcript under the foundation graduation program and may qualify as a substitute for an end-of-course testing requirement in certain circumstances. A student's performance at a certain level on the SAT or ACT also makes the student eligible for automatic admission to a Texas public institution of higher education.

## **TSIA2 (Texas Success Initiative Assessment)**

Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test called the Texas Success Initiative Assessment 2.0 (TSIA2). The purpose of the TSIA2 is to assess the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering freshmen-level students should have if they are to perform effectively in undergraduate certificate or degree programs in Texas public colleges and universities. This assessment will be required before a student enrolls in a dual-credit course offered through the district as well. Achieving certain benchmark scores on this assessment for college readiness may also waive certain end-of-course assessment requirements in limited circumstances.

The district will provide the Accuplacer assessment once in the fall to 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and once in the spring to 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. If a student is not successful, he/she will need to make arrangements to take the assessment from another entity in order to be dual credit eligible.

## **Grades 3–8**

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

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
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

For any student who does not pass the STAAR test in grade 3, 5, or 8 in math or reading, the district will establish an accelerated learning committee to develop an individual educational plan for the student and monitor progress.

For any student who does not pass the STAAR test in grades 3–8 or STAAR (EOC) end-of-course assessments, the student will be assigned a classroom teacher who is a certified master,

exemplary, or recognized teacher, or the student will receive supplemental instruction (tutoring) before or after school, or embedded in the school day. Students receiving supplemental instruction (tutoring) will receive:

- no less than 15 or 30 hours depending on student performance and is provided in the summer or at least once per week in the school year;
- limited to two subjects per year, prioritizing math and RLA

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.

## ***High School Courses***

### **End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments**

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

- Algebra I
- English I and English II,
- Biology
- United States History

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

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

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

A student's ARD committee for students receiving special education services will determine whether successful performance on the EOC assessments will be required for graduation within the parameters identified in state rules and the student's personal graduation plan.

## **STUDENT IDENTIFICATION BADGES**

Secondary students will be required to wear their school-issued ID badge at all times while on campus.

Identified grade levels will leave the ID badges at school and put them on when they arrive at school. Before they leave for the school day, they will turn in their school-issued ID badge to their teachers.

Secondary students will be required to bring and take home their school-issued ID badges each day.

If a student does not have their ID badge on, they will be directed to the office to contact parents to bring the ID badge, receive their free second school-issued ID badge from the Director, or purchase a new ID badge for \$5.

## **STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE (All Grade Levels)**

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district strives to assist any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (temporary or permanent custody of the state) 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 the Testing/Academic Coordinator, who has been designated as the district's foster care liaison, with any questions.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION (All Grade Levels)**

If you are worried that your child may be using or is in danger of experimenting, using, or abusing illegal drugs or other prohibited substances, please contact the school Director. The school Director 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 (All Grade Levels)**

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

## **TARDIES (All Grade Levels)**

Students are expected to be in first period by 7:55 a.m. Parents are required to sign students in at the front office when students arrive late. The campus will track tardies using the schoolSAFEid system. To be excused, a tardy must meet the same criteria as an excused absence. Tardies that are not excused are considered unexcused. Every 3<sup>rd</sup> unexcused tardy within the semester will count as 1 absence in relation to the 90% rule.

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

Textbooks and other district-approved instructional materials are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Any books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. Electronic textbooks and technological equipment may also be provided to students, depending on the course and course objectives. A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return an item in acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day.

## **TRANSCRIPTS**

High school transcripts must be requested from the College and Career Counselor through the transcript request form located on the Counselor's website. Students will be allowed 5 transcript requests during their senior year. Additional transcripts can be purchased for \$5.00 each. Students need to allow 5 working days for their transcript request to be filled.

## **TRANSFERS (All Grade Levels)**

The College and Career Counselor is authorized to transfer a student from one classroom to another.

## **TRANSPORTATION (All Grade Levels)**

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips may be provided transportation by the school to and from the event. All students are strongly encouraged to use this transportation. In the event that a legal guardian wants to provide transportation for their own child (children) a "Legal Guardian Request to Transport Child (Children)" form will need to be completed and submitted to the office no later than 72 hours prior to the event date. The school has the right to deny requests based on special circumstances.

### **Buses and Other School Vehicles**

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses and other district vehicles remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding in district vehicles, including buses, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the vehicle in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.

- Not deface the vehicle or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the vehicle.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco on any district vehicle.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the vehicle and before crossing in front of the vehicle.
- Follow any other rules established by the operator of the vehicle.

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

## **VANDALISM (All Grade Levels)**

To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended—both this year and for years to come—littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **VIDEO CAMERAS (All Grade Levels)**

For safety purposes, video and audio recording equipment may be 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 Director will review the video and audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL (All Grade Levels)**

### **General Visitors**

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the main office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures. When arriving on campus, all parents and other visitors should be prepared to show identification.

All Parents/visitors to campus are expected to abide by the Visitor and Parent Code of Conduct. If you would like to receive a copy, please contact your campus front office.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the

Director 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. An individual that violates this expectation, depending upon the severity of the violation, may be ejected from meetings and events or otherwise banned from campus and participation in school-sponsored events under the criminal trespass laws or prohibited from the use of telephone and electronic communication. In situations involving lesser infractions or where remediation is viable, a warning will be provided, either verbal or in writing, prior to the filing of trespass and issuance of a formal ban. Should a parent/guardian or visitor fail to heed the direction issued in the warning, a ban or other restrictions designed to deter the conduct will follow.

### **Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students**

On certain days the district may invite representatives from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present information to interested students.

## **VOLUNTEERS (All Grade Levels)**

We appreciate so much the efforts of parent and grandparent volunteers that are willing to serve our district and students. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the Campus Director for more information and to complete an application.

## **WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL (All Grade Levels)**

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 Director'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 administrative assistant for the last report card, and finally, to the Director. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student, and a copy will be placed in the student's permanent record.

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

## **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 districtwide 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 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.

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

**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 Director 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.

**TSIA2** is the Texas Success Initiative Assessment 2.0 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.

# **APPENDIX I:**

## **Freedom From Bullying Policy**

### **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

#### **Priority Statement**

It is the goal of the University of Texas at Tyler University Academy to provide a learning environment free from bullying. Such an environment of civility and good manners is most conducive to learning and high academic achievement. The school will support this goal in a variety of areas, including the establishment of clear procedures for reporting and response, age-appropriate student instruction, staff development and parent or guardian involvement. The school's code of values, character education program, behavior management procedures and the current prevention plan constitute a comprehensive approach to the establishment and maintenance of such an environment.

#### **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L.c.71, 370, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyberbullying.

#### **Definition of Cyber-Bullying**

Cyber-bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, 370, is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

## Scope

The bullying intervention and prevention policies apply to all sites and activities under the supervision of the University of Texas at Tyler University Academy. Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

All staff members who become aware of bullying are required to report it to the campus administration or their designee. These individuals will conduct a prompt and reasonable investigation. The requirement to report the incident does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. When appropriate, referral will be made to a law enforcement agency. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, or who is a witness to or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

The school expects students, parents or guardians who witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to campus administration or designee. Students, parents or guardians and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with the campus administration or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Anonymous reports, either regarding bullying or retaliation, may be mailed to the campus administrator.

## Annual Staff Training

Annual training for all school staff on the Plan is incorporated into an extensive training period prior to the start of the school year. This training includes staff duties under the Plan, an overview of steps that the Director, Assistant Directors, or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of how bullying prevention curricula and character education will be integrated for students throughout the school.

## Professional Development

Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. Such development will build on the school's character education program and include age-appropriate strategies to prevent and intervene in bullying incidents, cyber-bullying incidence and nature, internet safety, research on students at risk for bullying, and information on power differentials and interactions among witnesses, aggressors and targets of bullying. Additional areas for professional development include the use of positive behavioral interventions, applying constructive disciplinary strategies and maintaining a safe and caring community.

## Access to Resources and Services

A school administrator or designee will counsel students who are targets or aggressors in a bullying situation. Targets, aggressors and appropriate family members of involved students will have access to support as needed. Counseling will be arranged in consultation with school authorities and parents. Evaluation and services will be coordinated through district administrators in consultation with parents, school nurses and others, including IEP teams and Special Education professionals as necessary.

## Academic and Non-Academic Activities

Character education classes incorporate age-appropriate strategies and lessons on the necessary skills and habits required for the maintenance of respectful communication and a caring community. Friendship and healthy relationships are promoted through examples, positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior and empowering students to take action when witnessing acts of bullying or retaliation. A school-wide accountability promotes the ongoing development of good habits along with appropriate consequences for disrespectful or negative behavior. Students are consistently presented with clear expectations and established school and classroom routines. Such routines and expectations maintain a safe environment and provide essential boundaries and encouragement of appropriately respectful behavior.

## Responding and Reporting Procedures

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made electronically, orally, or in writing. The campus administrator or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying while maintaining a written record of the investigation.

Upon the reporting of an incident, steps will be taken immediately to ensure the target's safety and assess the target's need for assurance. If after investigating, the allegations are substantiated, the investigator will develop a plan to prevent recurrence and determine what disciplinary action is necessary. A range of disciplinary actions may be taken, including but not limited to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, meeting with parents and other authorities, expulsion, and

revoking of enrollment. The target's safety needs will be addressed through meetings with parents, teachers, students, relevant authorities and counselors, as appropriate. These meetings will address such issues as creating a personal plan, seating, scheduling, and additional steps as needed to promote the target's safety. The campus administrator or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying a student who a) reports bullying, b) provides information during an investigation of bullying, c) witnesses or provides reliable information about an act of bullying. Parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor will be notified about the results and actions taken to address the current issue as well as to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation. Discipline will be consistent with the school's established code of conduct and behavioral expectations/procedures.

False accusations of bullying or retaliation will be addressed by the school's disciplinary procedures that include meetings with parents, detentions, suspensions, and other disciplinary action as needed. Protection of all students will be provided, regardless of their status under the law.

## Notifications

The school's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be distributed in summary form to all parents each year and also posted on the school's website. Every other year the plan will be subject to updating as needed. Parents and guardians will also be notified of opportunities to learn more about the school's plan as it relates to parental responsibilities, with a particular focus on internet safety and the encouragement of good habits at home. Parent/Guardian information on the dynamics of bullying, as well as ways to reinforce the school's prevention plan at home will also be provided.

## Definitions

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

Target is student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during the investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

## **APPENDIX II:**

### **Academic Honesty Policy**

UT Tyler University Academy regards academic honesty as a cornerstone of its educational mission. It is expected that all schoolwork submitted for the purpose of meeting course or class requirements represent the original efforts of the individual student. Administration, faculty, students and their families are all important contributors to the upholding of this academic integrity in our school community. To this end, it is important that all involved understand their integral role in helping to promote this climate of academic honesty. All forms of academic dishonesty will make a student subject to disciplinary action. The following list provides examples of what a student will not do.

- Plagiarize in written, creative, or oral work. (Plagiarism is using the ideas, whether of a person or a technology application, as one's own without acknowledgment of the source.) Giving it as one's own work and re-submitting work from another person or another class are all unacceptable practices.
- Give or receive unauthorized assistance on exams.
- Alter grades or other academic records
- Submit identical work in more than one course without the prior approval of the instructor. Students may further develop previous work with prior approval of the instructor.

#### **Violation of Academic Honesty Policy**

The following rules for conduct apply to all students in grades 7-12 and violation of the rules could result in consequences as described. In most cases the teacher is granted the authority to exercise his/her good judgment in applying the range of consequences described. The principal has the authority to exercise judgment in determining an appropriate consequence but should strive to follow the procedure as outlined.

#### **Rules for Conduct**

Students shall not engage in any act of deception or falsification of work product. This includes plagiarism by copying the language structure, idea and/or thought of another and representing it as one's own work, and verbal or written statement of untruth.

#### **Dishonesty, or cheating, is defined as:**

- Copying or stealing another person's work or data
- Using ChatGPT and similar tools without instructor permission
- Allowing another person to copy one's own work;
- Doing another person's classwork;
- Creating more than one copy of one's own work for distribution;

- Providing another person with the answers on tests or quizzes; or
- Noncompliance with teachers' test taking procedures.
- Unauthorized copying or development of software

### **Disciplinary Actions**

Any action taken with respect to cheating shall take into account: First, the rights of those students whose educational opportunity was diminished because of another student's dishonesty. Second, the rights of the student who has violated this policy and the need to provide an appropriate action.

By signing this agreement, I \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I was academically dishonest. I know that I will be on probation for the remainder of the school year. If, in that time, I am to plagiarize again, a disciplinary form will be placed in my high school file. If I do not repeat the offense, the probation will be dropped at the end of the current school year.

The policy was read and explained to me, and I was given an opportunity to ask questions in order to completely understand the policy and how it may affect me. My signature shows that I have a full understanding of what is considered dishonesty or cheating and that I am fully aware of the serious penalty involved if I should choose to be dishonest in the academic work I do while I am a student at University Academy.

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

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

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

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

Director's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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



# APPENDIX III

## UT University Academy Graduation Plan Worksheet

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Campus: Tyler Longview Palestine

Graduation Year: \_\_\_\_\_

\*English 1 \_\_\_\_\_ End of Course Exam  
 \*English 2 \_\_\_\_\_ End of Course Exam  
 \*English 3 \_\_\_\_\_ DC \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*English 4 \_\_\_\_\_ DC \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*Required for graduation

\*Biology \_\_\_\_\_ End of Course Exam  
 \*Chemistry \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*Physics \_\_\_\_\_  
 Earth Space Science \_\_\_\_\_  
 DC Science 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
 DC Science 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 As a STEM focused school, students must enroll in a science course each year of high school.  
 \*Required science courses

Foreign Language  
 \*Computer Science 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*Computer Science 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Or two years of another foreign language, must be the same language) \*Required for graduation

STEM Endorsement

Engineering	Biomedical
IED	PBS
Civil	HBS
POE	MI
EDD	Bio Inn

\*Algebra 1 \_\_\_\_\_ End of Course Exam  
 \*Geometry \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*Algebra 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pre-Calculus \_\_\_\_\_ DC \_\_\_\_\_  
 College Prep Math \_\_\_\_\_  
 Statistics \_\_\_\_\_ DC \_\_\_\_\_  
 DC Calculus \_\_\_\_\_  
 As a STEM focused school, students must enroll in a math course each year of high school.  
 \*Required math courses

\*World History \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*U.S. History \_\_\_\_\_ DC \_\_\_\_\_  
 End of Course Exam  
 \*U.S. Govt. .5 \_\_\_\_\_ DC \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*Economics .5 \_\_\_\_\_ DC \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*Required for graduation

\*Fine Art \_\_\_\_\_ DC \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*PE \_\_\_\_\_  
 \* Required for graduation

Electives

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Distinguished Achievement with an Endorsement= minimum of 26 credits

All students must pursue an endorsement and the distinguished achievement plan. All students must also participate in a full-time course load.

# APPENDIX IV

## DUAL CREDIT DEADLINES

### 2024-2025

<b>FALL DUAL CREDIT DEADLINES</b>	
<b>April 26, 2024</b>	<b>Last Day to submit TSIA test scores for fall 2024</b>
<b>May 3, 2024</b>	<b>Last day to change dual credit courses for the fall 2024 semester</b>
<b>May 7, Longview May 8, Tyler May 9, Palestine</b>	<b>Dual credit on campus enrollment for current UA students for the fall semester 2024. All enrollment forms are due at this time.</b>
<b>August 9, 2024</b>	<b>Last day for students new to UA, to submit TSIA scores and dual credit forms</b>
<b>August 26, 2024</b>	<b>Dual credit courses begin.</b>
<b>September 2, 2024</b>	<b>Labor Day Holiday-no classes held</b>
<b>October 21-25, 2024</b>	<b>Fall TSIA administration: all 9<sup>th</sup> graders and select others</b>
<b>October 25, 2024</b>	<b>All TSIA scores for spring dual credit courses are due to <a href="mailto:kathyparker@uttyler.edu">kathyparker@uttyler.edu</a>.</b>
<b>November 1, 2024</b>	<b>Last day to withdraw for the fall semester</b>
<b>November 4-8</b>	<b>Enrollment on each campus for spring semester</b>
<b>November 15, 2024</b>	<b>All spring dual credit forms must be signed.</b>
<b>November 25-29, 2024</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>
<b>December 9-13, 2024</b>	<b>Fall final exams</b>
<b>December 14, 2024</b>	<b>Last day of fall dual credit semester</b>

<b>SPRING DUAL CREDIT DEADLINES</b>	<b>(see Oct 25 &amp; Nov. 17, deadline above)</b>
<b>January 13, 2025</b>	<b>Dual Credit courses begin</b>
<b>January 20, 2025</b>	<b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday-no classes held</b>
<b>March 17-21, 2025</b>	<b>Spring Break-no classes held</b>
<b>March 28, 2025</b>	<b>Last day to withdraw for the spring semester</b>
<b>March 25-28, 2025</b>	<b>Spring TSIA Administration for fall 2025</b>
<b>April 28-May 2, 2025</b>	<b>Spring Final Exams</b>
<b>The following are dates that students do not report to the University Academy campus; however, the University does not observe these days. University professors may still have class on these days and students may be required to attend.</b>	
<b>September 23, 2024</b>	
<b>October 10-11, 2024</b>	
<b>October 14-15, 2024</b>	
<b>February 17, 2025</b>	
<b>March 24, 2025</b>	
<b>April 18, 2025</b>	

## APPENDIX V: TEXAS FIRST DIPLOMA

### Fast Track Your Path to Texas Universities

## Texas First Program

We're excited to introduce the **TEXAS FIRST PROGRAM**. This prestigious opportunity enables you to graduate early with the Distinguished Level of Achievement AND receive a scholarship for college.

As one of Texas' top students, you may be eligible to accelerate your path to college and receive a scholarship for one or two semesters at any Texas public institution of higher education, including colleges, universities, and technical colleges.



Talk to your counselor today to see if this exciting new opportunity is the right path for you!

For more information, visit [our website](#) or scan the QR code on the left.

LOOKING  
FOR MORE  
INFORMATION



#### THE FINE PRINT:

Here's what you need to be eligible:

- Texas residency
- FAFSA completion
- At least 22 high school credits and a final GPA equivalent to 3.0 or higher
- Additional academic requirements, including college readiness test scores, STAAR exam participation, and demonstration of mastery in various subjects

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website link above includes a detailed list of eligibility requirements.

If you graduate two or more semesters before your class, you'll receive a two-semester scholarship, equivalent to the amount of the TEXAS grant, upon admission to any Texas public institution of higher education, including colleges, universities, and technical colleges. You may also be eligible for additional financial aid at most of these institutions.

The Texas First Diploma does not guarantee automatic admission for students. Ask your counselor if your grade point average at graduation qualifies you for automatic admission under the state's top 10 percent law.

You can apply to any college or university you choose; however, the scholarship will apply only at the Texas public institution of higher education where you have been admitted.

**Use it or lose it!** The scholarship offer will expire at the end of the first academic year following your graduation, so we encourage you to attend college directly after high school.

**NOTE:** Before September 1, 2023, the Texas First Scholarship was only applicable at 10 Texas public universities. However, effective September 1, 2023, the number of

institutions of higher education eligible to award the Texas First Scholarship to eligible Texas First Diploma graduates expanded from 10 universities to all Texas public institutions of higher education, including colleges, universities, and technical colleges (Senate Bill 2294, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session). Please see your high school counselor for information regarding eligibility requirements to graduate early under the Texas First Program and receive a scholarship up to one year upon admission to any eligible Texas public institution of higher education, per Texas Education Code, Section 61.003.

## Texas First Diploma Program

### Requirements:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Earn 22 credits, by allowed methods
- \_\_\_\_\_ Final grade point average of 3.0 on 4.0 scale
- \_\_\_\_\_ Scale score of at least the 80th percentile on one college entrance test (ACT, SAT, PSAT/NMSQT, TSIA/TSIA2, or GED-or top 10% of class\*\*)
- And
- \_\_\_\_\_ Passing STAAR EOC in Alg. 1, English 1, English 2 and Biology, with minimum score required by the state 19 TAC §21.52(a)(2)(C)
- \_\_\_\_\_ or DC course with a C or better

The student graduating under the Early High School Completion Program will not receive an endorsement, due to not achieving 26 credits. They can graduate with the distinguished level of achievement.

Students can also qualify for additional funding under the Texas First Diploma, contact the District Counselor for more information about Texas First program eligibility and scholarships. Graduating under the Texas First Diploma does not guarantee automatic admission.

\*\* top 10% is calculated during the current semester or prior semester of counselor verification