

# Stephenville Independent School District



2009-2010

## Secondary Student/Parent Handbook

### Contact Information

**Stephenville ISD**  
2655 W. Overhill  
Stephenville, TX 76401  
254-968-7990  
Dr. Darrell Floyd, Superintendent

**Stephenville High School**  
2650 W. Overhill  
Stephenville, TX 76401  
254-968-4141  
Mr. Travis Stilwell, Principal

**Henderson Junior High**  
2798 W. Frey  
Stephenville, TX 76401  
254-968-6967  
Mr. Bob Cervetto, Principal

**Gilbert Intermediate**  
950 N. Dale  
Stephenville, TX 76401  
254-968-4664  
Mrs. Kristen Carey, Principal

- Due to SISD's campus grade configuration, all areas of this handbook may/may not be pertinent to your child's particular campus. Should you have any questions about items within this handbook, please feel free to contact your child's campus administrator(s).
- All policies in this handbook may be accessed at [www.sville.us](http://www.sville.us) and in any campus or district office.

# Table of Contents

PREFACE.....	1
SECTION I: REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS.....	2
STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION.....	2
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.....	2
Working Together.....	2
PARENTAL RIGHTS.....	3
Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights.....	3
“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities.....	3
Inspecting Surveys.....	3
Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff.....	3
Reviewing Instructional Materials.....	3
Displaying a Student’s Artwork and Projects.....	4
Accessing Student Records.....	4
Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student.....	4
Granting Permission to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction.....	4
Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom.....	4
Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction.....	4
Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags.....	5
Excusing a Student from Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence.....	5
Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct.....	5
Requesting Transfers for Your Child.....	5
Requesting Classroom Assignment for Multiple Birth Siblings.....	5
OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS.....	6
Parents of Students with Disabilities.....	6
Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education.....	6
Accommodations for Children of Military Families.....	6
Services for Title I Participants.....	6
Student Records.....	7
Directory Information.....	8
Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes.....	8
Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education.....	8
Bacterial Meningitis.....	8
SECTION II: INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS.....	10
ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE.....	10
Compulsory Attendance.....	10
Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance.....	10

Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance .....	10
Attendance for Credit.....	11
Parent’s Note After an Absence.....	11
Doctor’s Note After an Absence for Illness.....	12
Driver License Attendance Verification (Grades 9-12).....	12
As a parent, how can you help our school? .....	12
Some examples of unexcused absences include but not limited to: .....	12
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS .....	12
AWARDS AND HONORS .....	12
SHS Texas Scholars Program (Grades 9-12).....	12
BULLYING .....	13
CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS.....	13
CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE .....	13
CLASS DUES (Grades 9-12) .....	14
CLASS RANK / TOP TEN PERCENT / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT (Grades 9-12) .....	14
CLASS SCHEDULES .....	14
COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES (Grades 9-12).....	15
COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS .....	15
COMPUTER RESOURCES.....	15
CONDUCT .....	16
Applicability of School Rules.....	16
Corporal Punishment .....	16
Disruptions.....	16
Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty/Cheating.....	17
Cell Phones, Radios, CD Players, Other Electronic Devices and Games.....	17
Inappropriate Use of Technology .....	17
Social Events.....	17
Corridors and Halls.....	18
Skates, Skateboards, and Scooters .....	18
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS .....	18
CORRESPONDENCE COURSES (Grades 9-12) .....	18
COUNSELING.....	18
Academic Counseling .....	18
Personal Counseling.....	19
Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment.....	19
CREDIT BY EXAM (Grades 9-12)—If a Student Has Taken the Course .....	19
CREDIT BY EXAM (Grades 9-12)—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course .....	19
DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION .....	20

Dating Violence .....	20
Discrimination.....	20
Harassment.....	20
Sexual Harassment.....	20
Retaliation.....	21
Reporting Procedures.....	21
Investigation of Report .....	21
<b>DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS .....</b>	<b>21</b>
School Materials .....	21
Nonschool Materials...from students .....	21
Nonschool Materials...from others.....	22
<b>DRESS AND GROOMING .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>EXEMPTIONS (Finals) (Grades 9-12) .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Who May Exempt.....	23
Exemption Criteria.....	24
Absences Toward Exemptions.....	24
Exemption Ineligibility .....	24
<b>EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS .....</b>	<b>24</b>
Offices and Elections .....	25
School Trips.....	25
<b>FEES .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>FUND-RAISING .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>GANG-FREE ZONES .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>GRADE CLASSIFICATION (Grades 9-12).....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>GRADING GUIDELINES .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>GRADUATION.....</b>	<b>26</b>
Requirements for a Diploma.....	26
Graduation Programs .....	26
Students with Disabilities (Grades 9-12).....	29
Graduation Expenses (Grades 9-12).....	29
State Scholarships and Grants (Grades 9-12) .....	29
<b>HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS .....</b>	<b>30</b>
School Health Advisory Council .....	30
Physical Fitness Assessment.....	30
Vending Machines .....	30
Other Health-Related Matters .....	30
Tobacco Prohibited.....	30
Asbestos Management Plan .....	30

Pest Management Plan.....	30
HOMELESS STUDENTS.....	30
HOMEWORK.....	31
IMMUNIZATION.....	31
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.....	31
Questioning of Students.....	31
Students Taken Into Custody.....	31
Notification of Law Violations.....	32
MAKEUP WORK.....	32
Routine and In-depth Makeup Work Assignments Because of Absence.....	32
DAEP Makeup Work.....	32
MEDICINE AT SCHOOL.....	32
Psychotropic Drugs.....	33
PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS.....	33
PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE.....	33
PRAYER.....	34
PROMOTION AND RETENTION.....	34
RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL.....	34
REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES.....	34
SAFETY.....	35
Accident Insurance.....	35
Drills: Fire, Storms, and Other Emergencies.....	35
Emergency Medical Treatment and Information.....	35
Emergency School-Closing Information.....	35
SAT, ACT, AND OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS (Grades 9-12).....	36
SCHOOL FACILITIES.....	36
Conduct Before and After School.....	36
Use of Hallways During Class Time.....	36
Cafeteria Services.....	36
Eating On Campus.....	36
Library.....	36
Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups.....	37
SEARCHES.....	37
Students' Desks and Lockers.....	37
Vehicles on Campus (Grades 9-12).....	37
Trained Dogs.....	37
Drug-Testing (Grades 9-12).....	37
SPECIAL PROGRAMS.....	37

STEROIDS .....	38
SUMMER SCHOOL .....	38
TAKS (TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS) .....	38
TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, AND TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT.....	38
TRANSFERS .....	38
TRANSPORTATION.....	39
School-Sponsored Trips.....	39
Buses and Other School Vehicles .....	39
Bus Disciplinary Procedures.....	39
VANDALISM.....	40
VIDEO CAMERAS.....	40
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL .....	40
General Visitors .....	40
Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students.....	40
WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL .....	40
SISD INTERNET ACCESS ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY .....	40

# PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2009–2010! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students.

The Stephenville ISD Secondary Student/Parent Handbook is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. In an effort to make it easier to use, the handbook is divided into two sections:

**Section I**—REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS—with notices that the district must provide to all parents, as well as other information to assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook; and

**Section II**—INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS—organized alphabetically by topic for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

Please be aware that the term “the student’s parent” is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Stephenville ISD *Student Code of Conduct*, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document is available at the principal’s office and online at <http://www.sville.us>.

The Student/Parent Handbook is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the *Student Code of Conduct*. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters or other communications.

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

After reading through the entire handbook with your child, keep it as a reference during this school year. If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact the main office.

**Also, please complete and return to your child’s campus the following required form:**

## 1. Acceptance and Signature Form

### Board Policies

References to board policies, both [LEGAL] and [LOCAL], are included in this handbook in order for students and parents to be able to refer to current board policies. A copy of the district’s board policy manual is available for review on the district’s website – [www.sville.us](http://www.sville.us). To reference a policy, begin by clicking on “Our District”; use the drop-down to click on “Board of Trustees” then click on “Policy” to access local both the legal and local board policies. Any questions should be directed to the campus principal.

## **SECTION I: REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

This section of the Secondary Student/Parent Handbook includes several notices that the district is required to provide to you, as well as other information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

### **STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Stephenville ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following district staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of gender: Dr. Kathy Ray, SISD Assistant Superintendent for Personnel, Instruction, and Administration 968-7990.
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Dr. Kathy Ray
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: Dr. Darrell Floyd, 2655 W. Overhill Dr., Stephenville, Texas, 76401; 254-968-7990.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

#### **Working Together**

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Your involvement in this partnership may include:

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements of the graduation programs with your child, if your child is entering ninth grade.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling and Academic Programs.**]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences.**]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, contact the school office.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, contact the principal.

- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction. [See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and information in this handbook at **School Health Advisory Council**.]
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies at BE and BED for more information.]

## **PARENTAL RIGHTS**

### **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights**

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

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent.
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family.
- Sexual behavior or attitudes.
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship.
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents.
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student’s eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

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

### **“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities**

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

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing or selling that information.
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law. [See policies EF and FFAA.]

### **Inspecting Surveys**

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

### **Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff**

You may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child’s teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

### **Reviewing Instructional Materials**

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

## **Displaying a Student's Artwork and Projects**

The district will seek parental consent before displaying students' artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, and the like on the district's Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication.

## **Accessing Student Records**

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

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,
- Teacher and counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns, and
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.

[See **Student Records.**]

## **Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student**

As a parent, you may grant or deny any written request from the district to make a video or voice recording of your child. State law, however, permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:

- When it is to be used for school safety;
- When it relates to classroom instruction or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity; or
- When it relates to media coverage of the school.

## **Granting Permission to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction**

As a parent, if your child is under the age of 14, you must grant permission for your child to receive instruction in the district's parenting and paternity awareness program or your child will not be allowed to participate in the instruction. This program, developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the Texas State Board of Education, is incorporated into the district's health education classes.

## **Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom**

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

## **Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction**

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) is involved with the selection of course materials for such instruction. State law requires that any instruction related to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome must:

- Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;
- Devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;

- Emphasize that abstinence is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- Direct adolescents to a standard of behavior in which abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; and
- If included in the content of the curriculum, teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates.

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

### **Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags**

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

### **Excusing a Student from Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence**

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

### **Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct**

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

### **Requesting Transfers for Your Child**

As a parent, you have a right:

- To request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the school administration to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the campus administration for information. [See policy FDB.]  
[See **Bullying**, and policy FFI(LOCAL).]
- To request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See policy FDD(LOCAL).]
- To request the transfer of your child to a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. [See policies FDD(LEGAL) and (LOCAL).]

### **Requesting Classroom Assignment for Multiple Birth Siblings**

As a parent, if your children are multiple birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets, etc.) assigned to the same grade and campus, you may request that they be placed either in the same classroom or in separate classrooms.

Your written request must be submitted no later than the 14<sup>th</sup> day after the enrollment of your children. [See FDB(LLEGAL).]

## **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

### **Parents of Students with Disabilities**

Parents of students with learning difficulties or who may need special education services may request an evaluation for special education at any time. For more information, see **Special Programs** and contact your child's school counselor.

### **Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education**

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

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent.

The district must give a copy of the report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent of his or her rights if the parent disagrees with the district. Additionally, the notice must inform the parent how to obtain a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*.

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is your child's school counselor.

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that any other student residing in the household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus. [See policy FDB(LOCAL).]

### **Accommodations for Children of Military Families**

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

- Immunization requirements.
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement.
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.
- Graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent related to leave or deployment activities may be excused by the district.

### **Services for Title I Participants**

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs is Lisa Duran and may be contacted at 968-7990.

## Student Records

Both federal and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights of privacy. Before disclosing any personally identifiable information from a student's records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older OR who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

Virtually all information pertaining to student performance, including grades, test results, and disciplinary records, is considered confidential educational records. Release is restricted to:

- The parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student's education records.  
Federal law requires that, as soon as a student becomes 18, is emancipated by a court, or enrolls in a post-secondary institution, control of the records goes to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes and under limited circumstances when there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals.
- District school officials who have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records. School officials would include trustees and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff; a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or volunteer); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties. "Legitimate educational interest" in a student's records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility; or investigating or evaluating programs.
- Various governmental agencies.
- Individuals granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.

Release to any other person or agency—such as a prospective employer or for a scholarship application—will occur only with parental or student permission as appropriate.

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

Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

A parent or eligible student who provides a written request and pays copying costs of ten cents per page may obtain copies. If circumstances prevent inspection during regular school hours and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the principal. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy. [See FINALITY OF GRADES at

FNG(LEGAL), **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences**, and **Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns** for an overview of the process.]

The district’s policy regarding student records found at FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL) is available from the district’s website at [www.sville.us](http://www.sville.us).

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

**Please note:**

Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with federal law regarding student records. The complaint may be mailed to:

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

**Directory Information**

The law permits the district to designate certain personal information about students as “directory information.” This “directory information” will be released to anyone who follows proper procedures. However, release of a student’s directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of your child’s first day of instruction for this school year. [See the “Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information” included on the “Acceptance and Signatures” form.]

**Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes**

The district often needs to use student information for the following school-sponsored purposes: athletic programs, school societies and clubs, honor rolls, school newspapers and yearbooks, and school publicity. Please note this list is not inclusive of all possible uses.

For these specific school-sponsored purposes, the district would like to use your child’s name, address, telephone listing, e-mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, degrees, honors, awards, dates of attendance, grade level, most recent educational institution attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of members of athletic teams. This information will not be used for other purposes without the consent of the parent or eligible student, except as described above at Directory Information.

Unless you object to the use of your child’s information for these limited purposes, the school will not need to ask your permission each time the district wishes to use this information for the school-sponsored purposes listed above.

**Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education**

The district is required by federal law to comply with a request by a military recruiter or an institution of higher education for students’ names, addresses, and telephone listings, unless parents have advised the district not to release their child’s information without prior written consent. The “Acceptance and Signature” Form has been provided for you to complete if you do not want the district to provide this information to military recruiters or institutions of higher education.

**Bacterial Meningitis**

State law specifically requires the district 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 to ten days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five years.

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

You should seek prompt medical attention.

- Where can you get more information?

Your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Department of State Health Services office to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the 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/>.

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

Topics in this section of the handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is conveniently organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact the school office.

### **ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE**

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

#### **Compulsory Attendance**

State law requires that a student between the ages of six and 18 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year and is subject to compulsory attendance laws, if the student is under 21 years old. In addition, if a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester the district may revoke the student’s enrollment. The student’s presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. [See FEA]

Students enrolled in prekindergarten or kindergarten are required to attend school.

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

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

#### **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance**

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Service as an election clerk; and
- Documented health-care appointments, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders.

In addition, a junior or senior student’s absence of up to two days related to visiting a college or university may be considered an exemption, provided the student receives approval from the campus principal, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed.

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

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional

special instruction, termed “accelerated instruction” by the state; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

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

- Is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, or
- Is absent on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period.

If the student is over age 18, the student’s parents shall not be subject to penalties as a result of their child’s violation of state compulsory attendance law. [See FEA(LEGAL)]

## **Attendance for Credit**

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal, that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the approval of the judge presiding over the case will also be required before the student receives credit for the class.

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

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

- All absences will be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for religious holy days and documented health-care appointments will be considered days of attendance for this purpose. [See policies at FEB.]
- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district. For a student transferring into the district after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.
- In reaching a decision about a student’s absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student’s absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student’s parent could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

The student or parent may appeal the committee’s decision to the board of trustees by filing a written request with the superintendent in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL).

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

## **Parent’s Note After an Absence**

When a student must be absent from school, the student—upon returning to school—must bring a note, signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent’s permission, will not be accepted. Forged notes will result in disciplinary consequences. A parent note may explain an absence but not necessarily excuse an absence.

## **Doctor's Note After an Absence for Illness**

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than 4 consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. [See FEC(LOCAL).]

## **Driver License Attendance Verification (Grades 9-12)**

To obtain a driver license, a student between the ages of 16 and 18 must provide to the Texas Department of Public Safety a form obtained from the school verifying that the student has met the 90 percent attendance requirement for the semester preceding the date of application. The student can obtain this form at the campus attendance office.

## **As a parent, how can you help our school?**

- Call the attendance office when you know your child is going to be absent.
- Upon returning to school from any absence, a signed note from the parent/guardian is required detailing the reason(s) for the absence(s).
- If your child sought treatment from a physician, a signed excuse from the doctor is required.
- Call the school office to check your student's absences.

## **Some examples of unexcused absences include but not limited to:**

- Work
- Vacation and/or visiting relatives
- Community service hours
- Oversleeping
- Participating in non-school sponsored competitions
- Babysitting for relatives
- Getting vehicle repaired

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

The school counselor provides students and parents information regarding academic programs to prepare for higher education and career choices.

[See **Academic Counseling**.]

## **AWARDS AND HONORS**

Athletic and other extracurricular awards are presented according to requirements and guidelines stated in the specific extracurricular handouts and constitutions. Students are referred to their coaches, directors, and/or sponsors for more specific information.

## **SHS Texas Scholars Program (Grades 9-12)**

The current Texas Scholars Program requires students to earn a passing grade on all courses as they complete the Texas Recommended High School Graduation Program.

The SHS Texas Scholars Program includes additional local requirements to receive this honor upon graduation. These requirements include:

- Meet state requirements for the Texas Scholars Program.
- Students must earn an additional fine arts or technology credit.
- Students must accumulate 25 community service hours for each year enrolled at SHS.
  - ➔ These hours must be turned in by April 1<sup>st</sup> every year for review by the SHS Texas Scholars Community Service Board.
  - ➔ No compensation may be received for community service.
  - ➔ A maximum of 8 volunteer hours per day will be accepted.
  - ➔ Non-profit agencies (501 C-3) are recommended for earning hours.

- ➔ Starting with 2008 Freshmen (graduating class of 2012): a maximum of forty hours of the required 100 may be earned through school related volunteering.

The SHS Texas Scholars Community Service Board is operated by parents, community members, and a faculty liaison. The acceptance/denial of all community service hours will be determined by this parent-driven committee.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students directs written or verbal expressions or physical conduct against another student and the behavior results in harm to the student or the student's property, places a student in fear of harm to himself or his property, or is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit bullying and to respond to reports of bullying. [See FFI(LOCAL).]

## **CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS**

The district offers career and technology programs in various fields. Contact the counselors for more details. Stephenville ISD will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

## **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, which may be accessed at SISD Administration Building. As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

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

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

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse, the campus counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see

[http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention\\_and\\_Early\\_Intervention/Programs\\_Available\\_In\\_Your\\_County/default.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp).

The following Web sites might help you become more aware of child sexual abuse:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index.aspx?id=2820>

<http://sapn.nonprofitoffice.com/>

<http://www.taasa.org/member/materials2.php>

[http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG\\_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml)

[http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG\\_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml)

Reports may be made to:

The Child Protective Services (CPS) division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (1 800-252-5400 or on the Web at <http://www.txabusehotline.org>).

### **CLASS DUES (Grades 9-12)**

Students at Stephenville High School pay class dues in order to pay for their admittance into prom for their Junior and Senior years, provide flowers for graduation, and provide a Senior gift upon graduation.

Dues are \$25 each year and are to be paid to the designated class sponsor. If dues are not paid and current by Christmas break of the student's Junior year, there will be an additional fee of \$20. (Payments can be made early.)

Dues will not be paid during Senior year if student is current. It is highly recommended that students participate in this program in order to attend prom and help their class with other obligations. However, graduation status for students not participating is not affected.

### **CLASS RANK / TOP TEN PERCENT / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT (Grades 9-12)**

The Valedictorian and Salutatorian must be enrolled for four years at Stephenville High School. All students with fewer than four years of enrollment at Stephenville High School will be ranked in their order after the Valedictorian and Salutatorian, using grades at Stephenville and grades transferred under SISD policy. The ranking will include all four years' semester grades. The final semester grade will be the average of the fourth and fifth six weeks of the final semester. The highest grade recorded for a six-week, semester, or final average will be 100.

Class rank will be computed by using the grades for all academic courses excluding band, choir, physical education, athletics, cheerleading, driver education, aides, Stingerettes, ESL, correspondence courses, Credit by Exam, and credits earned prior to enrollment as a high school freshman.

For UIL eligibility purposes, students must earn a grade of 70 or higher in each Level I course and a grade of 60 or higher in each Level II or Level III course during each six week reporting period to be eligible for extracurricular participation.

Courses will be classified as Level I, Level II, or Level III courses for GPA purposes, calculation of honor graduates, and class ranking. Level I courses will include all of the HS curriculum included in the normal requirements for the Recommended High School program and not specifically designated as Level II or Level III courses by district policy. These courses will not receive additional weighting in the calculations of GPA, honor graduates, and class rank.

Level II courses will include the courses listed below and will receive 5 additional points on the semester grade for GPA, honor graduate, and class rank purposes: all PreAP courses, PreCalculus (non dual credit), Spanish III, Anatomy and Physiology (non dual credit).

Level III courses will include the courses listed below and will receive 10 additional points on the final semester grade for GPA and class rank purposes: all dual credit and AP courses, Calculus, and Spanish IV. Grade point averages for class ranking and honor graduates will be calculated using a simple numerical average. These numerical averages will be converted to a simple 4.0 scale for college purposes if needed by the HS counselors.

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

- Completes the Recommended or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program; or
- Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT.

Students and parents should contact the counselor or appropriate university officials for further information about the application process and deadlines. [For further information, see policies at EIC.]

### **CLASS SCHEDULES**

Students should pick up class schedules at the appropriate time in the summer. The time will be posted on office doors of the campus and announced in the local paper and on local radio stations. All schedule

changes must be made prior to the first day of school. Not all schedule change requests can be granted due class size limitations. Any extenuating circumstances for changes will be made only after student has conferred with a counselor and secured approval of the principal.

### **COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES (Grades 9-12)**

This program offers another opportunity for students to enrich their high school program and to accelerate their studies so that they can earn both high school and college credit at the same time. Students classified as juniors or seniors may be granted credit for college course(s) taken in approved institutions to fulfill units for high school graduation under the following provisions:

1. The student makes written request to the principal and superintendent that credit be given for a college course. The course(s) may be taken concurrently with high school courses or during the summer or evening.
2. The parent(s) or guardian(s) affirms in writing to the principal or superintendent that the student has parental permission to take the college course(s).
3. Credit for successfully completed college course(s) shall be earned in one-unit increments.
4. The student pays all costs associated with taking the college course(s) and provides the District with an official college transcript showing the grades received. The grade must be a minimum of a "C" to qualify for high school credit.
5. Students graduating on the Distinguished Achievement Program must make a minimum of "B" or above in dual credit classes for it to count as an advanced measure.
6. Dual credit courses are Level III courses and grades earned from dual credit courses shall be used in the class ranking.

Dual credit shall be available to students under the following high school equivalent courses:

- English IV – second semester, 1/2 credit
- Anatomy and Physiology – one credit
- Biology – one credit
- Chemistry – one credit
- U.S. History – one credit
- Computer Info. Systems – one credit
- PreCalculus – second semester, 1/2 credit

### **COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS**

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the district has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG(LOCAL) in the district's policy manual. A copy of this policy may be obtained on the district's website ([www.sville.us](http://www.sville.us)) or the superintendent's office.

In general, the student or parent should submit a written complaint and request a conference with the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

### **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these computer resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these resources; violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and their parents should be aware that e-mail using district computers is not private and will be monitored by district staff. [For additional information, see policies at CQ.]

## **CONDUCT**

Stephenville Independent School District has adopted a discipline management system seeking to improve the operation of our schools through a consistently applied system of rules and regulations regarding conduct. Through the positive cooperation of students, parents, teachers, and administrators, our schools will be the best places to learn and achieve academic success. Students are responsible for conducting themselves properly, in a manner appropriate for their age and level of maturity. Student responsibilities for achieving a positive learning environment at school or school-related activities include:

1. Attending all classes, daily and on time.
2. Being prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.
3. Being properly dressed.
4. Showing respect toward others.
5. Behaving in a responsible manner.
6. Paying required fees and fines, unless waived.
7. Refraining from violations of the code of student conduct.
8. Obeying all school rules, including safety rules.
9. Seeking change in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner, through appropriate channels.
10. Cooperating with staff in investigation of disciplinary cases and volunteering information relating to a serious offense.

General student expectations in class are:

1. Attend school regularly and get to class on time.
2. Take required materials to class.
3. Begin work on class assignments promptly.
4. Complete all class assignments.
5. Complete homework assignments on time.

### **Applicability of School Rules**

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

### **Corporal Punishment**

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

### **Disruptions**

As identified by law, disruptions include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a

student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.

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

### **Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty/Cheating**

Plagiarism is the use of another person's original ideas or writing as one's own without giving credit to the true author. Academic dishonesty includes copying another student's work – homework, class work, or test answers. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will be considered cheating, and the student shall be subject to disciplinary action that will include (but not be limited to) loss of credit for the work in question.

### **Cell Phones, Radios, CD Players, Other Electronic Devices and Games**

Cell phones cannot be used during school, but can be used before or after the school day has ended. Cell phones must be turned off (vibrate/silent ring is unacceptable) and out-of-sight before and during the instructional day whether inside or outside the building.

The office telephones are for school business and may be used by students with permission from authorized school personnel. Students should not to leave class to use the telephone.

Students are permitted to possess such items as personal CD players and personal tape players/MP3 players/IPODs at school. These devices must be turned off and out-of-sight during the school day whether inside or outside the building. Personal CD players, tape players, MP3 players, and IPODs may be used immediately before or after school with headphones while in the building.

Students are not permitted to possess such items as camcorders, DVD players, full size radios/CD players/tape players, pagers or electronic games/devices unless prior permission has been obtained from the administration. The one exception to the above requirement is a pager used by emergency response personnel, such as a volunteer fire fighter.

Without such permission, teachers will collect the item and turn it in to the campus office. The administration will determine whether to return the item at the end of the day for the student to take home or whether the parent will be contacted to pick up the item. Disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The district will not be responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic device. For certain items, such as cell phones and pagers, in which a third party retains a legal right of ownership, an administrative fee may be charged. [See policy FNCE.]

### **Inappropriate Use of Technology**

Students are prohibited from sending or posting electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition applies to conduct off school property if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs will be disciplined according to the *Student Code of Conduct* and may, in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement.

### **Social Events**

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

The rules of good conduct and grooming shall be observed for school social events. **ANYONE LEAVING BEFORE THE OFFICIAL END OF THE EVENT WILL NOT BE READMITTED.** Dances, socials, or proms will be either closed (only SHS students) or open, as determined by the principal. (Grades 9-12) For open functions, at least one person of any couple attending must be a student from Stephenville High School. Guest's name (not an SHS student) must be signed in at the high school office and have prior approval from the SHS administration before attending the function.

## **Corridors and Halls**

Students are not to run in corridors or halls at any time. Those students who are caught doing so may be subject to disciplinary action. Noise in halls should be kept to a minimum especially while classes are in progress. A student who is in a corridor while classes are in progress must have a corridor pass signed by a teacher. Failure to have this pass can result in disciplinary action. It is the responsibility of the student to see that he or she has a corridor pass. Students will be restricted to certain areas of the building during lunchtime.

## **Skates, Skateboards, and Scooters**

Skates (including heelys), skateboards, and scooters are not allowed on school property at any time.

## ***CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS***

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

The school nurse or the principal's office can provide information from the Department of State Health Services regarding these diseases.

## ***CORRESPONDENCE COURSES (Grades 9-12)***

The District permits high school students to take correspondence courses—courses by mail—for credit toward high school graduation. However, the student will be enrolled in the course at SHS until the correspondence course is completed and passed.

A maximum of 2 credits may be earned through correspondence courses. These credits may be applied toward graduation and may be earned from The University of Texas at Austin, Texas Tech University, or other public institution of higher education approved by the Commissioner of Education.

Prior to enrollment in correspondence courses, students shall make written request to the principal or designee for approval to enroll in the course. Students shall not be awarded credit toward graduation if approval was not granted prior to enrollment. The correspondence course shall be supervised by the high school counselor.

Resident students may be enrolled in only one correspondence course at a time. Grades earned in correspondence courses shall **not be used in computing class ranking**. Seniors shall complete the course and submit the grade for recording three weeks prior to the graduation date in order to be eligible for graduation at the end of the term.

A fee for a correspondence course is to be paid by the student as set by the university. Students are responsible for purchasing textbooks and paying all fees. [For further information, see policies at EEJC.]

## ***COUNSELING***

### **Academic Counseling**

Students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn more about course offerings, graduation requirements, and early graduation procedures. Each spring, students will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next school year and other information that will help them make the most of academic and vocational opportunities.

To plan for the future, each student should work closely with the counselor in order to enroll in courses that best prepare him or her for attendance at a college, university, or training school, or for pursuit of some other type of advanced education. The counselor can also provide information about entrance exams and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission to state colleges and universities, financial aid, housing, and scholarships.

## **Personal Counseling**

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues, or substance abuse. The counselor may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns. A student who wishes to meet with the counselor should personally contact the counselor.

## **Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment**

The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent. Parental consent is not necessary when a psychological examination, test, or treatment is required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports. [For more information, refer to FFE(LEGAL) and FFG(EXHIBIT).]

## ***CREDIT BY EXAM (Grades 9-12)—If a Student Has Taken the Course***

Stephenville High School will offer credit by exam (CBE) for the purpose of credit retrieval with prior instruction for students entering the district who have been home schooled, or who are coming from unaccredited schools seeking placement/validation of coursework, or who have received a grade of 60-69 in coursework. Prior instruction is based on a review of educational records. Home schooling, correspondence courses, independent study supervised by a parent or teacher, and coursework/experience in a foreign country may be considered prior instruction when documented.

A student who has received prior instruction in a course or subject—but did not receive credit for it—may, in circumstances determined by the teacher and counselor or principal, be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam on the essential knowledge and skills defined for the course or subject. To receive credit, a student must score at least 70 on the exam. In other instances, the District administration will determine whether any opportunity for credit by exam will be offered.

The attendance review committee may offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an exam. A student may not use this exam, however, to regain eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities. [For further information, see the counselor and policy EEJA.]

1. CBE exams are available for most courses taken for the purpose of attaining credit toward graduation.
2. A six-week observation placement may be made for students in an appropriate level of class pending CBE validation results.
3. Requests for retrieval of any course credit may come from parent or student and be based on availability of test(s) from Texas Tech University.
4. All exam fees will be paid by parent or student, and the district will facilitate the ordering, administration, and awarding of credit if student passes examination.
5. When awarded, credit will be shown on transcript, but no numerical grade will appear and will not be calculated as a part of the student's GPA. If credit is not awarded, documentation of examination will be placed in the student's academic achievement folder.
6. A student may test for the same course only once during each semester.

[For further information, see the counselor and policies EEJA.]

## ***CREDIT BY EXAM (Grades 9-12)—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course***

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course for which the student has no prior instruction. Credit by examination tests shall be administered a minimum of twice each calendar year. Contact the counselor for exact dates. No student in grades 9-12 may earn more than a total of four credits by examination to count toward graduation requirements. Students are limited to one test administration per year for each semester course.

The District shall pay for the first administration of each semester course according to Senate Bill 1. The student will pay the ten dollar test fee and be refunded after completion of test.

The passing score required to earn credit on an exam is 90.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the principal no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. The District may not honor a request by a parent to administer a test on a date other than the published dates. The parent will be responsible for paying an appropriate fee to the district or for purchasing the test from a university approved by the State Board of Education. [For further information, see EEJB(LOCAL).]

## ***DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION***

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

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. [See policy FFH]

### **Dating Violence**

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

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

### **Discrimination**

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

### **Harassment**

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance. A copy of the district's policy is available in the superintendent's office and on the district's website – [www.sville.us](http://www.sville.us).

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to, offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening or intimidating conduct; offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student is prohibited.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature. However, romantic and other inappropriate

social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Examples of prohibited sexual harassment may include, but not be limited to, touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

### **Retaliation**

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

Retaliation against a student might occur when a student receives threats from another student or an employee or when an employee imposes an unjustified punishment or unwarranted grade reduction.

Retaliation does not include petty slights and annoyances from other students or negative comments from a teacher that are justified by a student's poor academic performance in the classroom.

### **Reporting Procedures**

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced dating violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, counselor, principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent. See policy FFH(LOCAL) for the appropriate districts officials to whom to make a report.

### **Investigation of Report**

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law. Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated. The district will notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district.

In the event prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parents of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy.

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

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

## ***DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS***

### **School Materials**

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

The school newspaper and the yearbook are available to students.

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

[See **Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes.**]

### **Nonschool Materials...from students**

Students must obtain prior approval from the campus administration before posting, circulating, or distributing written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any

nonschool material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. A student may appeal a principal's decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). Any student who posts nonschool material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*. Materials displayed without the principal's approval will be removed.

### **Nonschool Materials...from others**

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by policy GKDA. To be considered for distribution, any nonschool material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the campus and/or district administration for prior review. The administration will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies at DGBA, FNG, or GF.]

Prior review will not be required for:

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

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

### **DRESS AND GROOMING**

We take pride in Stephenville ISD and its traditions. One of the most important ways of doing this is for each one of us to reflect careful and consistent personal habits and appearance each day. We seek to avoid the fads that are not in keeping with good grooming. In addition, hairstyles and certain manners of dress that might present a danger to the student's health and safety, cause an interference with school work, or create a classroom or school disruption, will not be tolerated. The dress code is in effect at all school events and at any time students are on school property. The building administration determines if a student's dress violates the dress code and/or could create a disruption to the normal routine of school.

Student dress and grooming shall conform to the following regulations:

- Abbreviated clothing that reveals the midriff area, chest (i.e., low cut blouses), back (i.e., backless tops and dresses), sides, or thighs; transparent clothing (including fishnet); and torn/ripped clothing are not permitted. Patches for tears/rips must be permanently attached to clothing in a neat manner. Unhemmed clothing is allowable, as long as no loose strings extend over 0.25 inch below the intact fabric.
- Shirts shall be buttoned appropriately, and belts shall be buckled. Boys' shirts shall have sleeves.
- Shoulder straps on female apparel must be at least 2.0 inches wide for one garment and must cover undergarment straps.
- No clothing should be worn so as to reveal underclothing of any type.
- Hair shall be clean and well groomed at all times. Only natural hair colors are allowed.
  - ➔ Boys' hair shall be out of the eyes, no lower than the bottom of the earlobe on the sides, and no lower than the base of the neck in the back. Building administration retains the privilege to determine appropriate hairstyles (i.e., fads). For example, boys shall not wear ponytails, braids, mohawks, or shaven geometric designs. Notwithstanding, "out of the eyes" is

determined by where the hair naturally falls when unobstructed by any factor, such as hair gel, sweatbands, and hats.

- ➔ Students shall be clean-shaven at all times. Mustaches, goatees, long sideburns, or beards are not permitted. Sideburns must be above the bottom of the earlobe and cannot exceed 1 inch wide.
- Skirt length shall be determined by what is appropriate for sitting and standing. A general rule will be that a skirt must be longer than the tips of the fingers with the arms extended to side (fingertip rule). Exceptions to this rule occur for the dress modes of extracurricular activities that traditionally have uniforms that are shorter than the fingertip rule.
- Split skirts must meet the fingertip rule when standing. Tights worn in place of appropriate shorts or trousers are not permitted. Shorts must meet the fingertip rule or have a 4 inch inseam.
- Prohibited are pictures, emblems, clothing, or writing on clothing that are lewd, offensive, vulgar, or obscene; depict the occult; promote violence; represent gang membership; advertise tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs, bars/liquor stores, or any other substance prohibited under school policy; or exhibit innuendo to any of the above areas (i.e., “Hooters” apparel, bandanas).
- Pajamas or any clothing designed for sleep is not allowed.
- Students will not be permitted to go barefoot. House shoes/slippers and shoes with wheels on the bottom will not be permitted.
- Hats, caps, scarves, or any head covering shall not be worn in the building. No gloves are allowed.
- Boys shall not wear ear jewelry or items in the ear, including any type of spacer.
- Tongue, nose, eyebrow (facial jewelry), and navel rings or studs (including any spacer) are not permitted by any student on school campus or during school related activities. Girls may not wear more than 2 earrings in one ear.
- Tinted glasses are not to be worn in school unless medically prescribed for sensitive eyes.
- Students who engage in elective extracurricular activities such as chorus, band, athletics, etc., shall comply with the requirements as to dress and grooming as required by the directors of such activities.
- No exposed tattoos.
- Pants such as “oversized flairs” will not be allowed. Shorts and pants must be worn at the waist. Bagging and sagging are prohibited.
- No exposed chains will be allowed.

Students who fail to meet these guidelines or whose appearance is disruptive to school activities shall be placed in ISS. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action. The campus administration has the authority to make the final decision concerning fads, appropriate school attire, and to ensure compliance with the dress and grooming policy.

The District’s dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student’s personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with these regulations.

### ***EXEMPTIONS (Finals) (Grades 9-12)***

In order to establish an incentive, yet maintain student academic preparation for future educational experiences, Stephenville High School offers an exemption plan designed to stimulate students to their very best scholastic efforts. Also, the plan guides students to make good decisions for the real-world situations that call for punctuality and good citizenship.

#### **Who May Exempt**

1. Seniors may be exempt in all classes for the fall and spring semester finals if criteria are met.
2. Juniors may be exempt in three classes for the fall semester and all classes for the spring semester finals if criteria are met.
3. Sophomores may be exempt in two classes for the fall semester finals (except Science and Social Studies) and two classes for the spring semester finals (except Math and English) if criteria are met.

4. Freshmen may be exempt in one class for the fall semester finals (except Math and English) and one class for the spring semester finals (except Science and Social Studies) if criteria are met.

### **Exemption Criteria**

1. 90 or above semester average – three or fewer absences in the individual class
2. 80 to 89 semester average – two or fewer absences in the individual class
3. 75 to 79 semester average – one or fewer absences in the individual class
4. 70 to 74 semester average – no absences in the individual class
5. no failing six weeks average per class for the entire academic year
6. completion of all requirements of the class (all assignments turned in)
7. all fines and fees paid prior to exam
8. must not have been truant in that class
9. no disciplinary infractions resulting in the following:
  - suspension
  - placement in an alternative classroom setting
  - placement in ISS
10. passing TAKS in related subject area (English, Science, Social Studies, Mathematics)

### **Absences Toward Exemptions**

All absences are counted toward exam exemption, with the exception of school related activities. For the purpose of the exemption plan, the principal has the authority to waive the absence rule if there are extenuating circumstances. These extenuating circumstances shall be determined on an individual case-by-case basis, and waiver of the absence rule shall be considered only for major emergencies (e.g., serious illness, death in the family).

In order to protect instructional integrity, exemption appeals based on extenuating circumstances will only be considered if the student has six or fewer absences in all classes during the semester. In addition, homebound students are ineligible for exemptions due to the nature of the homebound instructional program.

### **Exemption Ineligibility**

The principal may declare a student ineligible for exemption in all subjects for flagrant violation of school policies such as truancy or improper conduct in and around school. The student will be notified by the principal to the extent that he/she will be excluded from exemption of examinations. Any fees due the school or other outstanding obligations at the time of the examination will automatically make the student ineligible for exemption in all classes. This includes book fines, library fines, fees and dues, etc.

### ***EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS***

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

Eligibility for participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association overseeing inter-district competition. The following requirements apply to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than an advanced placement or international baccalaureate course; or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or a foreign language—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to 10 absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum of 5 absences for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of 2 absences for

state competition. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.

- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence. **Please note:** Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior—including consequences for misbehavior—that are stricter than those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the *Student Code of Conduct* or by local policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization's standards of behavior.

A student who violates the law, or the Student Code of Conduct, by possessing, using, or delivering alcohol or illegal drugs at any time during the calendar year will be subject to disciplinary actions on the first offense. Any additional occurrences during the calendar year may result in the immediate dismissal from all extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year or season, whichever is later. The removal from extracurricular activities applies whether the illegal action occurred at a school event or an event outside the school campus boundaries of facilities. [For further information, see policies at FM and FO.]

## Offices and Elections

Offices and elections for each extracurricular activity, club, and organization will be conducted in accordance with the constitution of each group. Please see the sponsor for more details.

## School Trips

Students going on school-sponsored trips or excursions may be required to take home a form to be signed by a parent or guardian indicating his/her permission for the child to participate in the school excursion. All students on trips or excursions are under the jurisdiction of the school and will be expected to display good sportsmanship at all times. Students who ride school buses on school trips or excursions must return on the school-provided transportation, unless the sponsor receives either written permission prior to departure for the event or parent signature at the conclusion of the event for the student to be released into the custody of their parents or other authorized guardians.

Students missing school because of school trips or excursions shall not be counted absent, but any assignments missed during the absence must be made up according to the directions of the teacher(s) involved.

## FEES

In the event that a check written to any Stephenville Independent School District campus, club or organization is returned unpaid by your bank, Stephenville ISD, or its representative agent, will redeposit your check. Additionally, you understand and agree that we may collect a returned check fee of \$25.00. The use of a check for payment is your acknowledgement and acceptance of this policy and its terms.

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

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.

- Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit requiring the use of facilities unavailable on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school. [See **Buses and Other School Vehicles.**]
- A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit because of absences and whose parent chooses the program in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.

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

## **FUND-RAISING**

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

## **GANG-FREE ZONES**

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a location in, on, or within 1000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

## **GRADE CLASSIFICATION (Grades 9-12)**

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

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

## **GRADING GUIDELINES**

Achievement is reported to parents through progress reports and report cards mailed home and/or given to the student. Generally, teachers inform their students of the class grading guidelines at the beginning of the year. Please contact individual teachers for specific grading guidelines.

## **GRADUATION**

### **Requirements for a Diploma**

To receive a high school diploma from the district, a student must successfully complete the required number of credits and pass a statewide exit-level exam.

The exit-level test, required for students in grade 11, covers English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies and requires knowledge of Algebra I, Geometry, Biology, Integrated Chemistry and Physics, English III, and early American and United States History, World History, and World Geography. A student who does not pass the exit-level assessment will have additional opportunities to take the test.

### **Graduation Programs**

The district offers the graduation programs listed below. All students entering grade 9 are required to enroll in the Recommended High School Program or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program. Permission to enroll in the Minimum Graduation Program will be granted only if an agreement is reached among the

student, the student's parent or person standing in parental relation, and the counselor or appropriate administrator. [See policy EIF(LEGAL).]

Students who entered the ninth grade during the 2006–2007 school year must meet the following credit requirements for graduation:

- Recommended Program 24 credits
- Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program 24 credits

Beginning with the 2007–2008 school year, a student entering the ninth grade must meet the following credit requirements for graduation:

- Recommended Program 26 credits
- Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program 26 credits

## Stephenville High School Graduation Requirements

### Class of 2010

Discipline	Minimum HSP	Recommended HSP	Distinguished Achievement Program
English Language Arts ♦	<b>Four credits:</b> English I, II, III, and IV.	<b>Four credits:</b> English I, II, III, and IV.	<b>Four credits:</b> English I, II, III, and IV.
Mathematics ♦	<b>Three credits:</b> Algebra I, Geometry, and Mathematical Models with Applications (MMA) <b>or</b> Algebra II	<b>Three credits:</b> Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II	<b>Three credits:</b> Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II
Science ♦	<b>Two credits:</b> Biology and Integrated Physics & Chemistry (IPC)	<b>Three credits:</b> Biology, IPC, and Chemistry or Physics  OR Pre AP Biology, Pre AP Chemistry, Pre AP Physics	<b>Three credits:</b> Pre AP Biology, Pre AP Chemistry, Pre AP Physics
Social Studies ♦	<b>Two and one-half credits</b> must consist of: World History Studies <b>or</b> World Geography Studies, U.S. History Studies, and U.S. Government (one-half credit).	<b>Three and one-half credits</b> must consist of: World History Studies World Geography Studies U.S. History Studies and U.S. Government (one-half credit).	<b>Three and one-half credits</b> must consist of: World History Studies World Geography Studies U.S. History Studies and U.S. Government (one-half credit).
Economics	<b>One-half credit</b>	<b>One-half credit</b>	<b>One-half credit</b>
Academic Elective	<b>One credit</b> selected from either: World History Studies <b>or</b> World Geography Studies, <b>Or</b> any science course approved by SBOE.	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>
Physical Education	<b>One and one-half credits:</b> (Limit two credits.) Substitutions: Stings, marching band, cheerleading,	<b>One credit:</b> (Additional credits will count as electives) Substitutions: Stings, marching band, cheerleading, athletics, Dance I-IV or certain career and technical education courses.	<b>One and one-half credits:</b> (Limit two credits.) Substitutions: Stings, marching band, cheerleading, athletics, Dance I-IV or certain career and technical education courses.

	athletics, Dance I-IV or certain career and technical education courses.		
<b>Languages Other Than English</b> ♦	<b>None</b>	<b>Two credits:</b> must consist of any two levels in the same language.	<b>Three credits:</b> must consist of any three levels in the same language.
<b>Health Education</b>	<b>One-half credit</b> of Health Science (one credit).	<b>One-half credit</b> of Health Science (Local policy.)	<b>One-half credit</b> of Health Science (one credit).
<b>Technology Applications</b> ♦	<b>One credit:</b> BCIS, Multimedia, Desktop Publishing, Video Technology, or Web Mastering	<b>One credit:</b> BCIS, Multimedia, Desktop Publishing, Video Technology, or Web Mastering (Local Policy.)	<b>One credit:</b> BCIS, Multimedia, Desktop Publishing, Video Technology, or Web Mastering
<b>Fine Arts</b> ♦	<b>One credit:</b> Choir, Band, Art, Theatre, or Dance	<b>One credit:</b> Choir, Band, Art, Theatre, or Dance	<b>One credit:</b> Choir, Band, Art, Theatre, or Dance
<b>Speech</b>	<b>One-half credit:</b> Communication Applications	<b>One-half credit:</b> Communication Applications	<b>One-half credit:</b> Communication Applications
<b>Elective Courses</b> ♦	<b>Six and one-half credits:</b>	<b>Four credits:</b>	<b>Two and one-half credits:</b>
<b>Advanced Measures</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>4 advanced measures:</b> AP exam(s), B average in college course, PSAT results, or Independent Project of Professional Quality including mentorship
<b>Total Credits</b>	24	24	24

### Class of 2011 and Beyond

Discipline	Minimum HSP	Recommended HSP	Distinguished Achievement Program
<b>English Language Arts</b> ♦	<b>Four credits:</b> English I, II, III, and IV.	<b>Four credits:</b> English I, II, III, and IV.	<b>Four credits:</b> English I, II, III, and IV.
<b>Mathematics</b> ♦	<b>Three credits:</b> Algebra I, Geometry, and Mathematical Models with Applications (MMA) <b>or</b> Algebra II	<b>Four credits:</b> Algebra I, Geometry, Mathematical Models with Applications (MMA) and Algebra II  <b>Or</b> Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and Pre Calculus	<b>Four credits:</b> Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and Pre Calculus
<b>Science</b> ♦	<b>Two credits:</b> Biology and Integrated Physics & Chemistry (IPC)	<b>Four credits:</b> Biology, IPC, Chemistry, and Physics  OR Pre AP Biology, Pre AP Chemistry, Pre AP Physics <b>and</b> <i>1 credit from the following list:</i> AP Biology, AP Chemistry, Anatomy and Physiology, or concurrent enrollment in a college course.	<b>Four credits:</b> Pre AP Biology, Pre AP Chemistry, Pre AP Physics <b>and</b> <i>1 credit from the following list:</i> AP Biology, AP Chemistry, Anatomy and Physiology, or concurrent enrollment in a college course.
<b>Social Studies</b> ♦	<b>Two and one-half credits</b> must consist of: World History Studies <b>or</b> World Geography Studies,	<b>Three and one-half credits</b> must consist of: World History Studies World Geography Studies	<b>Three and one-half credits</b> must consist of: World History Studies

	U.S. History Studies, and U.S. Government (one-half credit).	U.S. History Studies and U.S. Government (one-half credit).	World Geography Studies U.S. History Studies and U.S. Government (one-half credit).
<b>Economics</b>	<b>One-half credit</b>	<b>One-half credit</b>	<b>One-half credit</b>
<b>Academic Elective</b>	<b>One credit</b> selected from either: World History Studies or World Geography Studies,  or any science course approved by SBOE.	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Physical Education</b>	<b>One and one-half credits:</b> (Limit two credits.) Substitutions: Stings, marching band, cheerleading, athletics, Dance I-IV or certain career and technical education courses.	<b>One credit:</b> (Additional credits will count as electives.) Substitutions: Stings, marching band, cheerleading, athletics, Dance I-IV or certain career and technical education courses.	<b>One and one-half credits:</b> (Limit two credits.) Substitutions: Stings, marching band, cheerleading, athletics, Dance I-IV or certain career and technical education courses.
<b>Languages Other Than English ♦</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Two credits:</b> must consist of any two levels in the same language.	<b>Three credits:</b> must consist of any three levels in the same language.
<b>Health Education</b>	<b>One-half credit</b> of Health Science (one credit).	<b>One-half credit</b> of Health Science (Local policy.)	<b>One-half credit</b> of Health Science (one credit).
<b>Technology Applications ♦</b>	<b>One credit:</b> BCIS, Multimedia, Desktop Publishing, Video Technology, or Web Mastering	<b>One credit:</b> BCIS, Multimedia, Desktop Publishing, Video Technology, or Web Mastering (Local Policy.)	<b>One credit:</b> BCIS, Multimedia, Desktop Publishing, Video Technology, or Web Mastering
<b>Fine Arts ♦</b>	<b>One credit:</b> Choir, Band, Art, Theatre, or Dance	<b>One credit:</b> Choir, Band, Art, Theatre, or Dance	<b>One credit:</b> Choir, Band, Art, Theatre, or Dance
<b>Speech</b>	<b>One-half credit:</b> Communication Applications	<b>One-half credit:</b> Communication Applications	<b>One-half credit:</b> Communication Applications
<b>Elective Courses ♦</b>	<b>Six and one-half credits:</b>	<b>Four credits:</b>	<b>Two and one-half credits:</b>
<b>Advanced Measures</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>4 advanced measures:</b> AP exam(s), B average in college course, PSAT results, or Independent Project of Professional Quality including mentorship
<b>Total Credits</b>	24	26	26

## Students with Disabilities (Grades 9-12)

Upon the recommendation of the admission, review, and dismissal committee, a student with disabilities may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her individualized education program (IEP).

A student who receives special education services and has completed four years of high school, but has not met the requirements of his or her IEP, may participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a certificate of attendance. Even if the student participates in graduation ceremonies to receive the certificate of attendance, he or she may remain enrolled to complete the IEP and earn his or her high school diploma; however, the student will only be allowed to participate in one graduation ceremony. [See FMH(LEGAL).]

## Graduation Expenses (Grades 9-12)

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

## State Scholarships and Grants (Grades 9-12)

Under the Texas Early High School Graduation Scholarship Program, students who complete the Recommended or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement High School Program may earn financial credits in varying amounts to apply toward college tuition. The amounts depend on the number of consecutive months in which the student completed graduation requirements and the number of early college credits earned and

may be used at public or private higher education institutions within the state. The counselor can provide additional information about meeting the program's eligibility requirements.

Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the Recommended High School Program or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program may be eligible under the T.E.X.A.S. Grant Program for tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions. [For further information, see the principal or counselor and policy EJ(LEGAL).]

## **HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

### **School Health Advisory Council**

During the preceding school year the district's School Health Advisory Council held four (4) meetings. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available from the Dr. Kathy Ray at 968-7990. [See also policies at BDF and EHAA.]

### **Physical Fitness Assessment**

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to campus administration to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

### **Vending Machines**

The district has adopted policies and implemented procedures to comply with state and federal food service guidelines for restricting student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines contact Becky Eckert, Director of Child Nutrition at 968-4826. [See policies at CO and FFA.]

## **Other Health-Related Matters**

### **Tobacco Prohibited**

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of tobacco products by students and others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the *Student Code of Conduct* and policies at FNCD and GKA.]

### **Asbestos Management Plan**

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, is available in the maintenance office. If you have any questions, please contact Regi Brackin, Director of Maintenance, at 968-7328.

### **Pest Management Plan**

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Regi Brackin, Director of Maintenance, at 968-7328.

## **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

For more information on services for homeless students, contact Dr. Kathy Ray at 968-7990.

## **HOMWORK**

Homework is important, as it is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. On some nights, a student may need to complete work that was unfinished at school. Special projects may be assigned. Each teacher has developed homework policies. Please contact the teacher for questions.

## **IMMUNIZATION**

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco/affidavit.shtm>. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are: diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella (German measles), mumps, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis (polio), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and varicella (chicken pox). The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the Department of State Health Services. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition. [For further information, see policy FFAB(LEGAL) and the Department of State Health Services Web site: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm>.]

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

### **Questioning of Students**

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances:

- The principal will verify the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.
- The principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

### **Students Taken Into Custody**

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

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.

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

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

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

### **Notification of Law Violations**

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been arrested or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who is required to register as a sex offender or who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.

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

## ***MAKEUP WORK***

### **Routine and In-depth Makeup Work Assignments Because of Absence**

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

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher. [For further information, see policy EIAB(LOCAL).]

A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

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

### **DAEP Makeup Work**

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

## ***MEDICINE AT SCHOOL***

District employees will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements, with the following exceptions:

- Only authorized employees, in accordance with policies at FFAC, may administer:
- Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.
- Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.

- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student’s individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.
- In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only:
- In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district’s medical advisor; and
- When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district’s form.

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

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

In accordance with a student’s individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. See the school nurse or principal for information. [See policy FFAF(LEGAL).]

## **Psychotropic Drugs**

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

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student’s academic progress or behavior with the student’s parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate. [For further information, see policies at FFAC.]

## **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS**

Students desiring to participate in the U.I.L. athletic competitions or cheerleading shall submit a statement from a physician licensed to practice in the state, indicating that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate in the program. This examination is required for the first year of seventh grade competition and every other year of high school competition. In other years, students shall complete a medical appraisal form. Students may be required to have a physical examination based on answers to the appraisal form.

Students new to the District shall submit the results of physical examination before participating in the U.I.L. athletic program.

## **PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE**

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

One minute of silence will follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others. [See policy EC(LEGAL) for more information.]

## **PRAYER**

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

## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

In addition, at certain grade levels a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1 and April 15 and is a Texas resident during the week that the TAKS is administered the first time.

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

Parents of a student in grade 5 or 8 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. Such students will have two additional opportunities to take the test. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policies at EIE.] Certain students—some with disabilities and some with limited English proficiency—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, counselor, or special education director.

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student in a middle school or beyond who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment or is determined by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9. The PGP will be designed and implemented by a guidance counselor, teacher, or other staff member designated by the principal. The plan will, among other items, identify the student's educational goals, address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and outline an intensive instruction program for the student. [For additional information, see the counselor and policy EIF(LEGAL).]

## **RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

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

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

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

## **REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES**

Report cards with each student's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every 6 weeks.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period will be given a written progress report if their child's performance is near or below 70, or is below the expected level of performance. [See **Working Together** for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the campus administration and are designed to reflect each student's academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See policy EIA(LOCAL).]

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG(LOCAL).

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in a class or subject.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and should be returned to the school within the time frame designated by the issuing teacher.

## **SAFETY**

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

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the *Student Code of Conduct*, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

## **Accident Insurance**

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

## **Drills: Fire, Storms, and Other Emergencies**

From time to time, students, teachers, and other district employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

## **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school would need to have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the school nurse to update any information that the nurse or the teacher needs to know.

## **Emergency School-Closing Information**

When inclement weather, road conditions or other emergencies arise, information will be posted on the district's website and announcements will be made on radio stations KSTV 93.1 FM and 1510 AM, KWEV 90.5 FM and WBAP 820 AM and television channels 5 (KXAS) and 8 (WFAA).

## **SAT, ACT, AND OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS (Grades 9-12)**

Many colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. Students are encouraged to talk with the counselor early during their junior year to determine the appropriate exam to take; these exams are usually taken at the end of the junior year. (Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test, such as the Texas Higher Education Assessment [THEA]).

## **SCHOOL FACILITIES**

### **Conduct Before and After School**

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on district premises and at school-sponsored events off district premises, such as play rehearsals, club meetings, athletic practices, and special study groups or tutorials. Students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the *Student Code of Conduct* or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

### **Use of Hallways During Class Time**

Loitering or standing in the halls during class is not permitted. During class time, a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

### **Cafeteria Services**

The district participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Free and reduced-price lunches are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. Contact the campus secretary or Becky Eckert at 968-4826 to apply. All campuses are closed during lunch, and all students will eat lunch on campus at the scheduled times. The district follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day. [For more information, see policy CO(LEGAL).]

Parents may wish to utilize the **mynutrikids.com** website to pay online for student meals and to monitor their child's meal account.

The following is an excerpt from the Texas Department of Agriculture's Texas Public School Nutrition Policy, effective August 1, 2007, section VI, Subsection C:

“This policy does not restrict what parents may provide for their own child's lunch or snacks. Parents may provide FMNV or candy items for their own child's consumption, but they may not provide restricted items to other children at school.”

Please do not bring food items during lunch for students other than your own child.

### **Eating On Campus**

Students must confine eating and drinking to the cafeteria. Lunch trays, paper, food, cans, bottles, and other litter should be cleared from these areas before leaving. No food or drink will be permitted in corridors, classrooms, shops, gymnasiums, or the auditorium, without authorization from appropriate school personnel. Students who violate these regulations may be disciplined.

### **Library**

The library is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure.

## **Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups**

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

## **SEARCHES**

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, district officials may from time to time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

## **Students' Desks and Lockers**

Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student.

Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of their assigned desks and lockers. Students must be certain that their lockers are locked, and that the combinations are not available to others.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by policy, whether or not a student is present.

The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

## **Vehicles on Campus (Grades 9-12)**

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable cause to do so, with or without the permission of the student. A student has full responsibility for the security and content of his or her vehicle and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. [See also the *Student Code of Conduct*.]

Drivers of vehicles are subject to the following regulations.

1. Parking spaces will not be assigned.
2. Parking lot spaces are first come, first serve.
3. Any vehicle parked in faculty parking, visitor parking, or fire lane may be towed at owner's expense.
4. The speed limit on campus is 10 miles per hour.
5. Students who drive motor vehicles to school must have a valid driver's license.
6. There will be no sitting in cars on the campus before school, during the school day, or after school. There will be no loitering in the parking lot before, during or after school.
7. Students must park and enter the building as soon as they arrive at school. Students will not be allowed to leave the campus but one time during the school day. Students leaving during the day must check out through the office.

## **Trained Dogs**

The district will use trained dogs to alert school officials to the presence of prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. At any time, trained dogs may be used around lockers and the areas around vehicles parked on school property. Searches of classrooms, common areas, or student belongings may also be conducted by trained dogs when students are not present. An item in a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle to which a trained dog alerts may be searched by school officials.

## **Drug-Testing (Grades 9-12)**

[For further information, see policy FNF(LOCAL). Also, see **Steroids**.]

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs

and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact a counselor.

## **STEROIDS**

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for medical use only, and only a physician can prescribe use.

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

Students participating in UIL athletic competition may be subject to random steroid testing. More information on the UIL testing program may be found on the UIL Web site at

[http://www.uil.utexas.edu/athletics/health/steroid\\_information.html](http://www.uil.utexas.edu/athletics/health/steroid_information.html).

## **SUMMER SCHOOL**

Students shall be awarded credit for courses begun and successfully completed during the summer sessions. Only students who complete the spring semester at SISD and are in good standing (i.e., paid all fees/fines) will be allowed to participate in our summer school program.

## **TAKS (TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS)**

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state-mandated assessments (such as TAKS: the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–11
- Reading, annually in grades 3–9
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7
- English language arts in grades 10 and 11
- Social studies in grades 8, 10, and 11
- Science in grades 5, 8, 10, and 11
- Any other subject and grade required by federal law

[See policy EKB(LEGAL).]

## **TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, AND TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT**

State-approved textbooks are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. Electronic textbooks and technological equipment may also be provided to students, depending on the course and course objectives. A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return an item in acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or paid for by the parent.

Textbooks are the property of SISD. Books are issued to students for use during the year; students are required to use these books carefully. The student to whom the text was issued is responsible for paying for a lost, stolen, or damaged book. All fines, including textbooks, school equipment, cafeteria, library, club fundraisers, etc., must be paid before enrolling in summer school, issuing report cards, receiving enrollment information for the next school year, and/or the sending of Senior transcripts to colleges or universities.

## **TRANSFERS**

Stephenville ISD accepts/denies transfers based upon the academic, attendance, and discipline records from the previous school. Contact Dr. Kathy Ray at 968-7990 to begin the process.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. The principal, however, may make an exception if the parent makes a written request that the student be released to the parent or to another adult designated by the parent.

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

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted at the school.

A parent may also designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, you may contact Tommy Washington, Transportation Director, at 968-3759.

See the *Student Code of Conduct* for provisions regarding transportation to the disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP).

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

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the bus, van, or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus or van.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco on school buses.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus or van and before crossing in front of the vehicle.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*; bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

### **Bus Disciplinary Procedures** (Refer to Bus Rider's Safety Handbook)

The school bus is an extension of the classroom and campus administrator may administer discipline with the assistance of the transportation director. All other school board policies that apply to student conduct and other student related activities apply to the school bus.

Steps and consequences for improper conduct on the school bus include the following:

1<sup>st</sup> offense - the student will be given a written warning to be sent home to the parent. Other disciplinary action may be taken at the discretion of the building administrators.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense - the student will be suspended from the bus for not less than 5 school days.

3<sup>rd</sup> offense - the student will be suspended from the bus for not less than 10 school days.

4<sup>th</sup> offense - the student will be suspended from the bus for the remainder of the semester or year.

Major offenses including, but not limited to, fighting, obscenity, cursing, confrontation with the driver, vandalism, etc., will be handled according to the severity of the offense. The campus administrator and transportation director have the authority to skip steps for serious violations.

## **VANDALISM**

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

## **VIDEO CAMERAS**

For safety purposes, video/audio equipment may be used to monitor student behavior, including on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used. The principal will review the video/audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

### **General Visitors**

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the principal's office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and only so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted. Students are not allowed to bring friends and other visitors from outside the school district to school with them without prior authorization from building administration.

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

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

## **WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL**

Students may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The parent may obtain a withdrawal form from the principal's office.

On the student's last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to each teacher for current grade averages and book clearance; to the librarian to ensure a clear library record; to the clinic for health records; to the counselor for the last report card and course clearance; and finally, to the principal. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student, and a copy will be placed in the student's permanent record.

## **SISD INTERNET ACCESS ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

The purpose of the Stephenville Independent School District-provided Internet access is to facilitate communications and expand research/educational opportunities for faculty, administrators, and students. To remain eligible as users, use of the system must be in support of and consistent with the educational mission of SISD. Access is a privilege, not a right. Access entails responsibility.

Any violation of the district's policy and rules relative to Internet or computer use may result in the loss of District-provided access. Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the campus or administrative level in keeping with existing procedures and practices regarding inappropriate language or behavior. When and where applicable, law enforcement agencies may become involved.

Stephenville Independent School District-provided Internet users agree to the following:

## **Internet/network etiquette**

- Be Polite
- Avoid use of vulgar or obscene language
- Use caution when giving out addresses or phone numbers (both yours and others)
- Remember, electronic mail is not private or secure
- Do not intentionally disrupt the network or other network users
- Abide by generally accepted rules of network etiquette

## **Usage guidelines and policies:**

1. Commercial use or political lobbying using these electronic resources is prohibited.
2. Copyrights and others' intellectual property rights are to be observed at all times. Copying of files, software, or passwords belonging to others may constitute theft, plagiarism, or fraud. Software licensed to SISD must be used in accordance with terms of the software license.
3. Users must always identify him/herself in electronic communications. Anonymous or pseudo-anonymous communications appear to dissociate individuals from responsibility for actions. Concealing user identities or misrepresenting user's names or affiliations to mask or attempt to distance him/herself from irresponsible behavior is a serious abuse of the system. It violates local policies and constitutes fraud.
4. Follow all security restrictions. Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. Do not reveal account passwords or allow others to use any account. Trying to evade, disable, or "crack" a password or other security provision is grounds for immediate suspension of access privileges and other disciplinary action. Users will be held responsible for any misuse of passwords. A user who is identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to all SISD Internet services.
5. Respect the rights of others to freedom from harassment or intimidation. Harassment targets another person or organization to cause distress embarrassment, injury or unwanted attention, or other substantial discomfort. This includes, but is not limited to, the sending of unwanted mail or chatline comments.
6. Use resources efficiently. Please respect the fact that unlimited resources are not available. Time, network bandwidth, printers, paper, disk space, and terminals or PCs are all limited. Restrictions may be placed on any or all of these, as well as any other computing resource. Such restrictions are designed to ensure access for all users.
7. There is no guarantee of privacy. Electronic communications should not be considered private or secure. In the course of diagnosing or correcting problems, system administrators may view the contents of any communications.
8. Obscene communication of any kind, including text or graphic material, is prohibited. This includes any sexually explicit image or other content as specified by local, state, federal, or international laws or policies.
9. Abide by the policies or guidelines of the network being used. Users are subject to all the rules, regulations or policies of other networks or computer services contacted or connected to from the school or home.
10. Vandalism is prohibited. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data and/or equipment of SISD, another user, the Internet, or other networks. This includes, but is not limited to, creating and/or uploading computer viruses.
11. SISD will not be responsible for any damage that users may suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries or service interruptions caused by network failures, computer viruses, or users' errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via network services is at the users own risk. SISD denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through network services.

## **Consequences**

SISD regards any violation of this policy as a serious offense. Any student, staff, or board member violating these provisions, applicable state or federal laws, or posted policies of any of the SISD's local network are

subject to loss of Internet/Network privileges and any other disciplinary options available, including criminal prosecution.

1. Student cases shall be handled by the campus principal. Staff and faculty cases shall be handled by a committee appointed by Stephenville ISD Technology Director.
2. These bodies shall make the final determination of what is acceptable use. SISD Board Policy DGBA (Local), FNG (Legal), and FNG (Local) outline procedures to process appeals or file grievances.

### **Harassment Complaints**

Rules and regulations as outlined in SISD Board Policy DAA, DHB, DHC, FB, FNCJ, FNCL shall be enforced in processing harassment complaints filed by users.

## GLOSSARY

**Accelerated instruction** is an intensive supplemental program designed to address the needs of an individual student in acquiring the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level.

**ACT** refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the American College Test. The test may be a requirement for admission to certain colleges or universities.

**ARD** is the admission, review, and dismissal committee convened for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student's parents are part of the committee.

**Attendance Review Committee** is sometimes responsible for reviewing a student's absences when the student's attendance drops below 90 percent of the days the class is offered. Under guidelines adopted by the board, the committee will determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences and whether the student needs to complete certain conditions to master the course and regain credit lost because of absences.

**DAEP** stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the *Student Code of Conduct*. Students in the DAEP will be separated from students not assigned to the program. The DAEP will focus instruction on English language arts, mathematics, science, history, and self-discipline, and provide for students' educational and behavior needs, as well as supervision and counseling.

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

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

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

**LAT** stands for Linguistically Accommodated Testing, which is an assessment process for recent immigrant English language learners who are required to be assessed in certain grades and subjects under the NCLB Act.

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

**Personal Graduation Plan (PGP)** is recommended for all students entering grade 9 and is required by state law for any student in middle school or higher who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

**SAT** refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the Scholastic Aptitude Test. The test may be a requirement for admissions to certain colleges or universities.

**Section 504** is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the

student is determined to be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), general education with appropriate instructional accommodations will be provided.

**State-mandated assessments** are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Successful performance sometimes is a condition of promotion, and passing the grade 11 exit-level test is a condition of graduation. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests if necessary for promotion or graduation.

**Student Code of Conduct** is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board; identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from the classroom or campus. It also sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP. It outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion, and states whether self-defense is a consideration in suspension, DAEP placement, or expulsion. The *Student Code of Conduct* also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

**TAKS** is the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, the state's standardized achievement test currently given to students in certain subjects in grades 3–11.

**TAKS-Accommodated** is a state mandated assessment based on the same grade-level academic achievement standards of TAKS available to certain students who receive special education services who need specific accommodations, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

**TAKS-Alternate** is an alternate state mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

**TAKS-Modified** is an alternate state mandated assessment based on modified achievement standards and is administered to eligible students receiving special education services, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

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

**UIL** refers to the University Interscholastic League, the statewide voluntary nonprofit organization that oversees educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests.