



**TEXAS**  
**SCHOOL**  
**OF THE ARTS**

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Texas Center for Arts + Academics

**Student Handbook**  
**& Code of Conduct**  
**2024-2025**

# Texas School of the Arts STUDENT HANDBOOK

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## **Mission**

Our mission is to inspire a lifelong passion for learning and empower students to achieve academic excellence through an arts-based education.

## **Admissions**

Texas School of the Arts (TeSA) is an open-enrollment charter school specializing in an arts-based education for students in Kindergarten through 5th grade. As a school of choice, parents are expected to be informed and make an accurate determination whether or not their student(s) will be motivated and excel in a school environment with requirements for active participation in Dance, Music, Theatre, and the Visual Arts. Additionally, the arts are regularly used to deliver and support instruction in the core academic subjects of English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies.

TeSA is a nonsectarian school and shall not discriminate in admission on the basis of sex, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic ability, athletic ability, or the district the child would otherwise attend. Students who have documented histories of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems under Subchapter A, Chapter 37 will be excluded from admission in accordance with Texas Education Code §12.111(a)(6)(A). This admissions policy will be revised as necessary to conform to the new Commissioner rules concerning the admission of students to open-enrollment charter schools.

### **Admission of New Students**

Texas School of the Arts will hold auditions to admit students for enrollment. Applications will be collected during the open enrollment period, which occurs during specific dates in January and February. All applicants will be assigned audition times and deadlines for consideration. All audition requirements and materials will be published on the campus website. Auditions and notifications will be completed by mid-March.

The President/CEO or designee will determine the number of available spaces for each grade level. Audition scores will be used to assign rank order for each grade level. Spaces will be filled in the order of grade-level ranking and those students will be invited to enroll, until all available spaces are filled. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available openings, the remaining students will be placed on a wait list in ranked order. Individuals will be offered admission as space is available.

TeSA will only accept admissions applications and schedule auditions outside of the open enrollment period if there are available openings at the prospective student's grade level and there is no existing wait list for that grade.

## **Districts Served**

Texas School of the Arts accepts students from the following ISDs:

- Aledo ISD
- Alvarado ISD
- Arlington ISD
- Azle ISD
- Birdville ISD
- Burleson ISD
- Carroll ISD
- Castleberry ISD
- Cedar Hill ISD
- Cleburne ISD
- Crowley ISD
- DeSoto ISD
- Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD
- Everman ISD
- Fort Worth ISD
- Godley ISD
- Granbury ISD
- Grand Prairie ISD
- Grapevine-Colleyville ISD
- Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD
- Joshua ISD
- Keene ISD
- Keller ISD
- Kennedale ISD
- Lake Worth ISD
- Mansfield ISD
- Northwest ISD
- Peaster ISD
- Springtown ISD
- Weatherford ISD
- White Settlement ISD

## **Communication Policy**

### **Non-Urgent Communication**

It is the responsibility of the guardian to provide at least one active email account, along with a current mailing address and phone number to be used for school communication. The guardian should immediately inform the front office staff of any changes during the school year. Texas School of the Arts will primarily contact parents/guardians through email or other electronic messaging system for non-urgent issues. Families are encouraged to check their email frequently for updates from their child's teachers and/or the TeSA administrative staff, as well as read all newsletters published by the principal and grade-level teachers.

### **Emergency Communication**

The decision to close or delay the opening of school due to bad weather or other cause will be made as early as reasonably possible. In addition to alerting families through email, communication will also be posted on the website and social media accounts. Weather related closures will also be reported on NBC 5 and ABC 8.

## **Fees**

Texas School of the Arts is a public charter school and, as such, does not charge tuition. 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/her own classroom supplies such as pencils, paper, erasers, notebooks, and other consumable items, and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits such as the costs for materials for a class project the student will keep, membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations, and fees to attend and/or participate in co-curricular or voluntary extracurricular activities.

Families are also financially responsible for purchasing the basic school uniform and Dance/P.E. attire, including shoes. Families should plan to replace all items at least once per year due to growth. All uniform pieces are available through Flynn O'Hara or the TeSA PTO. See the Dress Code section for more information.

### **Performances**

In the fall and spring of each year, TeSA produces exhibitions to showcase student work in all four Fine Arts disciplines. Participation is required as part of the classroom curriculum and will be graded. There is no fee required. Some personal props and costumes may be required to bring from home.

### **School Supplies**

Each year the TeSA PTO purchases required school supplies in bulk, providing families with money and time savings when compared with buying these supplies individually. Families are not required to purchase their supplies from the PTO, but they are encouraged to take advantage of the savings opportunity. School supplies lists are available on the Resources tab of the TeSA website. For families that choose to purchase their supplies through the PTO, the fee will be charged per student. These fees will be collected prior to the first day of school.

### **Miscellaneous Activities**

Students may be required to pay fees for other voluntary activities including:

- School pictures, publications, yearbooks, etc.
- Field trips
- Optional competitions and/or performances

### **Fundraising**

School and organization fundraising activities are conducted throughout the year. Participation is strictly voluntary. As a public charter school, Texas School of the Arts receives less funding from the State of Texas than traditional public schools. Our organization receives more than \$1 million less than a comparably sized school. Fundraising is necessary to help decrease that shortfall and enhance our excellent academic and artistic programs.

# Attendance

## School Hours

School hours are from 7:45 am until 3:15/3:30 pm, Monday through Friday. Office hours will be from 7:15 am until 3:45 pm, Monday through Friday. Students may not arrive on campus before 7:15 am and must leave by 3:45 pm each day. Texas School of the Arts assumes no liability for students on campus outside of school hours who are not in an authorized after-school activity.

## Closed Campus

After arrival on school grounds, students may not leave campus at any time or for any reason without first signing out in the office. A student requesting to leave school during the day must be signed out by his/her parent/guardian in the school office. A student must have a legitimate (see Decisions on Absences) reason for arriving late or leaving early from school. Every parent/guardian may be requested to show picture identification to school personnel when signing out a child for any reason. If a student becomes ill and needs to be sent home, TeSA will notify the student's parent/guardian.

## Attendance Overview

In Texas, all children who are 6 years of age but have not yet reached their 19th birthday are required to attend school unless otherwise exempted by law. Upon enrollment in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten, a child shall attend school (Texas Education Code §25.085). A student under the age of 19 is required to attend school daily. Texas education code requires that a student attend school 90% of the days that a class is offered. If students do not meet this requirement, they may be denied credit and retained for the school year. The TCA+A Board has adopted the 90% policy and students attending TeSA must be in attendance 90% of the required school days.

Under the Texas Education Code any student who voluntarily attends school after his/her 18th birthday is required to attend each scheduled school day for the entire period of the instructional program for which the student is enrolled. However, if the person has more than five unexcused absences in a semester the school may revoke the person's enrollment for the remainder of the school year. TeSA reserves the right to enforce this statute should this situation arise.

If a student has absences beyond the required 90%, the Attendance Review Committee will develop a plan to make up the required time. This plan may include additional attendance on Saturday or after school. If a student does not complete this plan, credit will be denied for the semester/school year. Any student/parent/guardian may appeal the denial of credit.

For purposes of determining whether a student has been in attendance for 90% of the scheduled class time, all absences, both excused and unexcused, will be counted. Determination of the status of excused or unexcused absences shall be the responsibility of the school administration. Any absence, regardless of number, will be considered and dealt with on its own merit.

When a TeSA student incurs unexcused absences for three (3) or more days or parts of days within a four-week period, the school will send a notice to the student's parent, as required by law, to remind the parent that it is the parent's duty to monitor his or her child's attendance and to require the student to come to school. The notice will also inform the parent that the school will initiate truancy prevention measures and request a conference between school administrators and the parent. These measures will constitute a truant behavior improvement plan which may include school-based community service, referrals to either in-school or out-of-school counseling or other social services. Any other measures considered appropriate by the school may also be initiated. The Truancy Prevention Facilitator for the school is the campus Principal or designee. If you have questions about your student and the effect of his or her absences from school, please contact the Facilitator or any other campus administrator. A court of law may also impose penalties against a student's parent if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student is absent without excuse from school on ten (10) or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year. If a student ages 12 through 18 incurs unexcused absences on ten (10) or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, the school, in most circumstances, will file a complaint in truancy court against the student. (Texas Education code §25.085 – §25.0915)

### **Attendance Review Committee**

The Principal shall appoint an Attendance Review Committee to hear petitions for class credit by students who do not achieve the 90% minimum attendance and who do not complete the appropriate makeup plan. The Attendance Committee shall establish guidelines following Texas Education Agency protocols for evaluation of these petitions, and shall have the discretion to award class credit to students who have exceeded the maximum number of absences. Students/Parents may appeal negative decisions of the Attendance Committee to the Superintendent.

### **Absences**

TeSA supports student success through regular attendance and will combine incentive programs to recognize good attendance with early intervention and prosecutorial enforcement of compulsory attendance laws. A student absent from school or from any class without valid approval from administration will be considered unexcused and subject to disciplinary action.

A student not actually on campus at the time attendance is taken will be considered absent unless the student is temporarily absent due to an appointment with a healthcare professional. A note from the healthcare professional will be required in order to excuse this time period. The time missed should not exceed the duration of the appointment plus reasonable travel time.

**Parents should email the Campus Attendance Clerk when the student is going to be absent and/or late to school. Documentation is required to excuse any absence.**

### **Participation in School Performances and Activities**

Any student absent from school will not participate in any after-school performances, rehearsals, or activities on that day without documentation of a medical appointment. Any student signing in to school after 10:30 am (without documentation of a medical appointment or an approved out-of-school performance) will be considered absent for that day and may not participate in after-school activities, including rehearsals and performances. Time missed for an out-of-school performance should be limited to the duration of the performance plus reasonable travel time.

Students absent for an approved performance must return to school before the end of the school day in order to be eligible to participate in after-school rehearsals or performances.

### **Excused Absences**

Students shall be excused for absences for the following reasons:

- Illness - After three (3) consecutive days missed, a doctor's note is required for return to school
- Family illness – A life threatening illness in the immediate family- Excused absence is subject to approval by the Principal
- Death in the family
- Pre-approved family obligation (e.g. funeral, wedding, sibling graduation) with consideration for reasonable travel time as approved by Administration; documentation required
- Health Care Professional Appointment – Must have a note from the Health Care Professional upon returning to school
- Required appearance in court
- Documented/pre-approved performances with professional companies and fine arts organizations. Students must request approval a minimum of two weeks prior to the anticipated absence. The student/parent must inform teachers of the planned, approved absences and make arrangements for make-up work. Students must be academically eligible and in good standing with attendance and discipline policies in order to be considered for an excused absence. All decisions are at the discretion of the Principal or the Principal designee.

### **Exemption from Class for Religious Holy Days**

Students shall be excused for the purpose of observing religious holy days, including travel for that purpose, as long as the guardian submits a written request for the excused absence. Absences are subject to prior approval from the principal.

### **Unexcused Absences**

An unexcused absence is defined as missing all or part of a school day without parent/guardian and Principal permission. Attendance violations may affect promotion and/or class credit status, and/or student's standing in a performing group.

### **Documentation of Absence**

Upon return to school all absences must be documented through the office with a note from the



parent or official documentation from a healthcare professional. All undocumented absences will be

considered unexcused. Illness which results in more than three (3) consecutive days of absence should be documented by a healthcare professional. After excessive absences (missing more than nine (9) days in a semester) all additional absences will require documentation from a healthcare professional. Documentation should include name of student, date of absence, and reason for absence.

### **Decisions on Absences**

The decision of determining excused or unexcused absences shall be the responsibility of the principal/designee. Any absence, regardless of the number, will be considered and dealt with on its own merit. Violations of attendance policies may result in disciplinary action and/or affect promotion or class credit status.

## **Asynchronous Learning**

Texas School of the Arts will follow all State of Texas and Tarrant County mandates and guidelines regarding campus closures due to health concerns. If it is determined students will learn virtually, they will be considered At-Home Learners and required to complete all assignments and attendance verifications through the designated learning platform(s). The previous law allowing Remote Conferencing expired on September 1, 2023. Students not in attendance will be expected to complete make-up work on their own or once returning to the campus.

## **General Education Homebound Policy**

General Education Homebound (GEH) services are available for students with significant/severe medical conditions, requiring the student to be confined at home or a hospital for a minimum of four consecutive weeks or at least four weeks throughout the school year. In order for students to qualify for homebound services, documentation of need must be submitted and approved by the Homebound Committee in accordance with the most updated Texas Education Agency requirements.

Additional information regarding Homebound instruction, committee responsibilities, and attendance requirements will be provided by request.

## **Student Arrival and Dismissal**

Drivers should NOT use electronic devices while dropping off or picking up children. Cell-phones and other devices create an unsafe situation. Drivers should drive the posted speed limit on Village Parkway and Cherry Street and decrease speed as they enter the TeSA parking lot.

Drivers should review the map for the appropriate traffic flow.

### **Morning Arrival Procedures**

- Students may arrive at 7:15 a.m. Students will not be admitted to the building prior to this time unless part of a morning tutorial with one of their grade level teachers.
- Students must stay in their vehicle until they have been admitted into the building.
- Drivers should pull their vehicles all the way to the second set of exterior doors to help with the flow of traffic.
- Students should be ready to exit the vehicle as soon as it comes to a stop.
- Students may not be dropped off in the front parking lot.
- Students arriving after 7:50 a.m. must be checked in through the front office.

### **Afternoon Dismissal Procedures**

- No early dismissals allowed after 3:00 p.m.
- Drivers should follow the designated lanes, divided by grade level
- K-1st grade students will dismiss from the South doors at 3:15 p.m.
- K-1st grade students with siblings may dismiss at 3:30 p.m.
- All 2nd-5th grade students will dismiss from the South doors at 3:30 p.m.
- Drivers must display a school-made car card. Additional cards may be requested in the front office.
- Drivers may not park in the front and come into the building to wait for their child(ren).
- After 3:45 p.m., students must be picked up from the front of the building.

### **Before/After School Rules**

- Students are not allowed on the playground immediately before or after school.
- Students must stay with their parent/guardian if they have been released from the teacher.
- Students are not allowed to walk around the building without supervision, even with parent permission.
- Students and parents are not allowed in teachers' rooms before or after school without a teacher or administrator present.
- Before school while children are waiting in the cafeteria, students must whisper and sit in their designated grade level area.

## **TCA+A After-School Opportunities**

### **TCA+A Art Conservatory**

Texas Art Conservatory offers intensive courses of study for students in grades 3-12, designed to develop foundations in technical visual art skills in both 2-D and 3-D media processes. During each year-long, afterschool course, students will create pieces which can be used to begin developing a personal portfolio. Each class will be taught by degreed instructors, who are active local artists with expertise in their art form. As courses are added to the program, Texas Art Conservatory will expand its curriculum, offering courses and workshops year round and establish a progressing path for students to develop their skill and artistry.

With highly credentialed instructors, students will develop critical thinking skills, strengthen their hand-eye coordination, and increase their capacity to problem-solve and connect ideas. As a result of the progressing curriculum, participants will expand their abilities in nonverbal communication and fine motor skills, their ability to create and imagine, and their understanding of art history and important artists. Classes are taught in a safe and supportive environment, nurturing students' natural abilities and building upon them.

### **TCA+A Dance Conservatory**

Texas Dance Conservatory creates technically strong concert style dancers by providing rigorous instruction in high quality classes. Our disciplined training is designed to nurture the growth of young dancers in a fun, accessible and inclusive environment. Primary dance techniques include ballet, modern, and jazz. Classical ballet is the foundation upon which we build balanced training in other styles.

With a sound anatomical approach, dancers increase strength and ability while gaining body awareness and longevity in their dance practice. Through the combination of classical and contemporary studies in each class, versatility in technique is achieved and students build increased vocabulary and understanding of the art form.

Whether dancers have professional aspirations or are interested in recreation, they will feel at home in our collegial and safe environment while they exercise their talent and creativity.

### **TCA+A Music Conservatory**

Texas Music Conservatory offers both ensemble and private music lessons for developing musicians in grades K-12. During each year-long, afterschool course, students will learn the fundamentals of music literacy, healthy vocal technique, and how to build a sense of self independence and collaboration with their peers. Our curriculum has foundations in Kodaly methods of solfege training and extended artistic training based on the National Core Art Standards and beyond.

Private lesson experiences offer students the opportunity for one on one feedback and skill development. Classes are taught in a safe and supportive environment, nurturing students' natural abilities and building upon them.

### **Other After-School Organizations**

Other contracted after-school programs may be available. Programs will be evaluated each year and all information will be communicated to parents by the Principal or designee and published on the school website.

## **Technology & Internet Use**

TeSA-owned technology resources are for instructional purposes, and may be issued to individual students on or off campus as determined by the Campus Principal. Use of these technological resources, including the district network systems and use of any TeSA-owned equipment is restricted to pre-approved purposes only.

Because of the expense associated with acquiring this technology and the potential for damage to the equipment through misuse, Texas School of the Arts has developed the following specific technology usage rules. Violation of any of the rules listed in this section may result in revocation of technology and/or Internet privileges and any other disciplinary consequences as may be deemed appropriate by the Principal in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct:

- Students are prohibited from erasing, renaming, or making unusable anyone else's files.
- Students are prohibited from using someone else's password, e-mail account, impersonating another individual, or using any method of hiding or manipulating IP addresses.
- Students may not use school resources to make purchases of any kind or to advertise any products for purchase or sale.
- Students may not use school resources for any unlawful purpose such as illegal copying, plagiarizing, or illegal installation of software.
- Students are prohibited from writing or otherwise attempting to introduce any computing code designed to self-replicate, damage or hinder the performance of the computer's memory or filing system (i.e., introduction of a computer virus, "spamming" the e-mail system, etc.)
- Students are prohibited from using technology to annoy, harass, or bully others with inappropriate language, images or threats. See also the Bullying & Cyber-Bullying section of this handbook.
- Students are prohibited from accessing any internet sites containing obscenities or sexually explicit materials.
- Students are prohibited from using technology to break into secure sites, accounts, or any efforts to hack or other illegal accounts.
- Students are prohibited from assembling or disassembling technology, computer

networks, printers, or other equipment except as part of a class assignment or with permission of a classroom teacher.

- Students are prohibited from removing any software, hardware or computer technology from the campus without express permission of the campus principal or principal designee.

### **Personally Owned Devices**

Personally owned laptops, tablets, cell phones, and smartwatches may be used only with permission of the classroom teacher as part of the student's assignment or class project when the student is working in the classroom of the teacher who has granted such permission. Such permission does not extend beyond the teacher's classroom or to other times of the day, e.g., lunch, etc. Use of personal devices must adhere to the Technology and Internet Use Policy. The school will not be liable for personally owned devices brought on campus.

### **Technology Tools and Internet User Agreement Policy**

Technology tools include computers and accessories, tablets, interactive boards, projectors and any other forms of technology used in the educational process at Texas School of the Arts.

Technology tools and the internet are available to students and staff to enhance the curriculum and promote educational excellence. The purpose of the Technology Tools and Internet User Agreement is to provide the procedures and code of conduct for the use of technology and the internet. Use of school technology materials and internet access will be provided to those who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner, following all school policies. Information created, sent, or received by email, the Internet or other means over the computers available to students and staff is the property of Texas School of the Arts and may be accessed at any time by the school for its review. In the event that a review reveals that this policy has been violated or that a privilege of using a technology tool or the Internet is being abused, disciplinary action will be taken against the individual or individuals involved. The Principal may determine inappropriate use and deny, revoke, or suspend access to specific users.

### **Security**

Security on any devices is a high priority. If a student can identify a security problem within the network, the student must immediately notify a teacher or administrator.

- Students should not demonstrate the problem to other users.
- Students should not use another individual's account, forge messages, or post anonymous messages.
- Attempts to login to any system as any other user may result in cancellation of user privileges.
- Using another user's device under that user's name will result in a consequence of an appropriate nature.

## **Non-Compliance**

Any other form of unauthorized access to the TeSA network will result in immediate cancellation of user privileges. This includes unauthorized use of the wireless network system. Teachers will be notified of the student's loss of privileges. Students will still be expected to complete assignments as assigned.

Violators may be held responsible for reimbursement to the Texas School of the Arts for all incurred expenses. Deliberate violations may also result in disciplinary consequences.

## **Offenses**

The following actions do not comply with the privilege and responsibility that the user assumes with access to technology and the internet and will be dealt with as stated above:

- Intentionally wasting resources
- Using the school's hardware, software, or network for commercial purposes
- Using the school's hardware, software, or network for personal entertainment purposes
- Using the school's network to store personal files, unrelated to academic needs
- Using the school's network to search for, transmit, receive, submit, or publish any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, offensive or illegal material.
- Vandalizing any part of the hardware, software or the network, including theft of any hardware or software
- Downloading, installing, or running executable files from external sources
- Writing or otherwise attempting to introduce any computing code designed to self-replicate, damage, or hinder the performance of the device's memory or filing system (e.g. introduction of a virus, "spamming" the e-mail system, etc.)
- Bypassing school network security measures, either by using a proxy, network tunnel, or any other method
- Snooping on faculty members, other students, or any equipment
- Displaying or sending offensive messages or pictures on the network or while using any school-owned computer
- Participating in videoconferencing or chat without permission
- Using another's login or password
- Revealing passwords to others
- Trespassing in another's files, or misusing, or deleting another's files
- Interfering with the integrity of the network system and/or the e-mail system.
- Violating copyright laws including plagiarism or making illegal copies of school-owned software
- Using email, or any other electronic communication, without permission and supervision
- Using social media sites without permission and supervision
- Taking video or audio recording of students, staff, or administrators without permission and supervision

# Dress Code

Texas School of the Arts (TeSA) and its performing groups are uniformed organizations. The following provides general guidelines for all students. In addition to the school uniform, additional uniform items, costumes and accessories may be required depending on a student's performances.

The Dress Code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, minimize safety hazards, and create a sense of equality and unity on our campus. Uniform compliance is a positive learning experience for students involved in professional training and will help individual students learn specific responsibilities. Once a student is enrolled in school, he/she should obtain the required uniform items. Some items can be purchased through any store. TeSA specific items must be purchased through a TeSA PTO Resale or the approved uniform vendor:

[www.flynnohara.com/school/TX059](http://www.flynnohara.com/school/TX059)

Flynn O'Hara  
Montgomery Plaza  
363 Carroll Street  
Fort Worth, TX 76107

## General Uniform Guidelines

### Tops

- Red or Navy Short or Long Sleeve Polo Shirt with TeSA logo
- White or Light Blue Short or Long Sleeve Oxford Shirt, available from any source
- Solid Red, White, or Navy Long Sleeve Shirt (worn underneath uniform shirts as needed)
- Navy Cardigan Sweater with TeSA logo
- Sweatshirt with TeSA logo
- Jacket with TeSA logo

### Bottoms

- Khaki Slacks, Shorts, Skorts, or Skirts, available from any source
- Plaid #36 Skort, Skirt, or Jumper
- All shorts and skirts should be no shorter than two inches above the knee.
- Shorts or White, Black, Grey, or Navy Tights/Leggings are required under all skirts and jumpers.

### Footwear

- Closed-Toe and Closed-Heel Shoes
- Ballet Shoes (for dance class only)
- Athletic Shoes (may be worn all day or just for P.E.)

## Dance & P.E. Uniform

Appropriate attire is an important component of dance because it allows the student to move freely without being restricted. Dance attire also allows both the student and instructor to see body alignment clearly, which leads to more advanced technique and injury prevention.



Hair should be pulled away from the face for Dance & P.E. Students should come with hair ties or headbands as needed. Teachers will not style student's hair for Dance or P.E. classes.

A white space is provided on all Dance/P.E. items to label the student's name. To prevent confusion and loss of purchased items, all required uniform pieces should be clearly labeled upon receipt before wearing to school.

All 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade students must wear:

### **Dance**

- Tops: TeSA Dance/P.E. Shirt or Solid Black Leotard (strongly recommended)
- Bottoms: TeSA Dance/P.E. Shorts, Leggings, or Sweatpants or Pink, Black, or Flesh-toned Tights (if wearing a leotard), sheer black dance skirt (if wearing a leotard)
- Footwear: Ballet Shoes
  - Ballet shoes should never be worn outside of the dance room.
  - Ballet shoes may be replaced throughout the year due to growth or wear and tear.
  - A specific color of ballet shoes will be required for performances.

### **P.E.**

- Tops: Dance/P.E. Shirt
  - A black dance leotard may be worn underneath.
- Bottoms: Dance/P.E. Shorts, Leggings, or Sweatpants
  - A student may choose one or a combination of any of the three official Dance/P.E. bottom wear choices.
- Footwear: Athletic/Tennis shoes
  - Velcro/laces are preferred for safety.

### **Dress and Grooming**

- Shall not lead school officials to believe that such dress or grooming will disrupt, interfere with, disturb, or detract from school activities.
- Shall not create a health hazard to the student's safety or to the safety of others.
- Clothing which exposes the stomach and hips shall not be worn.
- Jumpers, skirts, and shorts may not be hemmed shorter than two inches above the kneecap.
- Student names may be monogrammed on uniform tops, including the sweatshirt, hoodie, and sweater. The monogram should be on the right side of the garment, opposite from the TeSA logo. The monogram should be no larger than the TeSA logo, in keeping with the colors of our uniform.
- Shorts MUST be worn under jumpers and skirts, but should not be visible.
- No hats or scarves are to be worn inside the building except for special days.
- Girls may wear non-distracting hair accessories.
- Khaki slacks must be fitted at the waist with no sagging. Pants should have no more than four (4) pockets; two in the front and two in the back, (no cargo pockets).
- Jewelry must be quiet and non-distracting. Jewelry with bells, lights, should only be worn when requested for costuming, group projects, etc.

- Only uniform jackets, sweatshirts, and sweaters may be worn inside the classroom. Non-uniform coats and jackets may be worn outside of the building for recess or designated activities.

The school administration shall have the right to appraise any clothing issue. The administrator's decision shall be final. Coming to school out of dress code is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Spirit Days**

Spirit Days will be held every Friday. On Spirit Days, students can wear any approved TeSA shirt. All shirt choices must be worn with official TeSA uniform bottoms or blue jean shorts, skirts, skorts, jumpers, overalls, or pants with no holes. Students will also need to bring clothing for Dance and/or P.E. unless specifically stated otherwise.

### **Free Dress Days**

Free Dress Days may be held any day of the week with Principal approval, and will be communicated at least one week prior to the event. Free dress consists of clothing of the student's choice, excluding shorts more than 2 in above the knee, spaghetti straps, short skirts, inappropriate t-shirts, etc. Closed toe, closed heel shoes should still be worn with free dress. Students will also need to bring clothing for Dance and/or P.E. unless specifically stated otherwise.

## **Counseling Services**

Texas School of the Arts provides a comprehensive counseling program in accordance with the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The services provided by the School Counselor assist all students to grow to their full potential academically, socially, and emotionally. The counselor's mission is to foster emotional awareness and growth in artistically talented students to nurture the whole child.

The School Counselor may work with the grade-level teacher(s) to develop a plan of success for students struggling to meet academic or behavioral expectations. The School Counselor will also meet with students and parents as they prepare for the transition from elementary to middle school.

The School Counselor may provide guidance lessons, teaching skills that develop self-confidence, responsible behavior, problem solving, decision making, interpersonal communication, goal setting, and motivation. A student wishing to speak to the School Counselor individually during the school day should notify their teacher. Guardians may also request an individual counseling service for their child by emailing the School Counselor or calling the front office.

# Curriculum

Texas School of the Arts' curriculum is developed by its administrators and teachers. It is based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the National Core Arts Standards. We have a strong belief in challenging academics, and, in keeping with our fine arts mission, we offer all four Fine Arts disciplines at all grade levels. In order to prepare our students for higher education and training, TeSA has developed a rigorous curricular program.

## Grading & Student Assessment

As students progress towards mastery of skills and concepts outlined in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), teachers should use various indicators to monitor and assess this progress. Beginning, middle, and end-of-year testing will be utilized to monitor students' growth and guide plans for individual, small, and whole group instruction.

Additionally, a variety of classroom activities, with emphasis given to an individual student's learning style and applicability to the content, will be graded and averaged for student Progress Reports and Report Cards, include a combination of the following,:

- Teacher observations
- Compositions
- Class discussions
- Oral interviews
- Projects
- Demonstrations
- Book reviews/reports
- Homework
- Daily work
- Portfolios
- Participation
- Tests/Quizzes

### Grades K-2nd Skills-Based Grading Scale

<u>Quality of Work</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Meeting Standard	3
Approaching Standard	2
Below Standard	1

### Grades 3rd-5th Numerical Grading Scale

<u>Quality of Work</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Excellent progress	A = 90-100%
Above average progress	B = 80-89%
Average progress	C – 70-79%
Unsatisfactory progress; failing	F = 69-0%
Incomplete grade	I = Not passing

## K-5th Fine Arts & Physical Education Grading Scale

Quality of Work _____	Grade _____
Excellent	E
Satisfactory	S
Needs Improvement	N
Unsatisfactory	U

Fine Arts & P.E. Grading Rubric			
	Responsibility	Engagement	Citizenship
<b>E (Excellent)</b>	Student is <i>always</i> prepared for class with designated assignments, materials, supplies, and uniform.	Student <i>always</i> participates and demonstrates full engagement, and is <i>always</i> willing to accept and apply corrections.	Student <i>always</i> follows directions, and <i>always</i> possesses a positive attitude.
<b>S (Satisfactory)</b>	Student is <i>mostly</i> prepared for class with designated assignments, materials, supplies, and uniform.	Student <i>mostly</i> participates and demonstrates engagement, and is <i>mostly</i> willing to accept and apply corrections.	Student <i>mostly</i> follows directions, and <i>mostly</i> possesses a positive attitude.
<b>N (Needs Improvement)</b>	Student is <i>sometimes</i> prepared for class with designated assignments, materials, supplies, and uniform.	Student <i>sometimes</i> participates and demonstrates engagement, and is <i>sometimes</i> willing to accept and apply corrections.	Student <i>sometimes</i> follows directions, and <i>sometimes</i> possesses a positive attitude.
<b>U (Unsatisfactory)</b>	Student is <i>seldom</i> prepared for class with designated assignments, materials, supplies, and required uniform.	Student <i>seldom</i> participates and demonstrates engagement, and is <i>seldom</i> willing to accept and apply corrections.	Student <i>seldom</i> follows directions, and <i>seldom</i> possesses a positive attitude.
Students will be assessed in Art, Dance, Music, Theatre, and Physical Education separately, during each class session. Students may have an additional minus (-) or plus (+) listed on their progress report and/or report card to reflect the average of all work during the grading cycle.			

### Citizenship Grading

At the end of the grading period, a citizenship letter grade will be given on the report card based on an accumulation of recorded classroom disciplinary incidents within the grading cycle. All incidents will be recorded by the teacher and reported to the student's family through the student's planner or binder.

Any major infractions, resulting in an office referral, will be additionally reported by the Campus Principal, School Counselor, or designee.

- E (Excellent) = 0-1 incidents
- S (Satisfactory) = 2-4 incidents
- N (Needs Improvement) = 5-7 incidents
- U (Unsatisfactory) = 8 incidents

### **Progress Reports & Report Cards**

The academic year will be divided into six grading cycles. Progress Reports will be available for guardians of 3rd-5th grade students to view after the third or fourth week of the cycle. K-2nd grade students will not have Progress Reports available, however; when assessment data is collected for beginning, middle, and end-of-year or major curriculum-embedded assessments, these reports will be sent home in conjunction with the closest report card cycle. Report Cards will be available the week following the grading cycle. Guardians are strongly encouraged to check the Parent Portal to view grades weekly and reach out to the teacher(s) with any questions.

The Report Card grades for Cycles 1-3 will be averaged together by subject to reflect the Semester 1 grades, and the Report Card grade for Cycles 4-6 will be averaged together by subject to reflect the Semester 2 grade. These semester averages may not be automatically published, but will be used when considering retention.

Final report cards will not be issued until all records are clear. Students must pay for lost or damaged books and curricular materials in order to have a clear record. In some cases, students who have missed assignments and/or concepts in a class may be given an incomplete grade. All work pertaining to an "I" must be completed and turned in by the designated deadline.

### **Kindergarten-2nd Grading Policy**

- K-2nd grade students are graded and assessed using a skills-based model.
- Each grading cycle, students will be assessed over TEKS that have been taught for that grading cycle and assigned a quality of work grade of 1, 2, or 3 to indicate their level of mastery.
- If a student has a skill that has not been mastered in Language Arts and/or Math, it will be retaught and reassessed the following grading cycle.

### **3rd-5th Grading Policy**

- Tests/Major Work will constitute 40% of the overall grade for each grading cycle.
- Daily Work will constitute 60% of the overall grade for each grading cycle.
- Teachers will determine and communicate which class projects, papers, assignments, etc., will be considered "Major Work" vs "Daily Work."
- A minimum average of four grades per week must be offered for English Language Arts/Reading and Math, and a minimum average of two grades per week must be offered for Science and Social Studies.
- A student may have the option to correct major work and/or daily work in which they earned a

grade below 70. Corrections must be completed by the time designated by the instructor. Under no circumstances may a student turn in corrections after the grading period has ended.

- Partial credit may be earned for incomplete or late work without prior arrangements. Under no circumstances may a student turn in late work after the grading period has ended unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor and approved by an administrator.
- Partial credit may be earned for assignments in which the student's name is not included.
- Students must complete work assigned during an absence by the time designated by the instructor. Any assignments handed in after the designated deadline will be treated in the same manner as other late work and will receive a reduced grade.
- All tests/major work due on the day of an absence will be due on the day the student returns.

### **Posting/Communication of Grades**

- Teachers are required to post grades in their online grade book at least once per week.
- Teachers are expected to contact parents regarding missing and/or failing grades as needed.
- Parents are encouraged to sign up for parent access to view the online grade book and check it weekly with their child.
- Any student/parent concerns regarding graded assignments or grading policies should be directed to the classroom teacher.

### **Fine Arts and Physical Education (P.E.) Curriculum**

All TeSA students will participate in Art, Dance, Music, Theatre, and Physical Education as part of their academic curriculum. Performance and engagement in class will be assessed daily. If a student is required to be excused from physical activity for any reason, a parent note is required. If a student must remain inactive for more than three days, a doctor's note, including a release date or date for reexamination is needed. Once a doctor's note has been provided, a parent note will not release a child from the doctor's documentation. Students unable to participate will be expected to actively watch class and alternative assignments may be provided.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Teachers and parents are encouraged to stay in frequent contact regarding the student's progress. This can be accomplished through emails, phone calls, and face-to-face or online conferences. Parents may email teachers to make an appointment for a conference during the teacher's designated planning time during the school day.

The teacher must document and communicate with a parent/guardian immediately when a student's behavior becomes disruptive in the classroom and/or when a student's academic performance is below passing.

### **K-2nd Grade Promotion**

A student's promotion from kindergarten, first grade and second grade is based on attendance, social/emotional readiness, and academic performance, which includes: the skills based report card, early childhood literacy assessments, formative and summative classroom assessments, Rtl Committee

recommendations, and teacher observations. The decision to retain a student will be made collaboratively by the teacher, principal, and parents.

### **3rd-5th Grade Promotion**

Students shall be promoted from third, fourth, and fifth grades based on academic performance and attendance. Parents should refer to the Attendance section of the handbook for minimum attendance standards for promotion. At a minimum, students must pass English Language Arts/Reading and Math both semesters of the academic year. However, if a student earns less than 70% in one semester, but the average of both semesters is above 70%, both semesters may be considered passing.

## **Additional Education Services**

Texas School of the Arts is committed to providing a quality education for all students. Additional services may be provided for students with documented needs. All special services programs are detailed in the Texas School of the Arts Special Services Handbook. Each program follows the policies required by the Texas Education Agency, and therefore, some sections of the Special Services Handbook are directly quoted from the TEA website.

## **Options for Acquiring Outside Credits**

Options for receiving credit outside of Texas School of the Arts due to failure or for acceleration vary by class type. To ensure credit may be granted, parents should discuss all future plans with the TeSA Principal before enrolling in a program. TeSA is not financially responsible for assisting students in taking outside classes.

### **English, Math, Science, Social Studies**

To obtain elementary school level credit, students can take a Credit by Exams or courses through an accredited Texas Education Agency approved program. Students must take the test or complete the course for both semesters with an average grade of 80 or above.

### **Art, Dance, Music, Theatre**

Credit will not be granted for any Fine Arts class taken outside of TeSA. No other elective credits will be granted.

### **Physical Education**

All elementary school students must complete Physical Education classes each year. TeSA will not accept participation in outside activities or TeSA Dance classes for PE credit.

## **Accelerating Grade Level**

A request to accelerate a grade will only be approved if there is an available spot for the student in the student's desired grade level. Parents/guardians must notify TeSA of their intention to accelerate a grade no later than the last day of the first semester and must submit all required test scores no later than the last day of the academic school year.

## **Credit Recovery**

A request to complete Credit by Exam to recover credit due to absences or failures must follow the guidelines set by the Attendance Committee or Grade Placement Committee.

## **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty at Texas School of the Arts means demonstrating and upholding the highest integrity and honesty in all academic work. Students are expected to use their own thoughts, ideas, and beliefs to complete assignments or assessments in every grade/subject area. Student work must be authentic, meaning that the student's original ideas and understandings must be presented if applicable. Whenever the ideas of an additional source are included, that source must always be accurately and appropriately cited as is grade-level appropriate.

Students at Texas School of the Arts can display academic honesty by:

- Accurately citing sources when presenting/submitting assignments
- Submitting original and independent work
- Producing his/her own work where applicable
- Using technology as a tool and a resource to craft one's thoughts and ideas

## **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes the use of ideas, thoughts, and works or resources and presenting them as one's own without giving the primary source notable credit. Plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication are examples of academic dishonesty.

**Cheating** involves unauthorized use of information, materials, devices, sources, or practices in completing academic activities. Cheating may include, but is not limited to:

- Using a classmate's work as one's own
- Attempting to or stealing teacher materials
- Looking on a classmate's paper (assignments, tests, or homework)
- Using technology to search for solutions to a test/task
- Copying someone else's work, answer for answer or allowing someone to copy
- Allowing someone else to complete assigned work ( friends, family, tutor, etc.)
- Interacting with other students during an independent assignment or exam.



**Plagiarism** is a form of cheating in which an individual adopts another person's ideas, words, design, art, music, etc., as his or her own without acknowledging the source, or, when necessary, obtaining permission from the author. Plagiarism may include, but is not limited to:

- Copying and pasting material from a website into one's own document without proper citations
- Submitting assignments, or pieces of work, that are not one's own (art pieces, music samples, etc.)
- Excluding quotation marks, author's name, and document information when directly quoting a source
- Not giving credit for the thoughts, ideas, and/or work of others
- Excluding a bibliography or works cited page

**Fabrication** involves the intentional use of invented information or falsification of information and academic resources with the intent to deceive. Fabrication may include, but is not limited to:

- Creating false crisis' to receive immunity or special exemption
- Citing information from false sources
- Submitting assignments with false data and/or evidence
- Making claims of submitting assignments that have not been completed or turned in

### **ChatGPT/Artificial Intelligence**

Generative AI systems are under a broad category of machine learning that can produce various types of content including images, text, and audio. AI has been around since the 1960s but has recently become popular due to easier to use models, such as ChatGPT. AI is a powerful tool that can enhance learning and research, but also poses ethical and academic challenges.

It is the responsibility of all students to ensure they are complying with district and campus policies regarding academic integrity, including but not limited to plagiarism.

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty when using AI in your assignments, projects, and exams. Students who use ChatGPT and similar tools on assignments without permission, or who use them in improper ways, are violating the academic integrity rules of Texas School of the Arts.

The following policy outlines the principles and rules that govern the use of AI in academic work:

- Acknowledge and cite any AI sources or tools that you use in your work, such as websites, apps, software, or online services.
- Indicate the extent and purpose of your use of AI, such as generating, editing, summarizing, translating, or analyzing data or text.
- Do not use AI to plagiarize, which means to copy or use someone else's words, ideas, data, or work without giving proper credit or permission.
- Do not use AI to fabricate, falsify, or misrepresent any data or text that you submit as your own work.
- Do not use AI to bypass or undermine any academic requirements or assessments, such as by generating answers, solutions, or essays that you do not understand or have not learned.
- Do not use AI to harm others or violate their privacy, such as by creating or spreading false or malicious information, impersonating others, or accessing unauthorized data or systems.

- Respect the intellectual property rights of others when using AI, such as by obtaining permission, paying fees, or following licenses when using copyrighted or proprietary data or software.
- Follow any additional guidelines or instructions provided by your campus administrators and teachers.

### **ChatGPT/Artificial Intelligence Compliance**

Violations of this policy will be considered as academic misconduct and subject to disciplinary action, such as a grade penalty or course failure. An honor council comprised of staff and students will review instances where students are accused of academic dishonesty due to the improper use of AI. The District reserves the right to use AI tools to detect and prevent any violations of this policy. Questions or concerns about this policy or the use of AI in academic work should be directed to campus administration.

### **Role of Administrators, Teachers, and Parents**

Administrators, teachers, and parents/guardians can all play a part in helping students maintain academic honesty. At Texas School of the Arts, teachers and administrators will help students by promoting academic honesty and providing students with clear directions and requirements as grade-level appropriate. Parents can provide support and promote Texas School of the Arts’ policy with their children by monitoring their assignments and encouraging honesty in all matters.

## **State Assessment and Required Screenings**

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

STAAR is the state's testing program and is based on state curriculum standards in core subjects including reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. STAAR tests are designed to measure what students are learning in each grade and whether or not they are ready for the next grade. The goal is to ensure that all students receive what they need to be academically successful. Students in 3rd-5th grade are required to take the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, or STAAR® in the spring for the grades and subjects listed below.

- Grades 3–5 Mathematics
- Grades 3–5 Reading
- Grades 5 Science

Every student who takes the STAAR test receives a STAAR Report Card that helps parents see where their child is doing well and where he or she may need extra help.

### **HB1416**

Texas law requires all students who do not achieve approaches or higher on STAAR grades 3 through 8 or EOC assessments be provided accelerated instruction. These requirements, modified by House Bill 4545 of the 87<sup>th</sup> legislature and recently updated with the passage of House Bill 1416 in the 88<sup>th</sup> legislature, provide that qualifying students must be:

- Assigned a Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) designated teacher for the subsequent school year in the applicable subject area;

OR

- Provided supplemental instruction aligned with the research on high impact tutoring in the TEKS for the applicable grade levels and subject area in the following manner:

- 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;
- Provided in a group of no more than four students, unless the parent or guardian of each student in the group authorizes a larger group;
- Designed to assist the student in achieving satisfactory performance in the applicable grade level and subject area and includes effective instructional materials designed for supplemental instruction;
- Provided by a person with training in the applicable instructional materials for the supplemental instruction and provided by one person for the entirety of their accelerated instruction.

Texas School of the Arts will provide the required accelerated instruction for each designated student during the school day in small groups of no more than 6 students unless parents request a smaller group in writing. Additional after-school instruction and/or summer sessions may also be provided.

### **Texas English Language Proficiency System (TELPAS)**

TELPAS is an assessment program for students in Texas public schools who are learning the English language. TeSA must annually assess the English language proficiency of students who have been identified as English learners (ELs) in four language domains—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. TELPAS evaluates the progress that each EL makes in becoming proficient in the use of academic English.

Students in grades K-12 that have been identified as an EL are required to take TELPAS. This includes ELs whose parents have declined English as a Second Language (ESL) program services. They will stop participating in TELPAS when their language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) determines that they are proficient in the English language and have met exit criteria. This applies to all ELs, even those who are not in an ESL program. Once a student has met the state’s exit criteria, they will no longer be identified as an EL and will not have to participate in TELPAS.

### **K-2nd Reading Proficiency Assessments**

All districts are required to collect data regarding student reading proficiency using a TEA-approved tool. TeSA Kindergarten students will be assessed through Texas Kindergarten Entry Assessment (TX-KEA), and in 1st and 2nd, students will be assessed through the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI). TeSA will schedule three early childhood assessment windows for testing in the beginning, middle, and end of the academic year and all data will be used to plan instruction and interventions.

### **Dyslexia Screening**

A reading diagnostic assessment or screening is required for all K-2nd grade students each year. Parents are notified if their child is determined to be at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties based on the results of this screening.

## **Pledges of Allegiance & Moment of Silence**

State law requires a moment of silence following the pledges. Students may pray, meditate, or complete any other silent and still activity during this time. The state also requires a minute of silence each year in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11th, 2001.

## **Films in the Classroom**

To be shown during class time, commercial films must be rated G unless they have been reviewed and pre-approved by the Campus Principal.

All video footage borrowed, streamed, rented or owned shall be used in the schools for education purposes only. All media shall be appropriately licensed for display in an instructional setting and shall not be shown to a class for entertainment purposes. The fair use exemption permits limited use of copyrighted materials in classroom situations. That exemption does not permit free use of copyrighted materials for extracurricular activities such as after-school programs. Video performances for reward or entertainment purposes require the purchase of a performance license from suppliers such as Movie Licensing USA. The performance shall be presented by instructors or students, occur in the course of face-to-face teaching activities, and take place in a classroom or similar place for instruction. It is required that teachers document each video performance in their lesson plans to indicate the correlation between the video and the current lesson in the prescribed curriculum.

The subject of the video must align to a topic addressed in that grade level curriculum, and the topic is being taught during the time period of the video performance. Movie segments must be utilized in accordance with guidelines as specified in District administrative procedures. Movies rated "R" or "X" are strictly prohibited.

## **Exemption from Classroom Activity**

Parents who have a religious objection to a classroom activity may request that their child be removed from the classroom while that activity is conducted. Parents may also object to their child's participation when they feel that a class activity is controversial in nature for any reason. The TeSA Administration shall listen to the parent's concern and attempt to reach an agreement regarding the child's participation in the class activity that is being questioned.

## Field Trips

Field trips should supplement and enrich classroom instruction by providing learning experiences in an environment outside the school, arouse new interests among students, help students relate school experiences to the reality of the world outside of school, bring the resources of the community within the students' learning experience, and afford students the opportunity to study real things and real processes in their actual environment.

All field trips must be approved by the Principal. Grade level teams are encouraged to propose field trips as they relate to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Teachers are responsible for planning field trips but may elicit parent help. Field trips are considered a privilege. Students who do not follow the Student Code of Conduct may be denied this privilege. Students are subject to all school rules when on a field trip and are subject to disciplinary measures.

### On the Bus

- Students must be seated and facing forward.
- Students must speak in a low volume.
- Students must stop talking when the bus stops (including stop lights).
- Students must keep their hands and feet to themselves.
- Students must comply with the student code of conduct at all times.

### Inside Buildings

- Students must quietly enter the building.
- If in a seated area, students must sit down with feet in front.
- Students must stay where directed until told to move to another area.
- Students must be quiet and attentive during performances, with clapping and reactions as appropriate.
- Students must comply with the student code of conduct at all times.

### Outside exhibits

- Students must stay with the group at all times.
- Students must always walk—no running.
- Students must not touch exhibits unless given permission by an adult.
- Students should use a regular voice level—no shouting.
- Students must comply with the student code of conduct at all times.

### Transportation

All TeSA students may be transported in passenger vans or buses for field trips. According to Texas state law, with the exception of buses, all children ages eight years and younger are required to ride in a booster seat while in a passenger vehicle. The only exception to this law is if the child is 4'9" or taller. Because of this safety issue, every student in second grade and under will be required to use a booster seat while riding in the vans for field trips. If a child does not have a booster seat on the day of the field trip they will not be able to attend.

# Health Clinic

## Nurse/Health Clinic

Texas School of the Arts employs one full-time nurse to care for the students and staff and oversee the Health Clinic. The Health Clinic is equipped to treat minor injuries, perform mandatory state and federal health screenings, and serve as a semi-private space for students who become ill during the school day.

## Administration of Medication

The School allows administration of prescription medication and over-the-counter medication. In order for the school to administer any medication, the medication must be in its original container, properly labeled, with dosage instructions.

- Prescribed medicines must be labeled with the student's name, dosage, physician's name, pharmacy, and date filled.
- Prescription medicines can only be given if the TeSA Medication Form is signed by a doctor.
- Over-the-counter medications may be distributed with parent's written permission.
- Students are not permitted to carry any prescription or over-the-counter medications at School or at
- School-related activities unless permission is obtained from the Principal.
- Parents may request that their student be allowed to carry inhalant medication(s) by completing a written request.
- The School will not administer prescription medication obtained outside the United States.
- The School shall not administer vitamins, herbal remedies (such as herbal teas) or other home remedies to any student.

## Administration an Opioid Antagonist for Emergency Use

The campus nurse is authorized and trained to administer an opioid antagonist to a student who is reasonably believed to be experiencing anaphylaxis on campus; and at an off-campus school event or while in transit to or from a school event. Parents and/or guardians will be contacted prior to administering for parent/guardian consent.

## Communicable Disease

State law prohibits all public schools from allowing children with certain communicable diseases to attend school. Communicable diseases are those that may be passed directly or indirectly from one person to another. Common communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, vomiting and/or diarrhea, fever 100 or above, strep throat, ringworm of the scalp, unknown rashes, pink eye, scabies, hepatitis, impetigo, hepatitis, mononucleosis, measles (initial outbreak), chickenpox (initial outbreak) and whooping cough.

Students with symptoms should not attend school. Students who develop symptoms during the school day will be evaluated by the nurse. If requested to leave campus due to possible contagious symptoms, it is the parent's responsibility to pick up the student as quickly as possible.

The student should be symptom free for twenty-four (24) hours before returning to school.

A student may be readmitted to School when one of the following occurs:

- The School receives a medical clearance from the student's physician in writing;
- The School receives a readmission permit from the local Health District; or
- The guidelines published by the Texas Commissioner of Health show that the communicable disease in question (e.g., chickenpox) is no longer considered contagious.

Refer to the Texas Center for Arts & Academics website for the most up-to-date COVID-19 Health and Safety policies and procedures.

### **Lice**

A head check may be performed by the school nurse or appropriate school official as needed.

In compliance with state law, a student with live lice shall be sent home from school. Prior to returning to school, the child's condition must be treated with medicated shampoo or lotion. Upon returning, parents should provide the dates of onset and treatment to the nurse.

### **Immunization Policies**

In compliance with state law, each student shall be fully immunized against the following diseases:

- Diphtheria/ Tetanus
- Rubella/Measles/Mumps
- Varicella (or documentation of having chicken pox disease)
- Poliomyelitis
- Meningitis \* for students on or after 11<sup>th</sup> birthday
- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis A

Each student shall be required to provide proof of immunization upon enrollment and then provide updated copies each year. The school shall recognize the following exceptions to the immunization requirement:

- Student's parent/guardian has submitted to the School a signed affidavit stating that the immunizations conflict with the tenants and practice of a recognized church or religion of which the student is a member except that this exception does not apply in time of epidemic or emergency as declared by the Commissioner of public health.
- Student submits an affidavit signed by a licensed physician stating that, in the physician's opinion, the immunization(s) would be injurious to the health of the student or the student's family or household.

Persons who knowingly falsify student health information when enrolling are in violation of the law and are subject to prosecution.

Students may be provisionally admitted to the School if the student has begun the required immunizations and continues to receive the necessary immunizations as soon as is medically possible.

The School shall keep an individual immunization record for each student during the term of attendance at the School. These records shall be kept in compliance with all laws and regulations governing inspection of such records. These records may be transferred to other schools with or without parental or student consent as required by law.

### **Vision and Hearing Screening**

The School shall cooperate with the State Board of Health to provide screening for students in designated grade levels to detect vision and hearing disorders and any other special senses or communication disorders specified by the Board of Health. The Campus Nurse shall insure that each student receives the appropriate screening within the time period established by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

A parent or guardian may substitute one or more evaluations performed by an outside professional chosen by the parent for the required screenings. The School shall not reimburse the parent for private or outside evaluations obtained in these areas.

A student may be exempted from the screenings if the screening procedure conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religion of which the student is a member. The School Nurse must receive an affidavit signed by the student, or student's parent or guardian if a minor, on or before the day of admission, stating the objection to the screening.

The School Nurse shall maintain records of the screenings on forms provided by the Texas Department of State Health Services. Such records shall be available for inspection by the State and/or local health departments.

### **Abnormal Spinal Curvature Screening**

The School shall comply with State law and regulations promulgated by the State Department of Health and shall conduct or otherwise arrange a program for mandatory spinal screening for abnormal spinal curvature for girl students in 5th grade.

The School may engage a non-health practitioner to conduct the screenings, but the School shall insure that any individual conducting the screenings is properly trained and certified. If any screening indicates a student may have abnormal spinal curvature, the individual conducting the screenings, shall fill out the report form prescribed by the Department of Health. A copy of any such report shall be mailed to the student's parent or guardian, and a copy shall be kept with the School Nurse.

A parent or guardian may substitute one or more evaluations performed by an outside professional chosen by the parent for the required screenings. The School shall not reimburse the parent for private or outside evaluations obtained in these areas.

A student may be exempted from the screenings if the screening procedure conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religion of which the student is a member. The School Nurse



must receive an affidavit signed by the student, or student's parent or guardian if a minor, on or before the day of admission, stating the objection to the screening.

### **Bacterial Meningitis**

State law specifically requires the school to provide the following information:

- 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 most common and the least serious. Bacterial meningitis is the most common form of serious bacterial infection with the potential for serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease, but requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

- 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 1 year old) and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pains, and drowsiness or confusion. 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. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing, sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes). 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?

Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss. While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include when there is a disease outbreak in a community or for people traveling to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. Also, a vaccine is recommended by some groups for college students, particularly freshmen living in dorms or residence halls. The vaccine is safe and effective (85–90 percent). It can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven (7) to ten (10) days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five years.

- 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 Web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>.

## Campus Breakfast & Lunch Program

The TeSA breakfast and lunch program requires prepayment on all meals. All payments may be made online through the designated system or with cash/check. Parents will be charged a transaction fee per online transaction. Once an account is established, parents will be notified by email when their student has reached a low balance. Parents may contact the Kitchen Manager directly regarding negative balance plans.

Instead of purchasing at school, students may bring their lunch and beverage. All food brought to school must be ready to eat. A microwave or fridge is not available to students. Students should also bring their own napkins and utensils. No glass containers are allowed.

### Pricing

The price of breakfast and lunch will be listed on the monthly menu. Due to possible increases in the cost of food, specific ingredients and/or supplies, and transportation/delivery, TeSA reserves the right to increase the cost of meals if needed.

### Additional Considerations

- Adult meals cannot be purchased with student accounts.
- A student is not allowed to purchase items for another student.
- A lunch tray is a set price; students are not required to take the milk.
- Additional items, such as cookies or extra helpings of entrée items, may be available for an additional fee.
- Parents/Guardians will only receive a low account balance email alert if they have set up online payments.
- Students with a negative balance are not allowed to purchase additional items, such as cookies.
- If parents/guardians prefer their child NOT purchase additional items, they must email or send a signed note with specific instructions.
- All concerns regarding the nutrition program should be addressed to the Kitchen Manager.

### Celebration Treats

Treats and small prizes are allowed for celebrations at school. Due to potential allergens, non-food items are highly recommended. If food items are brought to campus, the following guidelines must be met:

- It is the donor's responsibility to discuss any classroom allergies with the teacher before

bringing any food items to school, and to make sure there is something for every child.

- Due to the risk of allergic reactions due to ingredients or cross contamination, no homemade items will be accepted.
- Celebration Treats must be wrapped, store bought items, and accompanied by a nutritional label.
- Treats will be distributed by the teacher or designated volunteer at the teacher's discretion in the homeroom classroom.

Parents/Guardians of students with food allergies/sensitivities may bring a box of wrapped treats at the beginning of the school year so that when there are special treat days, the approved treat is already provided.

### **Water Bottles**

Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school daily. All water bottles must be spill proof. Bottles with open spouts or straws are not allowed. Water bottles should be able to fit in the student's backpack. It is the student's responsibility to carry the water bottle to and ensure it is always closed tightly.

## **Wellness Policy**

The Texas School of the Arts shall support the general wellness of all students by implementing measurable goals to promote sound nutrition, student health, and to reduce childhood obesity.

The local School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), on behalf of the school board, shall review and consider evidence-based strategies, techniques, and shall develop nutrition guidelines for wellness goals as required by law. In the development, implementation, and review of these guidelines, and goals, the SHAC shall permit participation by parents, students, representatives of the school's food service management, physical education teachers, school health professionals, and school administrators.

### **Wellness Plan**

The SHAC develops a wellness plan to implement the school's nutrition guidelines and wellness goals. The wellness plan shall, at a minimum, address:

1. strategies for soliciting involvement by and input from persons interested in the wellness plan and policy;
2. objectives, benchmarks, and activities for implementing the wellness goals;
3. methods for measuring implementation of the wellness goals; and
4. the manner of communicating to the public applicable information about the school's wellness policy and plan.

### **Nutrition Guidelines**

The school's nutrition guidelines for all other foods and beverages sold/made available or marketed to students during the school day shall be designed to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity. The guidelines shall be at least as restrictive as federal regulations and guidance, except when the school allows an exemption for fundraising activities as authorized by state and federal rules.

### **Wellness Goals: Nutrition Promotion & Education**

The school shall implement, in accordance with law, a coordinated school health program with a nutrition education component. The school's nutrition promotion activities shall encourage participation in the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, and any other supplemental food and nutrition programs offered by the school.

The school establishes the following goals for nutrition promotion:

1. the School's food service staff, teachers, and other school personnel shall consistently promote healthy nutrition messages in cafeterias, classrooms, and other appropriate settings;
2. the School shall share educational nutrition information with families and the general public to promote healthy nutrition choices and positively influence the health of students; and
3. the School shall ensure that food and beverage advertisements accessible to students during the school day contain only products that meet the federal guidelines for meals and competitive foods.

The school establishes the following goals for nutrition education:

1. the School shall deliver nutrition education that fosters the adoption and maintenance of healthy eating behaviors;
2. the School shall make nutrition education a school-wide priority and shall integrate nutrition education into other areas of the curriculum, as appropriate; and
3. the School shall provide professional development so that teachers and other staff responsible for the nutrition education program are adequately prepared to effectively deliver the program.

### **Wellness Goals: Physical Activity**

The School shall implement, in accordance with law, a coordinated health program with physical education and activity components and shall offer at least the required amount of physical activity for all grades.

The school establishes the following goals for physical activity:

1. The School provides an environment that fosters safe, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate fitness activities for all students, including those who are not participating in physical education classes or competitive sports;
2. The School provides appropriate staff development and encourage teachers to integrate physical activity into the curriculum where appropriate;
3. The School provides appropriate training and other activities available to school employees in order to promote enjoyable, lifelong, physical activity for school employees and students; and
4. The School encourages parents to support their children's participation, to be active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.

### **School-Based Activities**

The school establishes the following goals to create an environment conducive to healthful eating and physical activity and to promote and express a consistent wellness message through other school-based activities:

1. the School allows sufficient time for students to eat meals in cafeteria facilities that are clean, safe, and comfortable;

2. the School promotes wellness for students and their families at suitable school and campus activities; and
3. the School promotes employee wellness activities and involvement at suitable school and campus activities.

### **Outdoor Activities**

As part of the wellness program, all K-5th students will have the opportunity to participate in recess daily. Recess will be held outside when possible. When students are not permitted outside, teachers will designate allowable indoor activities.

The recommended temperature to allow students to participate in outdoor activity for a prolonged time period is 40 degrees Fahrenheit or above, including the wind chill. If campus staff determine a student does not have sufficient warm clothing for outdoor activities, the student may be excused or given an alternative assignment.

Students should not participate in prolonged outdoor activities when the temperature or heat index is greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

Active lawn care, construction, weather alerts/watches, lightning, storms, and Air Quality Index (Ozone Alert Days) will be monitored and determined on a case-by-case basis by the Campus Principal.

### **Implementation**

The Principal shall oversee the implementation of this policy and the development and implementation of the wellness plan and appropriate administrative procedures.

### **Evaluation**

The school shall comply with federal requirements for evaluating this policy and plan, as well as the school's level of compliance. Annually, the SHAC shall assess and prepare a report of the school's progress toward meeting the goals listed in this policy and in the wellness plan, including a summary of the school's major activities and events tied to the wellness program.

## **Personal Belongings**

### **Responsibility**

TeSA is not, at any time, responsible for students' private possessions. Students should mark all personal items, including ALL uniform items. Students who ride bicycles to school should park and secure them in the assigned place immediately upon arrival.

Students shall be responsible for their own personal belongings while at TeSA. Students are discouraged from wearing or bringing expensive items of clothing, jewelry, or watches to campus. TeSA shall NOT be responsible for any personal items that are lost, damaged, or stolen at school or at school-related activities.

School administrators may search a child's backpack, locker, or other personal items brought to school if

there is a reasonable suspicion of a code of conduct violation or in order to investigate a smell that may attract insects or rodents.

### **Lost and Found**

A Lost and Found area will be available for all students. Students are encouraged to look for items immediately before and after school. Parents may check into the office to look through the lost and found area as needed. At the end of each grading period, all uniform items with no name will be donated to the TeSA PTO Resale. All non-uniform items will be donated.

## **Religious Activity**

Students may individually, voluntarily and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt the instructional or other activities of the school.

## **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

Texas Center for Arts + Academics and TeSA prohibit discrimination, including harassment, against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of School policy.

### **Discrimination**

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

### **Prohibited Harassment**

Prohibited harassment of a student is defined as physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the student's race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

- affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

### **Sexual Harassment by an Employee**

Sexual harassment of a student by a School employee includes both welcome and unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- A School employee causes the student to believe that the student must submit to the conduct in order to participate in a school program or activity, or that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the student submits to the conduct; or
- 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, or otherwise adversely affects the student’s educational opportunities; or
  - creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment.

Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and School employees are prohibited. Any sexual relationship between a student and a School employee is always prohibited, even if consensual.

**Sexual Harassment By Others**

Sexual harassment of a student, including harassment committed by another student, includes unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct when the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it:

- Affects a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student’s academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the student’s educational opportunities.

**Retaliation**

The School prohibits retaliation against a student alleged to have experienced discrimination or harassment or another student who, in good faith, makes a report, serves as a witness, or otherwise participates in an investigation.

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a School investigation regarding discrimination or harassment is subject to appropriate discipline.

**Prohibited Conduct**

In this policy, the term “prohibited conduct” includes discrimination, harassment, and retaliation as defined by this policy and/or the Student and Parent Handbook, even if the behavior does not rise to the level of unlawful conduct.

**Reporting Procedures**

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct or believes that another student has experienced prohibited conduct should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, principal, or the appropriate Compliance Coordinator listed in this policy.

Any School employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced prohibited conduct shall immediately notify the appropriate Compliance Coordinator

listed in this policy, and take any other steps required by this policy.

### **Definition of Compliance Coordinators**

For the purposes of this policy, Compliance Coordinators are the Title IX Coordinator, the ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, and the Superintendent.

### **Title IX Coordinator**

Reports of discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment, may be directed to the Title IX coordinator. The School designates the following person to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, as amended. The coordinator may be contacted through the school office.

### **ADA/Section 504 Coordinator**

Reports of discrimination based on disability may be directed to the ADA/Section 504 coordinator. The School designates the following person to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The coordinator may be contacted through the school office.

### **Superintendent**

The Superintendent shall serve as the Compliance Coordinator for purposes of the School's compliance with all other anti discrimination laws.

### **Alternative Reporting Procedures**

A student shall not be required to report prohibited conduct to the person alleged to have committed the conduct. Reports concerning prohibited conduct by the Title IX Coordinator or the ADA/Section 504 Coordinator may be directed to the Superintendent. Reports of prohibited conduct by the Superintendent may be made directly to the Board of Directors (the "Board"). If a report is made directly to the Board, the Board shall designate an appropriate person to conduct an investigation.

### **Timely Reporting**

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

### **Notice to Parents**

The School shall promptly notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct by a School employee, another adult, or another student.

### **Investigation of the Report**

The School may request, but shall not insist upon, a written report. If a report is made orally, the School official receiving the report shall reduce the report to written form. The receiving School official shall



immediately notify the appropriate Compliance Coordinator of the report.

Upon receipt or notice of a report, the designated Compliance Coordinator shall determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by this policy. If so, the Compliance Coordinator shall immediately authorize or undertake an investigation, regardless of whether a criminal or regulatory investigation regarding the same or similar allegations is pending.

If appropriate, the School shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent prohibited conduct during the course of an investigation.

The investigation may be conducted by a Compliance Coordinator or designee, or by a third party designated by the School, such as an attorney. When appropriate, the Superintendent may be involved in or informed of the investigation.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the person making the report, the person against whom the report is filed, and others with knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the allegations. The investigation may also include analysis of other information or documents related to the allegations.

### **Concluding the Investigation**

Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within fifteen (15) school business days from the date of the report. If the investigator determines that additional time is needed to complete a thorough investigation of the complaint and/or issue a report, he or she shall inform the complainant in writing of the necessity to extend the time for investigating or responding and a specific date when the report will be issued. Notwithstanding, the School shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent prohibited conduct during the entire course of the investigation. The Compliance Coordinator or designee shall prepare a written decision on the matter.

### **School Action**

If the results of an investigation indicate that prohibited conduct occurred, the School shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct.

The School may take action based on the results of an investigation, even if the conduct did not rise to the level of prohibited or unlawful conduct.

### **Confidentiality**

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

### **Appeal**

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the grievance process beginning at Level Two. A student or parent shall be informed of his or her right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

### **Records Retention**

Retention of records shall be in accordance with the applicable schedule published by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

### **Access to Policy**

Information regarding this policy shall be distributed annually to School employees and included in the Student and Parent Handbook. Copies of the policy shall be readily available at each campus and the School's administrative offices.

## **Student & Parent Complaints & Grievances**

### **Informal Process**

The Board of Directors encourages students and parents to discuss their concerns and complaints through informal conferences with the appropriate teacher, principal, or other campus administrator. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

A parent or student may request an informal conference with the Principal within five (5) school business days of the time the parent or student knew or should have known of the event(s) giving rise to the complaint. If the parent or student is not satisfied with the results of the informal conference, he or she may submit a written grievance form to the Principal. The grievance form can be obtained from the school's main office.

### **Formal Process**

If an informal conference regarding a complaint fails to reach the outcome requested by the student or parent, the student or parent may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint.

Even after initiating the formal complaint process, students and parents are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. A student or parent whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time.

The process described in this policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or Board policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or "mini-trial" at any level.

### **Freedom from Retaliation**

Neither the Board nor any Texas Center for Arts + Academics (the “Organization”) employee shall unlawfully retaliate against any student or parent for bringing a concern or complaint.

### **Notice to Parents and Students**

The Superintendent or designee may develop more detailed grievance procedures. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that all students and parents are informed of the Organization’s grievance procedures.

### **Complaints**

In this policy, the terms “complaint” and “grievance” shall have the same meaning. This policy shall apply to all student and parent complaints, except as provided below.

### **Exceptions**

This policy shall not apply to:

- Complaints concerning loss of credit on the basis of attendance;
- Complaints concerning expulsion;
- Complaints concerning identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability within the scope of Section 504;
- Complaints concerning identification, evaluation, educational placement, or discipline of a student with a disability within the scope of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;  
or
- Complaints regarding the Free and Reduced Price Meal Program.

### **Filing**

School administrators addressing parent and student complaints are expected to resolve such complaints at the lowest possible level.

Student and/or parent complaints shall be submitted in writing. Copies of documents that support the complaint shall be attached to the complaint form or presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted unless their existence was unknown to the complainant before the Level One conference. A complaint that is incomplete may be dismissed.

For purposes of this policy, “days” shall mean school business days and announcement of a decision in the student’s or parent’s presence shall constitute communication of the decision. If an administrator determines that additional time is needed to complete a thorough investigation of the complaint and/or issue a decision, the administrator shall inform the complainant in writing of the necessity to extend the time for investigating or responding and a specific date by when the decision will be issued.

### **Level One – Principal Review of Complaint**

The student or parent shall request in writing a conference with the Principal or designee within the later of (1) fifteen (15) school days from the time the event(s) causing the complaint were or should have been known, or (2) within fifteen (15) school days after the date a letter is mailed to the parent

or student after completion of the informal grievance process notifying the parent or student of the formal complaint process.

The Principal or designee shall serve as the Level One Grievance Officer, and will schedule a conference with the parent or student within ten (10) school days of receipt of the written complaint to consider the grievance. The Level One Grievance Officer will provide a written response to the complaint within ten (10) days of the meeting.

Note: Level One complaints concerning identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability within the scope of Section 504 shall be filed within thirty (30) calendar days.

### **Level Two –Human Resource Manager Review of Complaint**

If the student or parent is not satisfied with the Level One decision, or if no decision is provided within the time allotted, the student or parent may request in writing a conference with the Human Resource Manager within ten (10) school days of the Level One decision or the response deadline if no decision is made. The appeal must be specific, reference the law or policy alleged to have been violated, or the dissatisfaction raised by the student or parent and requested remedies. Additionally, the student or parent shall submit any evidence supporting the complaint, and the date and results of the conference with the Level One Grievance Officer.

The Human Resource Manager or designee shall serve as the Level Two Grievance Officer, and will schedule a conference with the parent or student within ten days of receipt of the Level Two appeal. The Level Two Grievance Officer shall have ten (10) school days following the conference to issue a decision.

### **Level Three – Superintendent Review of Complaint**

If the student or parent is not satisfied with the Level Two decision, or if no decision is provided within the time allotted, the student or parent may request in writing a conference with the Superintendent within ten (10) school days of the Level Two decision or the response deadline if no decision is made. The appeal must be specific, reference the law or policy alleged to have been violated, or the dissatisfaction raised by the student or parent and requested remedies. Additionally, the student or parent shall submit any evidence supporting the complaint, and the date and results of the conference with the Level Two Grievance Officer.

The Superintendent or designee shall serve as the Level Three Grievance Officer, and will schedule a conference with the parent or student within ten days of receipt of the Level Two appeal. The Level Three Grievance Officer shall have ten (10) school days following the conference to issue a decision.

### **Level Four – Board of Directors Review of Complaint**

If the student or parent is not satisfied with the Level Three decision, or if no timely decision is provided, the student or parent may submit to the Superintendent a written request for a hearing before the Board. The request must be filed within ten (10) days of the Level Three decision or the

response deadline if no decision is made. The appeal request shall be directed to the President of the Board of Directors, and the Superintendent or designee shall deliver the complaint to the Board. The appeal request must include a copy of the written complaint to the Level Three Grievance Officer, with his or her response.

The School shall place the matter on the agenda of a future Board meeting. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the student or parent of the date, time, and place of the meeting.

The Board shall hear the student or parent complaint, and may set a reasonable time limit for presenting the complaint. Only written documentation and issues previously submitted and presented by the student or parent and the Organization will be considered. An audiotape recording of the hearing shall be made.

The Board shall communicate its decision, if any, orally or in writing before or during the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If no decision is made by the end of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, the last decision below shall be upheld. The Board may not delegate its authority to issue a decision, and any decision by the Board is final and may not be appealed.

If the complaint involves concerns or charges regarding a student or School employee, it shall be heard by the Board in closed meeting unless the employee and/or student against whom complaints have been made requests that it be heard in public.

## **Visitors to the School**

Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the school to volunteer or attend performances/events. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher, and only as long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must report to the front office upon arrival and comply with all applicable school policies and procedures. All visitors must sign in and receive a visitor's badge, and check out in the front office before exiting the building.

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

It is preferred not to have non-school aged children in the building during instructional time. However, if they are, they must remain with and under the control of a parent or adult guardian at all times.

Adults coming to eat lunch with a student must be listed on the student's approved lunch and dismissal list. During lunch, they must sit at the designated visitor tables with only their student. Other students are not permitted to join the table unless the visiting adult is also on their approved list.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers are welcomed and appreciated at TeSA. There are many forms of volunteerism. Teachers are allowed to request volunteers but are not required to do so. Some teachers may choose to use volunteers for parties or chaperoning field trips. Some may use volunteers in the classroom.

Volunteers are not allowed in the class during instructional time unless invited by a teacher. If a teacher needs a volunteer, s/he will contact the parents and request assistance.

Volunteers may not gather in the building or at the front desk unless permitted by a school official as part of the volunteers' responsibilities. Each employee has responsibilities that preclude them from being able to socialize with volunteers during work hours.

Background checks are required of volunteers. For the safety of our students and our school community, anyone who fails to submit to or to pass a background check will not be allowed to volunteer and may be restricted in their participation at school activities, as required by law.

## **Volunteer Policy**

### **Purpose**

Volunteers may be used in the Organization to provide assistance in areas of support and enhance teaching and learning, the welfare of students, the schools, the conservatories, and the staff, and other areas of need that support the Organization.

### **Authority**

Volunteers may be used in the Organization to work under the supervision of the principal or designee in whose building they are assigned. All volunteers shall follow all federal and state laws, organization policies, and regulations.

### **Volunteer Application Process**

A volunteer may not perform any volunteer duties until:

- The volunteer has turned in a notarized Volunteer Application.
  - If the form is notarized off site, they will need to scan and email the document to the front office.

- If the form needs to be notarized by the campus, they must present their driver license simultaneously.
- The volunteer has provided to the Organization a driver license or another form of identification containing the person's photograph issued by an entity of the United States government;
- The Organization has obtained from the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) the criminal history record information that relates to the volunteer. The Organization, at the Board's and/or President & Chief Executive Officer's discretion, may obtain additional volunteer criminal history record information from any other law enforcement agency, criminal justice agency, or private consumer reporting agency, including but not limited to national criminal history record information from DPS through the Fingerprint Application Clearinghouse of Texas (FACT Clearinghouse); and
- The volunteer has fully completed the Organization's volunteer application provided by the Organization and such application and criminal history record information has been reviewed by the principal or designee of the Organization to whom the volunteer has been assigned.

### **Applicability**

The application and criminal history record review requirements apply to a volunteer or person who has indicated, in writing, an intention to serve as a volunteer of the Organization. The application and criminal history record review are required to be renewed every school year.

### **Costs**

The Organization may require a volunteer or volunteer applicant to pay any costs related to obtaining criminal history record information.

### **Governing Criteria for Volunteer Clearance Decisions**

Volunteer clearance is contingent upon the application and criminal history record being reviewed and approved by the Organization in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Regarding moral turpitude, an applicant who is a sexual offender or listed in a sex offender registry or database will be denied.
- An applicant who has been charged with, convicted of, or received probation or deferred adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor for the following crimes will be denied:
  - Child abuse;
  - Indecency with a child;
  - Injury to a child
  - Neglect of a child/elderly person/or disabled individual;
  - Molestation;
  - Child pornography;
  - Prostitution of a child; or
  - Sexual or human trafficking.

● If an applicant has been charged with, convicted of, or is currently on probation for a felony criminal offense of the following, the volunteer may be denied:

- Theft;
- Burglary;
- Fraud;
- Alcohol/drug abuse or distribution;
- Criminal trespassing;
- Vandalism;
- Deliberate violence; or
- Any other acts as determined by the Organization as dangerous to staff, students, or Organization property.

**NOTE:** The Organization may, at any time, deny any applicant from volunteering when the volunteer demonstrates behavior that is disruptive to the academic environment or behavior that is dangerous to Organization personnel, students, or property.



**Texas School of the Arts  
STUDENT CODE OF  
CONDUCT**

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## Application of the Code

**Texas School of the Arts** has adopted this Student Code of Conduct (the “Code”) in accordance with Texas Education Code §12.131, in order to clearly communicate standards for expected student conduct, the disciplinary consequences which may be applied to students who violate those standards, and the applicable procedures for the implementation of disciplinary consequences. All students must comply with the Code. Definitions of words and phrases used throughout this Code are provided at the end of the Code.

Parents and students are encouraged to contact campus administration with any questions or concerns regarding the requirements and provisions of the Code. Parents and students are expected to review and be familiar with the provisions of the Code. Lack of knowledge or awareness about any School rules, including this Code, will not excuse violations of the Code. Parents and students will be required to sign a statement acknowledging receipt and understanding of the Code. A copy of this Code is available on the Resources page at [www.artsacademics.org](http://www.artsacademics.org) or at the school office.

The School has the authority to create and enforce rules related to student conduct and behavior while on school property, traveling to or in attendance at a school-sponsored or school-related event or activity, whether on or off campus. The School has the authority to issue disciplinary consequences for certain other student conduct that relates to, affects, or shares a nexus with the School, its students, or its employees regardless of when or where the conduct occurs. The School may also issue discipline based on a student’s use of electronic media, whether on or off campus.

Other School rules, codes, or policies may apply to a student’s misconduct, and may result in multiple disciplinary consequences issued for the same conduct.

If a student who would otherwise be ineligible for admission to the School provides false information on an admissions application or other enrollment document and as a result of the false information is admitted to the School, the student shall be immediately withdrawn from enrollment from the School upon discovery of the falsification. Falsification of information for the purpose of gaining enrollment in a public school is a criminal offense under the Texas Penal Code §37.10. The School may elect to report the falsification to law enforcement or take any other action permitted by law.

## Expectations for Student Conduct

All students are expected to follow the campus rules at all times. Expectations will be taught in each classroom and communicated to parents. Parent cooperation is essential to achieving TeSA’s mission and ensuring that students learn in a safe, secure and positive environment. Parental involvement and cooperation is vital in the discipline process. Parents should understand and follow the Code while on campus or at school-related events, ensure that his or her child understands and seeks to comply with

this Code, and assist the school in counseling students regarding appropriate behavior.

## **Prohibited Conduct**

The following conduct constitutes a violation of the Code. Any student found to have engaged in such conduct shall be subject to one or more disciplinary consequences as identified within the Code.

### **General Student Behavior**

1. Cursing, using offensive language, name calling, ethnic, racial or gender slurs, other derogatory statements, or yelling;
2. Disrespectful behavior towards adults;
3. Failure to follow directives;
4. Disruption of instruction or other school activities or operations;
5. Unexcused or excessive tardiness;
6. False statements or false accusations;
7. Bullying (*including cyberbullying*), teasing, or targeting other students;
8. Inappropriate cell phone or electronic media use;

### **Violation of School Rules and Policies**

9. Failure to comply with the Student Handbook, or other School or campus rules;
10. Leaving the classroom, school building, mandatory school activities or events, or adult supervision without permission;
11. Skipping a class period or other mandatory activity, in whole or in part, without permission;
12. Violation of School or campus policies or rules related to the use of electronic media, including personal or School-owned electronic devices (*e.g.*, cell phones, tablets, game systems, computers, cameras), or the School's network or Internet connection;
13. Truancy or other failure to attend school without excuse;
14. Defacing, destroying or otherwise modifying School property without authorization;
15. Taking photographs or making video or audio recordings of students, employees, or other persons without the consent of the other person;
16. Soliciting or attempting to solicit another student to violate the Code, School policies and rules, or the law;
17. Taking steps toward violation of the Code even if the act is not completed, as determined by an appropriate School administrator;
18. Failing to follow school directives and classroom rules and expectations;
19. Disobeying rules and expectations regarding school transportation;
20. Inappropriate or unauthorized use of School property, including posting or distributing literature or materials without School authorization;
21. Propping open or opening any exterior door for another person

### **Violent, Illegal, and Other Serious Offenses**

22. Possession of prohibited items;
23. Conduct which meets the elements of a criminal offense, as determined by the School;
24. Physical, verbal, or sexual harassment of others;

25. Inappropriate physical or sexual behavior, including jokes, comments, gestures or unwelcome physical conduct or contact;
26. False statements or false accusations;
27. Hazing or initiations;
28. Participation in a gang, or soliciting or attempting to solicit participation in a gang;
29. Possessing, distributing, using or being under the influence of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, or controlled substances, including prescription drugs if the student has not been prescribed the drugs or is taking the drugs in excess of the dosage specified by the prescription;
30. Possessing drug paraphernalia;
31. Stealing, lying, cheating, or copying the work of another without authorization (plagiarism);
32. Deliberately, and without School authorization, accessing, damaging, or altering School data and records, including but not limited to confidential records, electronic data, networks or systems;
33. Violence of any kind, including dating violence;
34. Fighting;
35. Gambling;
36. Setting or attempting to set a fire;
37. Inappropriate or indecent exposure of body parts;
38. Retaliation of any form against other students or School personnel;
39. Conduct which requires the student's registration as a sex offender;
40. Possession or distribution of pictures, text messages, electronic messages or other material of a sexual or obscene nature;
41. Endangering the health or safety of others; or
42. Other conduct as identified within this Code.

## Bullying & Cyber-Bullying

### Texas Education Code (TEC), §37.0832

- ensure and appropriately integrate into instruction research-based content designed to reduce bullying for students in that age group, which are:
  - for students in early primary:
    - explicit direct instruction designed so students can recognize bullying, including cyberbullying, behaviors, and how to report them;
    - age-appropriate classroom culture-building discussions that encourage peers to intervene when they observe bullying occur; and explicit direct instruction that characterizes bullying as a behavior that results from the student's need to acquire more mature social or coping skills, not an immutable trait;
  - for students in secondary:
    - explicit direct instruction on the brain's neuroplasticity so the student recognizes bullying, including cyberbullying, the behavior can come from a developmental need to acquire more social skills, can change when the brain matures and learns better ways of coping, and is not an immutable trait; and

- classroom-culture or school-culture-building discussions that portray bullying as undesirable behavior and means for attaining or maintaining social status in school, and to dissuade students from using bullying as a tool for reputation management;
  - explicit direct instruction is designed so students recognize the role reporting plays in promoting a safe school community
- define how positive school culture and building healthy relationships between students and staff will be measured in alignment with the school and LEA’s mission, vision, and values, using an age-appropriate survey that includes relevant questions on bullying, including cyberbullying, that includes appropriate privacy controls in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g), and define who is responsible to develop and oversee the implementation of action plans based on the results that address student concerns regarding bullying, including cyberbullying;
- require each LEA campus to establish a committee, which must include parents and secondary level students and may be incorporated into an existing committee that otherwise meets the requirements of these minimum standards, to address bullying by focusing on prevention efforts and health and wellness initiatives;
- develop a policy for the reporting of bullying, including cyberbullying, incidents:
  - the policy must outline an easy mechanism(s) for reporting bullying, including cyberbullying, incidents both anonymously and identifiable by students and staff to an appropriate campus staff member(s)
  - the policy should recognize that, while one or more staff members may be designated, students are encouraged to report incidents of bullying to any trusted staff member, and that any staff member aware of such incidents must relay any reports to the appropriate designated staff member(s); and
  - the policy should provide for a tracking mechanism to allow for LEA-level staff to periodically monitor the reported counts of bullying incidents, and that declines in the count of bullying incidents may represent not only improvements in the campus culture because bullying declines but also declines in the campus culture because of a decline in openness to report incidents;
- provide support for research-based interventions taken both for the students who engage in bullying behaviors and the students who were targeted by the bullying behaviors;
- include a rubric or checklist to assess an incident of bullying and to determine the LEA’s response to the incident.
- in connection with the policy in subsection 4 and the rubric/checklist in subsection 6 any actions taken in response to bullying, including cyberbullying, must comply with state and federal law regarding students with disabilities.

### **Bullying Definition**

Bullying is a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct directed at another student that (1) occurs on or is delivered to School property or to the site of a School-sponsored or

School-related activity on or off School property; (2) occurs on a publicly or privately owned School bus or vehicle being used for transportation of students to or from the School or a School-sponsored or School-related activity; and

- exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator(s) and the student victim(s);
- has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or
- is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;
- materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school;
- infringes on the rights of the victim at school; and
- includes cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullying means bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including cellular telephone, a computer, a camera, e-mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

Cyber-bullying includes conduct that occurs off School property or outside of a School-sponsored or School-related activity if it interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, the School, or School-sponsored or School-related activity.

### **Reporting Procedures**

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or cyberbullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to the Campus Principal, a teacher, counselor, or other School employee. A report may be made orally or in writing. Any School employee who receives a report of potential bullying or cyberbullying must immediately relay the report to the Campus Principal.

### **Investigation of Report**

The Principal or Principal designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited harassment, and if so, proceed to conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report, and shall take prompt interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the School shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The School may take action based on the results of an investigation, even if the School concludes that the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying as defined above.

## **Confidentiality**

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

## **Determining Appropriate Discipline**

Depending on the nature and severity of the offense, disciplinary measures may be issued by the student's classroom teacher, campus administrator, or administrator's designee, in accordance with this Code. In order to make a determination of misconduct and/or issue disciplinary consequences under this Code, the authorized School employee must have a reasonable belief that the student engaged in the suspected conduct. The employee's conclusion may be based on any relevant evidence including, but not limited to, observation, other personal knowledge, verbal or written witness statements, other forms of documentation, or information received from law enforcement.

In response to certain behaviors and incidents, the school may choose to address student behavior through Restorative Practices / Restorative Discipline.

In reaching a decision regarding a student discipline matter, the School may consider the specific facts and circumstances of the situation, including but not limited to:

- the student's intent;
- the student's age and grade level;
- the student's past disciplinary history;
- whether the student's conduct may have been the manifestation of a disability;
- the extent of the student's cooperation during the investigation of the matter;
- the nature and severity of the alleged conduct;
- whether the student has previously engaged in similar conduct;
- whether self-defense was involved;
- the student's remorsefulness for the conduct;
- the severity of the effect or harm of the conduct on other persons or property; and/or
- the frequency of the conduct.

The School may issue disciplinary measures based on a determination that a student has engaged in conduct which meets the elements of a criminal offense. The School has the authority to make such a determination without regard for whether the student is arrested, charged, or otherwise processed by the criminal justice system for the criminal offense. The School may consider information received from law enforcement or other entities within the criminal justice system in issuing discipline under this Code.

Actions will not be based on a student's race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sex, religion, disability, or any other unlawful consideration.

## **Investigation of Discipline Issues**

In order to determine whether a violation of the Code has occurred, campus administrators or other authorized individuals may conduct an investigation. An investigation of student misconduct may involve, but is not limited to, interviews of other students, employees, and adults; review of school surveillance footage; review of relevant documents; review of information on School-owned computers; verification of tips received from other individuals; the gathering of physical evidence; or contact of or cooperation with law enforcement agencies and officials. Law enforcement may be contacted and informed of student conduct which may constitute a criminal offense.

Students should have no expectation of privacy with respect to School-owned property. Lockers, desks, and other items provided for student use remain School property, and students do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy in School property or in personal items placed inside School property. School administrators or other authorized personnel may monitor and search student desks and lockers for any reason. School officials may search any School property, including School property that is within a student's possession or otherwise being used by a student, at any time, with or without notice to the student and without consent. School officials may confiscate any items found during a search, including prohibited items, dangerous items, or other items that violate School policy.

A student's person or property may be searched by authorized school officials if the official has a reasonable belief that the search will result in the discovery of evidence of a violation of the Code or of the law. Any personal property which is brought onto school property or to a school-sponsored or school-related activity or event, on or off school property, may be subject to search (*e.g.*, student cell phone, backpack, personal computer, purse, car, etc.).

## **Discipline of Students with Special Needs**

Students eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) are subject to discipline under those laws and in accordance with the provisions of this Code.

The School may take disciplinary action pertaining to the use or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol against any student with a disability under Section 504 who is currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs or in the use of alcohol to the same extent that the School would take disciplinary action against nondisabled students. The due process procedures afforded under Section 504 do not apply to disciplinary action for the use or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol. However, a student who is eligible for special education under the IDEA shall have a manifestation determination review conducted to address any use or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol if such conduct could result in a change of placement.



Any disciplinary action that would constitute a “change in the placement” of a student receiving special education services may be taken only after the student’s Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee conducts a manifestation determination review in order to determine whether the student’s conduct was a manifestation of his or her disability.

A change in placement occurs if a student is:

- Removed from the student’s current educational placement for more than ten (10) consecutive school days; or
- Subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because:
  - The series of removals total more than ten school days in a school year;
  - The student’s behavior is substantially similar to the student’s behavior in the previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals; and
  - Additional factors exist, such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the student is removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

The School will determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change in placement.

A student who has not been determined eligible for special education services and who has engaged in behavior that violates the Code is entitled to the protections under the IDEA regarding discipline of a student with special needs described above if the school has knowledge that the student was a student with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. If the school does not have knowledge that a student is a student with a disability prior to taking disciplinary action, the student may be subject to the disciplinary actions applied to students without disabilities. If a request is made for an evaluation of a student during the time period in which the student is subjected to disciplinary action, the evaluation shall be conducted in an expedited manner.

## **Types of Disciplinary Measures**

Administrators and staff employ a variety of strategies focusing on teaching and encouraging appropriate behavior. These strategies may include:

- Verbal correction/warning;
- Loss or restriction of privileges;
- Confiscation of items;
- School-related assigned tasks or duties;
- Counseling referral;
- Conference with teacher;
- Parent/Teacher conference;
- Removal from class to campus office;
- Conference with administrator;
- Parent/Administrator conference;
- Silent Lunch Detention (SLD);

- In-School Suspension;
- Out-of-School Suspension;
- Expulsion.

One or more of these disciplinary consequences may be issued to a student found to have violated the Code. If the Code does not specify the appropriate disciplinary consequence for a particular type of student conduct, the School may issue whatever disciplinary consequence is deemed reasonable and appropriate, with the exception of expulsion. A teacher may have additional rules and consequences for student conduct in the classroom which may result in discipline under this Code or may be enforced in addition to any discipline issued under this Code.

If a student withdraws from the School before completing assigned In-School Suspension, Out-of-School Suspension, or Expulsion, the School shall send documentation of the discipline to the next school that enrolls the student. If a student withdraws from the School before the expulsion process is completed, the School may choose to complete the expulsion process and send documentation of the expulsion decision to the next school that enrolls the student. If the student returns to enroll in the School at a later date and has not been required to complete the disciplinary consequences previously required, the School may require the student to complete the discipline upon return.

The Code shall be applied and enforced consistently and equitably among students, with the understanding that every disciplinary situation will differ and decisions will be made based on the individual facts and circumstances of a given situation.

### **Detention**

A student may be assigned to one or more sessions of Detention for engaging in prohibited conduct under this Code. The student's parent or guardian will be notified of the student's conduct and assignment to Detention. Detention will be held outside of the instructional day, either before or after school, during lunch, or during recess.

### **In-School Suspension (ISS)**

A student may be assigned to one or more sessions of In-School Suspension for engaging in prohibited conduct under this Code. The student's parent or guardian will be notified of the student's conduct and assignment of ISS. In-School Suspension will require the student to report to a designated alternative space on campus for all or part of one or more school days. While in In-School Suspension, the student will be provided the appropriate class assignments and will be expected to complete those assignments as if the student were in the regular classroom.

### **Out-Of-School Suspension (OSS)**

A student may be suspended for one or more school days for engaging in prohibited conduct under this Code. The student's parent or guardian will be notified of the student's conduct and the length of the period of Suspension. A student may not be suspended for more than three (3) consecutive

school days. During a period of suspension, the suspended student may not enter onto school property or participate in or attend school-sponsored or school-related events or activities. The student's teachers will provide assignments that the student will be expected to complete during the period of suspension. Student assignments or other class work completed during a period of suspension will be accepted for grading.

## Expulsion

A student may be expelled from the School if he or she is found to have committed any of the acts listed below.

- **Weapons.** The student used, exhibited, or possessed any of the following while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property:
  - A firearm;
  - A location-restricted knife;
  - A club; or
  - A prohibited weapon.
- **Violent Conduct.** The student engaged in conduct that contains the elements of the following offenses within the Texas Penal Code, regardless of location:
  - Aggravated assault, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, arson, murder, capital murder, criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder, indecency with a child, aggravated kidnapping, aggravated robbery, manslaughter, criminally negligent homicide, or continuous sexual abuse of a child or children;
  - Assault against another student, an employee, or a volunteer of the School;
  - Deadly conduct; or
  - A Title 5 felony under the Texas Penal Code.
- **Disruptions.** The student engaged in conduct that contains the elements of the following offenses within the Texas Penal Code, regardless of location:
  - False alarm or report or terroristic threat involving a public school;
  - An offense related to an abusable volatile chemical;
  - Breach of computer security if the conduct involves accessing a computer network, or computer system owned by or operated on behalf of a public school and the student knowingly alters, damages, or deletes school property or information or commits a breach of any other computer, computer network, or computer system;
  - Criminal mischief if the conduct is punishable as a felony; or
  - Public lewdness or indecent exposure.
- **Drugs and Alcohol.** The student engaged in conduct that contains the elements of the following offenses within the Texas Penal Code:
  - On school property, at school-sponsored or school-related event, or within 300 feet of school property:
    - i. Sells, gives, or delivers to another person or possesses, uses, or is under the influence of any amount of marijuana, dangerous drug, or alcoholic beverage.
  - Regardless of location:

- i. Sells, gives, delivers to another person or possesses or uses or is under the influence of marijuana or a dangerous drug, as defined by the Health and Safety Code, if the conduct is punishable as a felony.
  - ii. Sells, gives, or delivers to another person an alcoholic beverage, as defined by the Alcoholic Beverage Code, commits a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol, or possesses, uses, or is under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, and the conduct is punishable as a felony.
- **Bullying and Cyber-bullying** the student, while on or off-campus:
  - Engages in bullying that encourages a student to commit or attempt to commit suicide;
  - Incites violence against a student through group bullying; or
  - Releases or threatens to release intimate visual material of a minor or a student who is 18 years of age or older without the student’s consent.
- **Other.** The student, while on campus or at a school-sponsored or school-related event, on or off campus:
  - Engages in conduct that constitutes a felony;
  - Commits an assault;
  - Commits frequent violations of this Code that cause significant disruption to the School environment or substantial interference with the instructional process.

### **Expulsion Process**

If the school administrator or administrator’s designee determines that the student’s conduct warrants expulsion, the administrator shall provide written notice to the parent/guardian of the proposed Expulsion of the student. The written notice shall also include the reason(s) for the proposed expulsion and the date, time, location, and procedure for the expulsion hearing. The student is entitled to a hearing with the campus administrator or the administrator’s designee during which the student and/or the student’s representative (*e.g.*, parent, guardian, attorney, other) will have the opportunity to review and present evidence and information. The campus administrator may place reasonable restrictions on the conduct of the hearing, including the length of the presentations. At the end of the hearing, the campus administrator may issue a decision immediately or may wait until a later date to communicate a decision. The administrator shall send written communication of the decision to the parent/guardian. If the administrator determines that expulsion is appropriate, the written decision (“Expulsion Order”) shall include the length of the term of expulsion.

The parent, guardian, or adult student may choose to voluntarily waive the right to an expulsion hearing by signing a hearing waiver form provided with the notice of proposed expulsion. If the hearing is waived, the administrator will review the relevant evidence and issue a written decision to the parent as described above.

The School will notify the independent school district in which the student resides of the student’s expulsion within three (3) business days of the Expulsion Order.

### **Terms of Expulsion**

The period of expulsion may be determined by many factors, including the severity of the conduct

and the existence of a continuing risk of harm to other students and employees if the student were allowed to return. An expulsion may be temporary or permanent. A temporary expulsion may range in length from four (4) school days to one (1) calendar year. In considering the length of the student's expulsion, the school will consider, among other factors, the nature of the violation that leads to the expulsion and the circumstances justifying the expulsion. A permanent expulsion allows the School to deny future admission to the student based on consideration of the student's past disciplinary history. In each instance, the Expulsion Order must explain the circumstances which justify the length of the expulsion.

### **Permanent Expulsion**

A student expelled from the School is not eligible for readmission to the school at any time.

### **Temporary Expulsion**

A student expelled from the School is eligible to apply for readmission to the School upon expiration of the expulsion period. However, the student will need to reapply to the School in accordance with the School's admission policies and timelines. A formerly expelled student who applies for readmission to the School during the school year will be added at the end of the waiting list for the grade level sought based on the date the application was received.

During a period of expulsion, the student is prohibited from entering onto any School property and attending any School-sponsored or School-related events. Failure to comply with this prohibition will result in the filing of criminal trespass charges against the student. Except as otherwise required by law, students will not receive educational services or receive course credits during a period of expulsion.

## **Discipline Appeal Process**

With the exception of expulsions, student discipline decisions at the campus level are final and not appealable. A parent, legal guardian, or adult student may appeal an expulsion decision by filing a written appeal with the Director of Admissions within five (5) business days of the date of the Expulsion Order. The Director of Admissions' designee will review the record of the expulsion proceedings at the campus level, along with any other relevant information, and will issue a written decision to the appealing party within ten (10) business days of receiving the request for review.

If the appealing party is not satisfied with the decision of the Director of Admissions' designee, he or she may appeal that decision to the Superintendent by filing a request for review with the Superintendent's office within five (5) business days of the date of the decision. If the appealing party is not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent, he or she may appeal that decision to the Board of Directors by filing a request for review with the Superintendent's office within five (5) business days of the date of the decision. The Superintendent shall notify the Chairman of the Board

and arrange for the Board of Directors to hear the complaints of the appealing party at the next available board meeting. The Superintendent shall notify the appealing party of the location, date, and time of the hearing in front of the Board of Directors. The decision of the governing body is final and may not be appealed. An expulsion action will not be delayed during the appeal process.

## Definitions

The following definitions are provided to further detail and define the terms of this Code. The Board of Directors shall have final authority to interpret or amend any terms or provisions within this Code.

**Abusable volatile chemicals:** Those substances as defined in Texas Health and Safety Code §485.001.

**Alcoholic Beverage:** Those substances as defined in Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code §1.04.

**Assault:** Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury to another.

**Club:** An instrument specially designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with the instrument, including, but not limited to, a blackjack, nightstick, mace, or tomahawk.

**Controlled substance:** Substances as defined in Chapter 481 of the Texas Health & Safety Code or 21 U.S.C. §801 et seq.

**Cyberbullying:** Bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

**Deadly conduct:** Recklessly engaging in conduct that places another in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or knowingly discharging a firearm in the direction of an individual, habitation, building, or vehicle.

**Electronic media:** Refers to all forms, kinds and types of electronic devices, communication systems, networks, software, websites, and any other technology resources including, but not limited to, social media applications, text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing or file sharing websites, cellular telephones, portable electronic devices, or computers.

**False alarm or report:** Knowingly initiating, communicating, or circulating a report of a present, past, or future bombing, fire, offense, or other emergency that is known to be false or baseless and that would ordinarily: (1) cause action by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with

emergencies; (2) place a person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury; or (3) prevent or interrupt the occupation of a building, room, or place of assembly.

**Firearm (federal):** (1) any weapon, including a starter gun that will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (2) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (3) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (4) any destructive device, such as an explosive, incendiary, poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four (4) ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter (1/4) ounce, mine, or device similar to any of the above described devices.

**Firearm (state):** Any device designed, made, or adapted to expel a projectile through a barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance or any device readily convertible to that use.

**Gang:** An organization, combination, or association of persons composed wholly or in part of students that: (1) seeks to perpetuate itself by taking in additional members on the basis of the decision of the membership rather than on the free choice of the individual, or (2) that engages in illegal and/or violent activities. In identifying gangs and associated gang attire, signs, or symbols, the School will consult with law enforcement authorities.

**Harassment:** Threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another, engaging in sexually intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another, subjecting another to physical confinement or restraint, maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another's physical or emotional health or safety, alone or in combination with other conduct prohibited by School policy, rules or the Code.

**Hazing:** Any act, occurring on or off campus, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purposes of pledging, initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization or group. Consent to or acquiescence in the hazing activity does not excuse the student of responsibility for the misconduct.

**Intimate visual material:** Visual material that depicts a person: (1) with the person's intimate parts exposed; or (2) engaged in sexual conduct.

**Location-restricted knife:** A knife with a blade over 5 ½ inches; hand instrument designed to cut or stab another by being thrown; dagger, including but not limited to a dirk, stiletto, and poniard; bowie knife; sword; or spear.

**Paraphernalia:** Any article or device used or intended for use to inject, ingest, inhale, or otherwise introduce marijuana, a controlled substance, or a dangerous drug into the human body, including but not limited to roach clips, rolling papers, needles, baggies with residue, razor blades, bongs and pipes.

**Possession:** Regardless of the student's knowledge or intent to possess the item, to have in or on: (1) a student's person or in the student's personal property, such as the student's clothing, purse, or backpack; (2) in any vehicle used by the student for transportation to or from school or school-related activities, such as an automobile, truck, motorcycle, or bicycle; or (3) any other school property used by the student, such as a locker or desk.

**Prohibited item:** Includes, but is not limited to: (1) alcoholic beverages, marijuana, controlled substances, or dangerous drugs; (2) paraphernalia; (3) prohibited weapons, or live ammunition; (4) any other item prohibited by this Code.

**Prohibited weapons:** Includes the following items: armor-piercing ammunition, chemical dispensing device, explosive weapon, firearm silencer, knuckles, machine gun, short-barrel firearm, switchblade knife, zip gun, or taser gun.

**Retaliation:** Harming or threatening to harm another: (1) because of their service as a School employee or volunteer; (2) to prevent or delay another's service to the School; or (3) because the person intends to report or has reported a crime or violation of this Code, whether formally or informally; (4) because the person will participate or has participated, whether formally or informally, in an investigation in any manner.

**Self-defense:** When the person who is not the aggressor in an encounter uses the minimum force required to remove himself or herself from immediate danger of harm. Actions that escalate or continue the encounter will not be considered self-defense.

**Sexual harassment:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that when it is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it can be said to (1) affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile or offensive educational environment; (2) has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance ; or (3) otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

**Soliciting:** Requesting, commanding, or attempting to induce another student to engage in specific conduct that would constitute a violation of the Code, and with the intent that a violation of the Code be committed.

**Short-barrel firearm:** A rifle with a barrel length of less than 16 inches or a shotgun with a barrel length of less than 18 inches, or any weapon made from a rifle or shotgun if, as altered, it has an overall length of less than 26 inches.

**Switchblade knife:** Any knife with a blade that folds, slides, closes, or retracts into the handle or



sheath and that opens automatically by pressing a button or other device located on the handle or opens or releases a blade from the handle or sheath by the force of gravity or centrifugal force.

**Terroristic threat:** A person commits an offense if he/she threatens to commit an offense involving violence to any person or property with intent to: (1) cause a reaction by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies; (2) place any person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury; (3) prevent or interrupt the occupation or use of a building, room, place of assembly, place to which the public has access, place of employment or occupation, aircraft, automobile, or other form of conveyance, or other public place; (4) cause impairment or interruption of public communications, public transportation, public water, gas, or power supply or other public service; (5) place the public or a substantial group of the public in fear of serious bodily injury; or (6) influence the conduct or activities of a branch or agency of the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision of the state (including the School).

**Title 5 felony offenses:** Offenses against the person that, depending on the circumstances, may include the following offenses under the Penal Code: murder; capital murder, murder, or manslaughter; assault or aggravated assault; kidnapping or aggravated kidnapping; trafficking of persons; sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault; indecency with a child; continuous sexual abuse of a young child or children; injury to a child, an elderly person, or a disabled person; abandoning or endangering a child; invasive visual recording; deadly conduct; terroristic threat; aiding a person to commit suicide; harassment of a public servant; and tampering with a consumer product.

**Under the influence:** When in an employee's professional judgment, the student does not have the normal use of mental or physical faculties likely attributable to the student's use of marijuana, a controlled substance, dangerous drug or alcoholic beverage. Such impairment may be evidenced by the symptoms typically associated with drug or alcohol use or other abnormal or erratic behavior. The student need not be legally intoxicated.

**Use:** With respect to substances, voluntarily injecting, ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise introducing a prohibited substance into the body. With respect to objects or devices, putting into action or service or carrying out an action or purpose with the object or device.

**Zip gun:** A device or combination of devices that was not originally a firearm and is adapted to expel a projectile through a smooth-bore or rifled-bore barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance.