



2022-2023 School Year

# Student-Parent Handbook

**The Bell Rings On!**

If you have difficulty accessing information in this document,

please contact Elise Studer, Administrative Assistant at

[estuder@doss.txed.net](mailto:estuder@doss.txed.net) or 830.669.2411.

## Student-Parent Handbook

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## Preface Parents and Students:

Welcome to the new school year!

Education is a team effort. Students, parents, teachers, and other staff members working together will make this a successful year.

The Doss CCSD Student-Parent Handbook is a general reference guide that is divided into two sections:

- **Section One: Parental Rights** describes certain parental rights as specified in state or federal law.
- **Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students** is organized alphabetically by topic. Where applicable, the topics are further organized by grade level.

**Note:** Unless otherwise noted, the term “parent” refers to the parent, legal guardian, any person granted some other type of lawful control of a student, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

The Student-Parent Handbook is designed to align with law, board-adopted policy, and the Student Code of Conduct, a board-adopted document intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. The Student Handbook is not meant to be a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules in any given circumstance.

In case of conflicts between board policy (including the Student Code of Conduct) and any Student Handbook provision, the district will follow board policy and the Student Code of Conduct.

Therefore, parents and students should become familiar with the Doss CCSD Student Code of Conduct. To review the Code of Conduct, visit the district’s website at <http://www.dossccsd.org/>. State law requires that the Code of Conduct be prominently displayed or made available for review at each campus.

The Student Handbook is updated annually; however, policy adoption and revisions may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed policy changes by attending board meetings and reviewing newsletter and other communications explaining changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions. The district reserves the right to modify the Student Handbook at any time. Notice of revisions will be provided as is reasonably practical.

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

A hard copy of either the Student Code of Conduct or Student Handbook can be requested at the Doss CCSD school office.

**Note:** References to board policy codes are included for ease of reference. The hard copy of the district’s official policy manual is available for review in the Doss CCSD school office and an unofficial electronic copy is available at <http://www.dossccsd.org/>.

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The policy manual includes:

- Legally referenced (LEGAL) policies that contain provisions from federal and state laws and regulations, case law, and other legal authorities that provide the legal framework for school districts.
- Board-adopted (LOCAL) policies that articulate the board's choices and values regarding district practices.

For questions about the material in this handbook, please contact Elise Studer, Administrative Assistant at [estuder@doss.txed.net](mailto:estuder@doss.txed.net) or at 830.669.2411.

Complete and return to the student's campus the following forms (provided in the forms packet distributed at the beginning of the year or upon enrollment):

- Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of Student Handbook,
- Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information,
- Consent/Opt-Out Form for participation in third-party surveys.

[See **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 7 and **Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey** on page 8 for more information.]

**Note:** References to board policy codes are included for ease of reference. The hard copy of the district's official policy manual is available for review in the district administration office, and an unofficial electronic copy is available at <http://www.dossccsd.org/>.

### Accessibility

If you have difficulty accessing this handbook because of a disability, please contact Elise Studer, Administrative Assistant at [estuder@doss.txed.net](mailto:estuder@doss.txed.net) or at 830.669.2411.

## Section One: Parental Rights

This section describes certain parental rights as specified in state or federal law.

### Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights

#### Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation

Unless required under state or federal law, a district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without obtaining prior written parental consent.

**Note:** An evaluation may be legally required under special education rules or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

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

Teachers may display a student's work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement without seeking prior parental consent. These displays may include personally identifiable student information. Student work includes:

- Artwork,
- Special projects,
- Photographs,
- Original videos or voice recordings, and
- Other original works.

However, the district will seek parental consent before displaying a student's work on the district's website, a website affiliated or sponsored by the district (such as a campus or classroom website), or in district publications, which may include printed materials, videos, or other methods of mass communication.

#### Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law

State law permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission when it:

- Is to be used for school safety,
- Relates to classroom instruction or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity,
- Relates to media coverage of the school, or
- Relates to the promotion of student safety as provided by law for a student receiving special education services in certain settings.

In other circumstances, the district will seek written parental consent before making a video or voice recording of a student.

Please note that parents and visitors to a classroom, both virtual and in person, may not record video or audio or take photographs or other still images without permission from the teacher or other school official.

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

In accordance with Local District policy, Corporal punishment will not be used at Doss CCSD.

### **Limiting Electronic Communications between Students and District Employees**

The district permits teachers and other approved employees to use electronic communications with students within the scope of professional responsibilities, as described by district guidelines.

For example, a teacher may create a social networking page for his or her class to relay information regarding class work, homework, and tests. A parent is welcome to access such a page.

However, text messages sent to an individual student are only allowed if a district employee with responsibility for an extracurricular activity must communicate with a student participating in that activity.

The employee is required to include the student's parent as a recipient on all text messages and the employee is required to include his or her immediate supervisor and the student's parent as recipients on all text messages.

A parent who does not want his or her child to receive one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee should contact Pam Seipp, Administrative Consultant.

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

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, permits the district to disclose appropriately designated "directory information" from a student's education records without written consent.

"Directory information" is information that, if released, is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy. Examples include:

- A student's photograph (for publication in the school yearbook);
- A student's name and grade level (for communicating class and teacher assignments);
- The name, weight, and height of an athlete (for publication in a school athletic program);
- A list of student birthdays (for generating school-wide or classroom recognition),
- A student's name and photograph (posted on a district-approved social media platform); and
- The names and grade levels of students submitted by the district to a local newspaper or other community publication (to recognize the A/B honor roll for a specific grading period.)

Directory information will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of this information. Any objection must be made in writing to the Administrative Consultant within ten school days of the student's first day of instruction for this school year.

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The district requests that families living in a shelter for survivors of family violence or trafficking notify district personnel that the student currently resides in such a shelter. Families may want to opt out of the release of directory information so that the district does not release any information that might reveal the location of such a shelter.

As allowed by state law, the district has identified two **directory information** lists—one for school-sponsored purposes and a second for all other requests. For district publications and announcements, the district has designated the following as directory information: **student's name, photograph, date of birth, honors, and awards, grade level and enrollment status**. If a parent does not object to the use of his or her child's information for these school-sponsored purposes, the school will not ask permission each time the district wants to use the information for these purposes.

For all other purposes, the district has identified the following as directory information: student's name, photograph, date of birth, honors, and awards, grade level and enrollment status. If a parent does not object to the use of the student's information for these purposes, the school **must** release this information when requested by an outside entity or individual.

For all other purposes, the district has identified the following as directory information: student's name, photograph, date of birth, honors, and awards, grade level and enrollment status. If a parent objects to the release of the student's information included on the directory information response form, this objection also applies to the use of that information for school-sponsored purposes, such as:

- Honor roll,
- School newspaper,
- Yearbook,
- Recognition activities,
- News releases, and

**Note:** Review **Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records** on page 12.

### Participation in Third-Party Surveys

#### Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) provides parents certain rights regarding participation in surveys, the collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams.

A parent has the right to consent before a student is required to submit to a survey funded by the U.S. Department of Education that concerns any of the following protected areas:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, and ministers;



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- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent; or
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student's eligibility for a program.

A parent can inspect the survey or other instrument and any corresponding instructional materials used in connection with such a survey. [See policy EF(LEGAL) for more information.]

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

The PPRA gives parents the right to receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

- Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from the child for the purpose of marketing, selling, or otherwise disclosing that information to others.
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student.

Exceptions are hearing, vision, or spinal screenings, or any physical examination or screening permitted or required under state law. [See policies EF and FFAA for more information.]

A parent may inspect:

- Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
- Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
- Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

The ED provides extensive information about the [Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment](#), including a [PPRA Complaint Form](#).

### **Removing a Student from Instruction or Excusing a Student from a Required Component of Instruction**

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

State law designates the week of September 17 as Celebrate Freedom Week and requires all social studies classes provide:

- Instruction concerning the intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, and
- A specific recitation from the Declaration of Independence for students in grades 3–12.

Per law, a student may be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence if:

- A parent provides a written statement requesting that his or her child be excused,
- The district determines that the student has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or
- A parent is a representative of a foreign government to whom the U.S. government extends diplomatic immunity. [See policy EHBK(LEGAL) for more information.]

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

A parent may request that his or her child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be made in writing. State law, however, requires that all students participate in one minute of silence following recitation of the pledges.

[See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** on page 55 and policy EC(LEGAL) for more information.]

### Religious or Moral Beliefs

A parent may remove his or her child temporarily from the classroom if a scheduled instructional activity conflicts with the parent's religious or moral beliefs.

The removal may not be used to avoid a test and may not extend for an entire semester. The student must also satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by state law.

### Tutoring or Test Preparation

A teacher may determine that a student needs additional targeted assistance for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills based on:

- Informal observations,
- Evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests, or
- Results from diagnostic assessments.

The school will always attempt to provide tutoring and strategies for test-taking in ways that prevent removal from other instruction as much as possible.

In accordance with state law and policy EC, districts must obtain parental permission before removing a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the days the class is offered.

Under state law, students with grades below 70 for a reporting period are required to attend tutorial services—if the district offers these services.

[For questions about school-provided tutoring programs, contact the student's teacher and see policies EC and EHBC. See **Standardized Testing** on page 62 for information regarding required accelerated instruction after a student fails to perform satisfactorily on certain state-mandated tests.]

### Right of Access to Student Records, Curriculum Materials, and District Records/Policies

#### Instructional Materials

A parent has the 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, whether instruction is delivered in-person, virtually, or remotely. The district will provide login credentials to each student's

parent for any learning management system or online learning portal used in instruction to facilitate parent access and review.

A parent is also entitled to request that the school allow the student to take home instructional materials the student uses. The school may ask the student to return the materials at the beginning of the next school day.

A school must provide printed versions of electronic instructional materials to a student if the student does not have reliable access to technology at home.

### **Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent**

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

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

In accordance with the "Every Student Succeeds Act" (ESSA), a parent may request information regarding any federal, state, or district policy related to his or her child's participation in required assessments.

## **Student Records**

### **Accessing Student Records**

A parent may review his or her child's records. These records include:

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,
- Teacher and school counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns,
- Records relating to assistance provided for learning difficulties,
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to the child, and

- Teaching materials and tests used in the child’s classroom.

### Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and eligible students certain rights regarding student education records.

For purposes of student records, an “eligible” student is anyone age 18 or older or who attends a postsecondary educational institution. These rights, as discussed here and at **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 7, are the right to:

- Inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access; Request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA;
- Provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student’s records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent; and
- File a complaint <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint> with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements.

Both FERPA and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights of privacy.

Before disclosing personally identifiable information from a student’s records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information.

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

Inspection and release of student records is restricted to an eligible student or a student’s parent unless the school receives a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student’s education records. A parent’s rights regarding access to student records are not affected by the parent’s marital status.

Federal law requires that control of the records goes to the student as soon as the student:

- Reaches the age of 18,
- Is emancipated by a court, or
- Enrolls in a postsecondary educational institution.

However, the parent may continue to have access to the records if the student is a dependent for tax purposes and, under limited circumstances, when there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student’s education records without written consent of the parent or eligible student when school officials have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records.

- Legitimate educational interest may include:
  - Working with the student;

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- 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.
- School officials may include:
  - Board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and Administrative Consultants;
  - Teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or medical staff);
  - A person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a specific institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third-party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, school resource officer, or volunteer);
  - A person appointed to serve on a team to support the district’s safe and supportive school program;
  - 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.

FERPA also permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information without written consent:

- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers,
- the U.S. Comptroller General’s office, the U.S. Attorney General’s office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, the Texas Education Agency, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture’s office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or, in certain cases, other child welfare representatives.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, district/system, or postsecondary educational institution to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which the student already is enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses directory information-designated details. [See **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 7 to prohibit this disclosure.]

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

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Pam Seipp, Administrative Consultant, is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The Administrative Consultant is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated.

A parent or eligible student who wants to inspect the student's records should submit a written request to the custodian of records identifying the records he or she wants to inspect. Records may be reviewed in person during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will be available to explain the record and to answer questions.

A parent or eligible student who submits 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 the records.

You may contact the custodian of records for currently enrolled or students who have withdrawn at:

Pam Seipp

Administrative Consultant

P.O. Box 50 / 11431 RR 648 Doss, TX 78618

[pseipp@doss.txed.net](mailto:pseipp@doss.txed.net)

(830) 669-2411

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

A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the appropriate records custodian. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information 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 after the hearing the records are not amended, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to place a statement in the student's record.

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

[See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 57, **Complaints and Concerns** on page 30, and **Finality of Grades** at policy FNG(LEGAL).]

The district's student records policy is found at policy FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL) and is available at the Doss CCSD school office or on the district's website at <http://www.dossccsd.org/>.

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

### Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications

A parent may request information regarding the professional qualifications of his or her child's teachers, including whether the teacher:

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- Has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction,
- Has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived, and
- Is currently teaching in the field of discipline of his or her certification.

The parent also has the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to the child.

### A Student with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances

#### Children of Military Families

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children entitles children of military families to flexibility regarding certain district and state requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements;
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement;
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities;
- Enrollment in the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN); and
- Graduation requirements.

The district will excuse absences related to a student visiting a parent, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who is:

- Called to active duty,
- On leave, or
- Returning from a deployment of at least four months.

The district will permit **no more than five** excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment.

Additional information may be found at [Military Family Resources at the Texas Education Agency](#).

### Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments

#### Multiple-Birth Siblings

State law permits a parent of multiple-birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets) assigned to the same grade and campus to request in writing that the children be placed in either the same classroom or separate classrooms.

Written requests must be submitted by the 14th day after the students' enrollment. [See policy FDB(LEGAL) for more information.]

### **Safety Transfers/Assignments**

The board or its designee will honor a parent's request to transfer his or her child to another classroom or campus if the district has determined that the child has been a victim of bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by Education Code 37.0832.

The board may transfer a student who has engaged in bullying to another classroom.

Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the Administrative Consultant for more information.

[See **Bullying** on page 25, and policies FDB and FFI for more information.]

The district will honor a parent's request for the transfer of his or her child if the child attends a school identified by the Texas Education Agency as persistently dangerous or if the child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds.

[See policy FDE for more information.]

The board will honor a parent's request for the transfer of his or her child if the child has been the victim of sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether the assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for the assault. In accordance with policy FDE, if the victim does not wish to transfer, the board will transfer the assailant.

### **Student Use of a Service/Assistance Animal**

A parent of a student who uses a service/assistance animal because of the student's disability must submit a written request to the Administrative Consultant before bringing the service/assistance animal on campus. The district will try to accommodate a request as soon as possible but will do so within ten district business days.

### **A Student in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)**

A student in the conservatorship (custody) of the state who enrolls in the district after the beginning of the school year will be allowed credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year.

The district will assess the student's available records to determine transfer of credit for subjects and courses taken before the student's enrollment in the district.

The district will award partial course credit when the student only passes one half of a two-half course. [For provisions on partial course credit for students who are not in the conservatorship of the state, see EI(LOCAL).]

A student in the conservatorship of the state who is moved outside the district's or school's attendance boundaries—or who is initially placed in the conservatorship of the state and moved outside the district's or school's boundaries—is entitled to remain at the school the student was attending prior to the placement or move until the student reaches the highest grade level at that particular school.

For a student in the conservatorship of the state who is eligible for a tuition and fee exemption under state law and likely to be in care on the day preceding the student's 18th birthday, the district will:

- Assist the student with the completion of applications for admission or financial aid;



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- Arrange and accompany the student on campus visits;
- Assist in researching and applying for private or institution-sponsored scholarships;
- Identify whether the student is a candidate for appointment to a military academy;
- Assist the student in registering and preparing for college entrance examinations, including (subject to the availability of funds) arranging for the payment of examination fees by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS); and
- Coordinate contact between the student and a liaison officer for students formerly in the conservatorship of the state.

[See **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration** on page 33, and **Students in Foster Care** on page 63.]

### **A Student Who Is Homeless**

A student who is homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain district provisions, including:

- Proof of residency requirements;
- Immunization requirements;
- Educational program placement (if the student is unable to provide previous academic records or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness);
- Credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year (if the student enrolled in the district after the beginning of the school year), per State Board of Education (SBOE) rules;
- Assessment of the student's available records to determine transfer of credit for subjects and courses taken before the student's enrollment in the district;
- Awarding partial credit when a student passes only one half of a two-half course;
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities; and
- Graduation requirements.

Federal law allows a student who is homeless to remain enrolled in the "school of origin" or to enroll in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied by the district's eligibility, school selection, or enrollment decision may appeal through policy FNG(LOCAL). The district will expedite local timelines, when possible, for prompt dispute resolution.

[See **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration** on page 33, and **Students who are Homeless** on page 63.]

### **A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services**

For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individuals listed below to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services.

This system will link students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine whether the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

### Special Education Referrals

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

**Note:** A request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally; it does not need to be made in writing. Districts must still comply with all federal prior-written notices and procedural safeguard requirements as well as the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of having a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district to respond within the 15 school-day timeline.

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

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

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

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

### Contact Person for Special Education Referrals

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

Pam Seipp, Administrative Consultant; [peipp@doss.txed.net](mailto:peipp@doss.txed.net) or 830-669-2411.

### Section 504 Referrals

Each school district must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's Section 504 program. Districts must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes:

- Notice,
- An opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records,
- An impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and
- A review procedure.

### Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals

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

Pam Seipp, Administrative Consultant; [peipp@doss.txed.net](mailto:peipp@doss.txed.net) or 830-669-2411.

[See **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504** on page 20.]

Visit these websites for information regarding students with disabilities and the family:

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

### Notification to Parents of Intervention Strategies for Learning Difficulties Provided to Students in General Education

In accordance with state law, the district will annually notify parents if their child receives assistance for learning difficulties. Details of such assistance can include intervention strategies. This notice is not intended for those students already enrolled in a special education program.

### A Student Who Receives Special Education Services with Other School-Aged Children in the Home

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, state law permits the parent or guardian to request that other students residing in the household be transferred to the same campus—if the grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus.

The student receiving special education services would be entitled to transportation; however, the district is not required to provide transportation to other children in the household.

The parent or guardian should contact the school Administrative Consultant regarding transportation needs prior to requesting a transfer for other children in the home. [See policy FDB(LOCAL) for more information.]

**A Student Who Speaks a Primary Language Other than English**

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English.

If the student qualifies for these services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

[See **English Learners** on page 40 and **Special Programs** on page 61.]

**A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504**

A student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law—and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services—may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine whether the student needs services and supports under Section 504 in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as defined in federal law.

[See **A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services** on page 17 and policy FB for more information.]

## Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students

This section contains important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements.

It is organized alphabetically to serve as a quick-reference guide. Where applicable, the topics are further organized by grade level.

Parents and children should take a moment together to become familiar with the issues addressed in this section. For guidance on a particular topic, please contact: Pam Seipp, Administrative Consultant; 830-669-2411 or at [pseipp@doss.txed.net](mailto:pseipp@doss.txed.net).

### Absences/Attendance

Regular school attendance is essential. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's education. The student and parent should avoid unnecessary absences.

Two important state laws—one dealing with compulsory attendance and the other with how attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or course credit—are discussed below.

### Compulsory Attendance

#### Prekindergarten and Kindergarten

Students enrolled in prekindergarten or kindergarten are required to attend school and are subject to the compulsory attendance requirements as long as they remain enrolled.

#### Ages 6–18

State law requires that a student who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reached their 19th birthday, shall attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended-year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

State law requires a student in kindergarten–grade 2 to attend any assigned accelerated reading instruction program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program based on a diagnostic reading instrument.

A student will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program before or after school or during the summer if the student does not meet the passing standards on an applicable subject area state assessment.

#### Age 19 and Older

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 19th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year. If the student incurs more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the district may revoke the student's enrollment. The student's presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. [See policy FEA for more information.]

## Compulsory Attendance—Exemptions

### All Grade Levels

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for the following activities and events, as long as the student makes up all work:

- Religious holidays;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining U.S. citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student;
- Absences resulting from a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes a student's attendance infeasible, with certification by a physician;
- For students in the conservatorship of the state,
  - An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
  - Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

For children of military families, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian going to, on leave from, or returning from certain deployments. [See **Children of Military Families** on page 15.]

Note that documented health-care appointments may include telehealth appointments. Students who are physically on campus will not be allowed to participate in telehealth or other online appointments without specific authorization from an appropriate administrator. Students should not use district-issued technology, including wifi or internet, for telehealth appointments because use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district. For more information, see **Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices** on page 61

### Compulsory Attendance—Failure to Comply

School employees must investigate and report violations of the compulsory attendance law.

A student absent without permission from school, any class, any required special program, or any required tutorial will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

### Students with Disabilities

If a student with a disability is experiencing attendance issues, the student's ARD or Section 504 committee will determine whether the attendance issues warrant an evaluation, a reevaluation, and/or modifications to the student's individualized education program or Section 504 plan, as appropriate.

### Ages 6–18

When a student ages 6–18 incurs three or more unexcused absences within a four-week period, the law requires the school to send notice to the parent. The notice will:

- Remind the parent of his or her duty to monitor the student’s attendance and require the student to attend school;
- Request a conference between school administrators and the parent; and
- Inform the parent that the district will initiate truancy prevention measures, including a behavior improvement plan, school-based community service, referrals to counseling or other social services, or other appropriate measures.

The truancy prevention facilitator for the district is:

Pam Seipp, Administrative Consultant; [peipp@doss.txed.net](mailto:peipp@doss.txed.net) or 830-669-2411

A court of law may impose penalties against the parent if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. The district may file a complaint against the parent if the student incurs ten or more unexcused absences within a six-month period in the same school year.

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

[See policies FEA(LEGAL) and FED(LEGAL) for more information.]

### Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (All Grade Levels)

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student must attend the class at least 90 percent of the days it is offered. A student who attends fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered will be referred to the attendance review committee. The committee will determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit or a final grade.

[See policy FEC for more information.]

With the exception of absences due to serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment, all absences, excused or unexcused, may be held against a student’s attendance requirement. To determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for any absences, the attendance committee will consider:

- Whether the student has mastered the essential knowledge and skills and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- Whether the student has completed makeup work satisfactorily. If the student completes makeup work, absences listed under **Compulsory Attendance — Exemptions** on page 22 and absences for extracurricular activities will be considered extenuating circumstances.
- Whether the student or the student’s parent had any control over the absences.
- Any information presented by the student or parent to the committee about the absences.

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

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

The district will take official attendance every day at **9:00 a.m.** which is during the second instructional hour as required by state rule.

A student absent for any portion of the day, should follow the procedures below to provide documentation of the absence.

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

A parent must provide an explanation for any absence upon the student's arrival or return to school. The student must submit a note signed by the parent. The campus may accept a phone call from the parent but reserves the right to require a written note. The campus will document in its attendance records whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

**Note:** The district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence, unless the absence is an exemption under compulsory attendance laws.

### **Doctor's Note after an Absence for Illness (All Grade Levels)**

Within 3 days of returning to school, a student, absent for more than 5 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 absence. Otherwise, the absence may be considered unexcused and in violation of compulsory attendance laws.

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the Administrative Consultant may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the absence to determine whether an absence will be excused or unexcused.

### **Certification of Absence Due to Severe Illness or Treatment**

If a student is absent because of a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes a student's attendance infeasible, a parent must provide certification from a physician licensed to practice in Texas specifying the student's illness and the anticipated period of absence related to the illness or treatment.

### **Accountability under State and Federal Law (All Grade Levels)**

Doss CCSD and each of its campuses are held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of accountability is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, including:

- The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the district, compiled by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), based on academic factors and ratings;
- A School Report Card (SRC) for each campus in the district, compiled by TEA;
- The district's financial management report, which includes the financial accountability rating assigned to the district by TEA; and



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

Accountability information can be found on the district's website at <http://www.dossccsd.org/>. Hard copies of any reports are available upon request to the district's administration office.

TEA maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at [TEA Performance Reporting Division](#).

### Awards and Honors (All Grade Levels)

**Pre-K and Kindergarten** – Star Student and Perfect Attendance will be recognized every six weeks.

**Pre-K and Kindergarten** – Star Student and Perfect Attendance for the school year will be awarded at the End of Year Awards Program.

**Grades 1-8** – A Honor Roll, A-B Honor Roll, Star Student, and Perfect Attendance will be recognized every six weeks.

### Bullying (All Grade Levels)

The district strives to prevent bullying, in accordance with the district's policies, by promoting a respectful school climate; encouraging reporting of bullying incidents, including anonymous reporting; and investigating and addressing reported bullying incidents.

Bullying is defined in state law as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Bullying includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined in state law as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of:

- A cellular or other type of telephone
- A computer
- A camera

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- Electronic mail
- Instant messaging
- Text messaging
- A social media application
- An internet website
- Any other internet-based communication tool.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include: hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, ostracism.

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or witnesses the bullying of another student, the student or parent should notify a teacher, school counselor, Administrative Consultant, or another district employee as soon as possible. Procedures for reporting allegations of bullying may be found on the district's website.

A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by mailing a provided form, found on our website at <http://www.dossccsd.org/>, to the school office at:

Doss CCSD

Attn: Administrative Consultant

P.O. Box 50

Doss, Texas 78618

The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying and related misconduct. The district will also provide notice to the parent of the alleged victim and the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in bullying.

If an investigation determines that bullying occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action and may, in certain circumstances, notify law enforcement. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying.

Available counseling options will be provided to the affected individuals, including any student who witnessed the bullying.

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

Upon recommendation of the administration, the board may transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's parent, the board may transfer the student to another campus in the district.

The parent of a student who has been determined to be a victim of bullying may request that the student be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district. [See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 16.]

A copy of the district's bullying policy is available in the Administrative Consultant's office, superintendent's office, and on the district's website, and is included at the end of this handbook as an appendix.

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

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 16, **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 34, **Hazing** on page 43, policy FFI, the district's Student Code of Conduct, and the district improvement plan, a copy of which can be viewed in the campus office.]

District policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap in its vocational programs, services, or activities, as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

District policy also prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The district will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation in all educational and vocational programs.

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

[See **Nondiscrimination Statement** on page 53 for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator and ADA/Section 504 coordinator.]

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

Although a parent or grandparent may provide food to share for a school-designated function or for a student's birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss any classroom allergies with the teacher before bringing food to share.

Occasionally, the school or a class may host functions or celebrations tied to the curriculum that involve food. The school or teacher will notify students and parents of any known food allergies when soliciting potential volunteers to provide food. [See **Food Allergies** on page 48.]

There will be four designated special celebrations throughout the school year: Character Day Celebration, Christmas Party, Valentine's Day Party, and Easter Party

### **Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children (All Grade Levels)**

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at <https://pol.tasb.org/policy/code/509?filter=ffg>

Trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking.

### **Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child.

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

A child who has been or is being sexually abused may exhibit physical, behavioral, or emotional warning signs, including:

- Difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches;
- 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; or
- Withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

Be aware that children and adolescents who have experienced dating violence may show similar physical, behavioral, and emotional warning signs. [See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 34.]

### Warning Signs of Trafficking

Child trafficking of any sort is prohibited by the Penal Code. Sex trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, into sexual abuse, assault, indecency, prostitution, or pornography. Labor trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, to engage in forced labor or services.

Traffickers are often trusted members of a child's community, such as friends, romantic partners, family members, mentors, and coaches, although traffickers frequently make contact with victims online.

Possible warning signs of sexual trafficking in children include:

- Changes in school attendance, habits, friend groups, vocabulary, demeanor, and attitude;
- Sudden appearance of expensive items (for example, manicures, designer clothes, purses, technology);
- Tattoos or branding;
- Refillable gift cards;
- Frequent runaway episodes;
- Multiple phones or social media accounts;
- Provocative pictures posted online or stored on the phone;
- Unexplained injuries;
- Isolation from family, friends, and community; and
- Older romantic partners.

Additional warning signs of labor trafficking in children include:

- Being unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips;
- Being employed but not having a school-authorized work permit;
- Being employed and having a work permit but clearly working outside the permitted hours for students;

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- Owing a large debt and being unable to pay it off;
- Not being allowed breaks at work or being subjected to excessively long work hours;
- Being overly concerned with pleasing an employer and/or deferring personal or educational decisions to a boss;
- Not being in control of his or her own money;
- Living with an employer or having an employer listed as a student's caregiver; and
- A desire to quit a job but not being allowed to do so.

### **Reporting and Responding to Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children**

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

A child who has experienced sexual abuse or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Children may be more reluctant to disclose sexual abuse than physical abuse and neglect and may only disclose sexual abuse indirectly. As a parent or trusted adult, 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.

If your child is a victim of sexual abuse, trafficking, or other maltreatment, the school counselor or Administrative Consultant will provide information on counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs.

To find out what services may be available in your county, see [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County](#).

Reports of abuse, trafficking, or neglect may be made to the CPS division of the DFPS at 1-800-252-5400 or on the web at [Texas Abuse Hotline Website](#).

### **Further Resources on Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children**

The following websites might help you become more aware of child abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children:

- [Child Welfare Information Gateway Factsheet](#)
- [KidsHealth, For Parents, Child Abuse](#)
- [Office of the Texas Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team](#)
- [Human Trafficking of School-aged Children](#)
- [Child Sexual Abuse: A Parental Guide from the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault](#)
- [National Center of Safe Supportive Learning Environments: Child Labor Trafficking](#)

## Communications (All Grade Levels)

### Parent Contact Information

A parent is legally required to provide in writing the parent's contact information, including address, phone number, and email address. A parent must provide the contact information to the district upon enrollment and again within two weeks after the beginning of each following school year while the student is enrolled in the district. If the parent's contact information changes during the school year, the parent must update the information in writing no more than two weeks after the date the information changes.

A parent may update contact information by emailing: Elise Studer, Administrative Assistant, at [estuder@doss.txed.net](mailto:estuder@doss.txed.net).

### Emergency Communications

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or social media messages. An emergency situation may include early dismissal, delayed opening, or restricted access to the campus due to severe weather, other emergencies, or a security threat. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number changes.

[See **Safety** on page 57 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.]

### Nonemergency Communications

Your child's school periodically sends information by text messages, or real-time phone or email communications that are closely related to the school's mission and specific to your child, your child's school, or the district. Standard messaging rates of your wireless phone carrier may apply. If you do not wish to receive such communications, please contact your child's Administrative Consultant. [See **Safety** on page 57 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency.]

### Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed informally by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or Administrative Consultant.

For those complaints and concerns that cannot be resolved informally, the board has adopted a Student and Parent Complaints/Grievances policy FNG(LOCAL). This policy can be viewed in the district's policy manual, available online at <https://pol.tasb.org/policy/code/509?filter=fng>. The complaint forms can be accessed *online* at <http://www.dosccsd.org/>, or at the Doss CCSD school office.

### Conduct (All Grade Levels)

#### Applicability of School Rules

The board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that defines standards of acceptable behavior—on and off campus, during remote and in-person instruction, and on district vehicles—and outlines consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with

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the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules.

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

To file a formal complaint a parent or student should complete and submit the complaint form. In general, the written complaint form should be completed and submitted to the Administrative Consultant in a timely manner.

If the concern is not resolved, a parent or student may request a conference with the Administrative Consultant. If the concern is still unresolved, the district provides a process for parents and students to appeal to the board of trustees.

### Campus Behavior Coordinator

Each campus has a campus behavior coordinator to apply discipline management techniques and administer consequences for certain student misconduct, as well as provide a point of contact for student misconduct. The contact information for each campus behavior coordinator is available on the district's website at <http://www.dossccsd.org/> and the coordinator for this campus is listed below:

Pam Seipp, Administrative Consultant; [peipp@doss.txed.net](mailto:peipp@doss.txed.net) or 830-669-2411

### Deliveries

Except in emergencies, delivery of messages or packages to students will not be allowed during instructional time. A parent may leave a message or a package, such as a forgotten lunch, for the student to pick up from the front office during a passing period or lunch.

### Disruption of School Operations

Disruption of school operations is not tolerated and may constitute a misdemeanor offense. As identified by state 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 or within 500 feet of district property 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 is also considered a disruption.

### **Social Events**

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

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

A parent interested in serving as a chaperone for any school social events should contact the Administrative Consultant.

### **Academic Counseling**

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

The Administrative Consultant is available to students and parents to discuss the importance of planning for postsecondary education, including appropriate coursework and financial aid availability and requirements. In either grade 7 or 8, each student will receive instruction on how best to prepare for high school, college, and a career.

#### **Personal Counseling (All Grade Levels)**

As a parent, if you are concerned about your child's mental or emotional health, please speak with the Administrative Consultant for a list of resources that may be of assistance. If your child has experienced trauma, contact the Administrative Consultant for more information.

[See **Mental Health Support** on page 46, and **Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children** on page 27 and **Dating Violence** on page 34.]

#### **Credit by Examination—If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject (Grades 6–12)**

A student who has previously taken a course or subject but did not receive credit or a final grade for it may, in circumstances determined by the Administrative Consultant or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit or a final grade by passing an examination approved by the district's board of trustees on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject.

Examples of prior instruction include incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a non-accredited school. The opportunity



to earn credit by examination after the student has had prior instruction is sometimes referred to as “credit recovery.”

The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an examination. If a student is granted approval to take an examination for credit, the student must score at least 70 on the examination to receive credit for the course or subject.

[See the school counselor and policy EHDB(LOCAL) for more information.]

### **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course/Subject**

A student will be permitted to earn credit by examination for an academic course or subject area for which the student had no prior instruction for advancement or to accelerate to the next grade level.

The examinations offered by the district are approved by the district’s board of trustees. Testing windows for these examinations will be published in district publications and on the district’s website. A student may take a specific examination only once per testing window.

The only exceptions to the published testing windows will be for examinations administered by another entity or to accommodate a student experiencing homelessness or a student involved in the foster care system.

When another entity administers an examination, the student and the district must comply with the testing schedule of the other entity.

If a student plans to take an examination, the student or parent must register with the Administrative Consultant no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. [See policy EHDC for more information.]

### **Kindergarten Acceleration**

For information regarding kindergarten acceleration, contact:

Pam Seipp, Administrative Consultant; at the Doss CCSD school office (830) 669-2411

### **Students in Grades 1–5**

A student in elementary school is eligible to accelerate to the next grade level if:

- The student scores at least an 80 on each examination in the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies;
- A district administrator recommends that the student be accelerated; and
- The student’s parent gives written approval of the grade advancement.

### **Students in Grades 6–12**

A student in grade 6 or above is eligible to earn course credit with:

- A passing score of at least 80 on an examination approved by the board.

### Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (All Grade Levels)

Students learn best, and their welfare is best served, in a school environment that is free from dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

Students are expected to treat peers and district employees with courtesy and respect, avoid offensive behaviors, and stop those behaviors as directed. District employees are likewise expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly address inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. A copy of the district's policy is available in the Doss CCSD school office or at <http://www.dossccsd.org/>.

[See policy FFH for more information.]

### Dating Violence

Dating violence will not be tolerated at school. To report dating violence, [see **Reporting Procedures**, on page 36]. 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 or any of the person's past or subsequent partners. This type of conduct is considered harassment if it is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

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

In accordance with law, when the district receives a report of dating violence, a district official will immediately notify the parent of the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator.

The Administrative Consultant's office has information about the dangers of dating violence and resources for seeking help.

For more information on dating violence, see:

- Texas Attorney General's office [recognizing and responding to dating violence flier](https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/child-support/papa/session%2010/recognizing-relationship-violence-en.pdf) (<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/child-support/papa/session%2010/recognizing-relationship-violence-en.pdf>)
- The CDC's [Preventing Teen Dating Violence](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teen-dating-violence-fastfact.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teen-dating-violence-fastfact.html>).

### Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, 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 a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance. Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation;
- Threatening, intimidating, or humiliating conduct;
- Offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors;
- Physical aggression or assault;
- Graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or
- Other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

### Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment

Sexual harassment and gender-based harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student are prohibited. Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature;
- Sexual advances;
- Jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and
- Other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact that a reasonable person would not construe as sexual in nature, such as comforting a child with a hug or taking the child's hand. However, romantic, sexual, and other inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Gender-based harassment includes physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on a student's gender, the student's expression of characteristics perceived as stereotypical for the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity.

Gender-based harassment can occur regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student may include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; Physical aggression or assault;
- Threatening or intimidating conduct; or Other kinds of aggressive conduct

### Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who makes a good-faith report or participates in an investigation of discrimination, harassment, or dating violence is prohibited. A person who makes a false claim, offers false

statements, or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

### Reporting Procedures

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

Upon receiving a report, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH. If not, the district will refer to policy FFI to determine whether the allegations, if proven, constitute bullying, as defined by law and policy FFI. If the alleged prohibited conduct also meets the statutory and policy definitions for bullying, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted. [See **Bullying** on page 25]

The district will promptly notify the parent of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district. In the event alleged prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parent of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy FFH.

### Investigation of Report

Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated. 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 comply with law.

If a law enforcement or other regulatory agency notifies the district that it is investigating the matter and requests that the district delay its investigation, the district will resume its investigation at the conclusion of the agency's investigation.

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

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

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

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

**Discrimination** [See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 34.]

## Distribution of Literature, Published Materials, or Other Documents (All Grade Levels)

### School Materials

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with the prior approval of the Administrative Consultant, sponsor, or teacher. Such items may include school posters, newspapers, yearbooks, brochures, flyers, etc. All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the Administrative Consultant.

### Non-school Materials

#### From Students

Students must obtain prior approval from the Administrative Consultant before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing more than 50 copies of written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. Approval will be granted or denied within two school days.

The Administrative Consultant designated the Doss CCSD school office as the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection by students. [See policy FNAA for more information.]

A student may appeal a decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). Any student who sells, posts, circulates, or distributes non-school material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed. [See policy FNG(LOCAL) for student complaint procedures.]

#### From Others

No person or group will sell, circulate, distribute, or post on any district premises written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that is not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization, except per policy GKDA.

To be considered for distribution, any non-school material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the Administrative Consultant for prior review. The Administrative Consultant 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 DGBA or GF for more information.]

The Administrative Consultant has designated the Doss CCSD school office as the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection. Prior review will not be required for:

- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.
- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours in accordance with policy GKD(LOCAL) or a non-curriculum-related student group meeting held in accordance with policy FNAB(LOCAL).

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- Distribution for electioneering purposes during the time a school facility is being used as a polling place, in accordance with state law.

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

### Dress and Grooming (All Grade Levels)

The district's dress code teaches grooming and hygiene, prevents disruption, minimizes safety hazards, and maintains a positive learning climate. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following:

- Any clothing advertising drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or profanity is not permitted.
- Abbreviated tops and/or spaghetti straps are not permitted. Midriffs or undergarments are not to be exposed.
- Dresses or shorts, shorter than mid-thigh are not permitted. Shorts or bloomers must be worn under dresses.
- No caps or hats are permitted in the school building.
- Shoes must be worn at all times. For PE/recess/farming, closed-toed, rubber sole shoes are to be worn.
- No visible tattoos (permanent or temporary). All tattoos must be covered.
- Make-up and/or fake or sculptured/acrylic nails are not allowed.
- Earrings will be permitted on females only. They must be of reasonable size and style and worn only in earlobes. No facial ring will be permitted. No other visible piercing is allowed.
- Hair must be groomed. Hair cannot be cut or colored so as to cause disruption or interfere with normal school activities. This includes, but is not limited to Mohawks, shaved designs, or unnatural hair colors.
- Boys' hair length cannot exceed the top of a regular collar. Boys will not have facial hair.

***The Administrative Consultant reserves the right to extend the dress and hair code to include attire not listed specifically above, but which is deemed to be inappropriate.***

If the Administrative Consultant determines that a student's grooming or clothing violates the school's dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school and return to the classroom. If the problem cannot be corrected at school, the Administrative Consultant will work with the student and parent to obtain an acceptable change of clothing for the student in a way that minimizes loss of instructional time.

Repeated or severe offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### Electronic Devices and Technology Resources (All Grade Levels)

#### Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Cell Phones, and Other Electronic Devices

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The district permits students to possess personal cell phones for safety purposes; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. [See **Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials** on page 64 for graphing calculator applications on computing devices.]

A student must have approval to possess other personal telecommunications devices on campus such as laptops, tablets, or other portable computers.

Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the Administrative Consultant's office. The Administrative Consultant will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

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

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

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

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See **Searches** on page 60 and policy FNF for more information.]

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

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

Students must obtain prior approval to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook).

All personal devices must be turned off during the instructional day when not in use for approved instructional purposes. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

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

District-owned technology resources may be issued to individual students for instructional purposes. Use of the district's network systems and equipment is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### **Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources**

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, whether on district-

owned or personally owned equipment, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content—commonly referred to as “sexting”—will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement.

This type of behavior may constitute bullying or harassment, as well as impede future endeavors of a student. We encourage parents to review with their child the ["Before You Text" Sexting Prevention Course](#), a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of sexting.

Any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the district’s computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. In some cases, the consequence may be expulsion.

### **English Learners (All Grade Levels)**

A student who is an English learner is entitled to receive specialized services from the district. A Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC), consisting of both district personnel and at least one parent representative, will determine whether the student qualifies for services. The student’s parent must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC. However, pending the receipt of parental consent or denial of services, an eligible student will receive the services to which the student is entitled and eligible.

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

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR Spanish, as mentioned at **Standardized Testing** on page 62, may be administered to an English learner up to grade 5. In limited circumstances, a student’s LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to English learners who qualify for services.

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

### **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations (All Grade Levels)**

Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships.

Some extracurricular activities may include off-campus events. Students are required to use transportation provided by the district to and from the events. Exceptions may only be made with the approval of the activity’s coach or sponsor. [See **Transportation** on page 64.]



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Eligibility for many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL), a statewide association overseeing inter-district competition. If a student is involved in an academic, athletic, or music activity governed by UIL, the student and parent are expected to know and follow all rules of the UIL organization. Students and parents can access the UIL Parent Information Manual at [UIL Parent Information Manual](#). A hard copy can be provided by the coach or sponsor of the activity on request.

To report alleged noncompliance with required safety training or an alleged violation of safety rules required by law and the UIL, please contact the curriculum division of TEA at (512) 463-9581 or [curriculum@tea.texas.gov](mailto:curriculum@tea.texas.gov). [See [UIL Texas](#) for additional information on all UIL-governed activities.]

Generally, a student who receives a grade below 70 at the end of a grading period in any academic class may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.

However, if a student receives a grade below 70 at the end of a grading period in an Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) course, or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or languages other than English, the student remains eligible for participation in all extracurricular activities.

If a student is enrolled in a state-approved course that requires demonstration of the mastery of an essential knowledge and skills in public performance and the student receives a grade below 70 in any course at the end of the grading period, the student may participate in a performance so long as the general public is invited.

In addition, the following applies to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives special education services and who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three schoolweeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse but may not participate in any competitive activity.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to 10 absences not related to post-district competition. 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 be considered an unexcused absence.

### Standards of Behavior

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

### Fees (All Grade Levels)

Basic educational program materials are provided at no charge to a student. However, a student is expected to provide his or her own supplies, such as pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks. A student may also be required to pay certain other costs, fees, or deposits, including:

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- Materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student health and accident insurance.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A maximum fee of \$50 for an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit or has not been awarded a final grade because of absences and whose parent chooses the program for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirements. 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 Administrative Consultant. [See policy FP for more information.]

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

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fundraising drives for approved school purposes in accordance with administrative regulations. [See policies FJ and GE for more information.]

### **Gang-Free Zones (All Grade Levels)**

Certain criminal offenses, including gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next-highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. Gang-free zones include a school bus and any location in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

**Gender-Based Harassment** [See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 34.]

### **Grading Guidelines (All Grade Levels)**

Approved grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated to students and their parents by the classroom teacher. These guidelines establish:

- The minimum number of assignments, projects, and examinations required for each grading period;
- How the student's mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.);
- Circumstances under which a student will be allowed to redo an assignment or retake an examination the student originally failed; and

- Procedures for a student to follow after an absence.

[See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 57 for additional information on grading guidelines.]

**Harassment** [See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 34.]

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

Hazing is defined as an intentional, knowing, or reckless act, on or off campus, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student for the purpose of pledging, initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in a student organization if the act meets the elements in Education Code 37.151, including:

- Any type of physical brutality;
- An activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the student's mental or physical health, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement to small spaces, calisthenics, or consumption of food, liquids, drugs, or other substances;
- An activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that violates the Penal Code; and
- Coercing a student to consume a drug or alcoholic beverage in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe the student is intoxicated.

The district will not tolerate hazing. Disciplinary consequences for hazing will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. It is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report this to the Administrative Consultant or superintendent.

[See **Bullying** on page 25 and policies FFI and FNCC for more information.]

### **Health—Physical and Mental**

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

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she will not be attending that day.

State rules require schools to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for certain periods of time. For example, if a child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications. Students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea-free without use of diarrhea-suppressing medications for 24 hours.

A parent should contact the Administrative Consultant if a student has been diagnosed with COVID-19. A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the Administrative Consultant.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, and the Administrative Consultant determines that the child should go home, the Administrative Assistant will contact the parent.

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

Contact the Doss CCSD school office to answer any questions for parents who are concerned about whether or not their child should stay home.

### Immunization (All Grade Levels)

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

For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained online at: [Affidavit Request for Exemption from Immunization](#) or by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347. The form must be notarized and submitted to the Administrative Consultant or school nurse within 90 days of notarization.

If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student. The immunizations required are:

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis
- Polio
- Measles, mumps, and rubella
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- Meningococcal
- Hepatitis A

The Administrative Assistant can provide information on immunization requirements. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. registered and licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or a member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a lifelong condition.

For information on immunization against bacterial meningitis and college enrollment and attendance, see **Bacterial Meningitis** on page 48.

[See the DSHS website: [Texas School & Child Care Facility Immunization Requirements](#) and policy FFAB(LEGAL) for more information.]

### Lice (All Grade Levels)

Head lice is very common among children. Although not an illness or a disease, it spreads easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, nap time, and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones.

The district does not require or recommend that students be removed from school because of lice or nits.

If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the Administrative Consultant or Assistant will contact the student's parent to discuss a treatment plan using an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student undergoes one treatment, the parent should contact the school nurse to discuss the treatment used. The Administrative Assistant can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments, how best to get rid of lice, and how to prevent lice from returning.

The district will provide notice to parents of elementary school students in an affected classroom without identifying the student with lice.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website [Managing Head Lice in School Settings and at Home](#).

[See policy FFAA for more information.]

### Medicine at School (All Grade Levels)

If a student must take medication during school hours, the student's parent must provide the medication. All medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, must be kept in the office and be administered by an authorized district employee. A student may be authorized to possess his or her own medication because of asthma or a severe allergy as described below or as otherwise allowed by law.

The district will not purchase nonprescription medication to give to a student.

In accordance with policy FFAC, authorized employees 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 provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Nonprescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request. **Note:** Insect repellent is considered a nonprescription medication.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

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

At the elementary level, a student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to the student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and asks for help applying it. A student at this level may apply his or her own sunscreen if the student is able to do so.

Whether a student is at the elementary or secondary level, if sunscreen needs to be administered to treat any type of medical condition, this should be handled through communication with the Administrative Assistant so that the district is made aware of any safety and medical issues.

### Asthma and Severe Allergic Reactions

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may 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 health-care provider and 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 Doss CCSD Administrative Consultant. See also, **Food Allergies** on page 48.

### Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels)

The district has implemented programs to address the following mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse concerns:

- Mental health promotion and early intervention;
- Building skills to manage emotions, establish and maintain positive relationships, and engage in responsible decision-making;
- Suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention (interventions after a suicide in a community);
- Grief, trauma, and trauma-informed care;
- Positive behavior interventions and supports;
- Safe, supportive, and positive school climates;
- Substance abuse prevention and intervention.

If a student has been hospitalized or placed in residential treatment for a mental health condition or substance abuse, the district has procedures to support the student's return to school. Please contact the district's mental health liaison for further information.

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 psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication that is intended to alter perception, emotion, mood, or behavior.

For related information, see:

- **Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation** on page 6 and **Consent to Provide a Mental Health Care Service on page 8**, the district's procedures for recommending a mental health intervention and the mental health liaison's contact information;
- **Counseling** on page 39 for the district's comprehensive school counseling program;
- **Physical and Mental Health Resources** on page 49 for campus and community mental and physical health resources; and
- **Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health** on page 49 for board-adopted policies and administrative procedures that promote student health.

## Physical Activity Requirements

### Elementary School

The district will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten–grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day for at least four semesters, in accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA.

For additional information on the district’s elementary school student physical activity programs and requirements, please see the Administrative Consultant.

### Temporary Restriction from Participation in Physical Education

Students who are temporarily restricted from participation in physical education will not actively participate in skill demonstration but will remain in class to learn the concepts of the lessons.

### Physical Fitness Assessment (Grades 3–8)

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to obtain the results of his or her child’s physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year by contacting the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at the Doss CCSD school office (830) 669-2411.

## Physical Health Screenings/Examinations

### Spinal Screening Program

School-based spinal screening helps identify adolescents with abnormal spinal curvature at an early stage, when the curve is mild and may go unnoticed. Early detection is key to controlling spinal deformities.

Spinal screening is non-invasive and conducted in accordance with the most recent, nationally accepted and peer-reviewed standards.

All students who meet the Texas Department of State Health Services criteria will be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. As appropriate, students will be referred for follow-up with their physician.

For information on spinal screening by an outside professional or exemption from spinal screening based on religious beliefs, contact the superintendent or see policy FFAA(LEGAL).

### Other Examinations and Screenings (All Grade Levels)

Students are required to undergo a risk assessment for Type 2 diabetes at the same time the district screens students for hearing and vision issues or for abnormal spinal curvatures. [See policy FFAA]

### Special Health Concerns (All Grade Levels)

#### Bacterial Meningitis (All Grade Levels)

Please see the district's website at <http://www.dosccsd.org/> for information regarding meningitis.

#### Diabetes

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 Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at the Doss CCSD school office (830) 669-2411 for information. [See policy FFAF(LEGAL) for more information.]

#### Food Allergies (All Grade Levels)

Parents should notify the district when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially an allergy that could result in dangerous or life-threatening reactions either by breathing, eating, or touching the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse or campus Administrative Consultant if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, based on the Texas Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) "Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis" found on the DSHS website at [Allergies and Anaphylaxis](#).

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

#### Seizures (All Grade Levels)

To address the care of a student with a seizure disorder while at school or participating in a school activity, a parent may submit a seizure management and treatment plan to the district before the beginning of the school year, upon enrollment of the student, or as soon as practicable following diagnosis of a seizure disorder.

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

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, electronic cigarette (e-cigarette), or any other electronic vaporizing device while on school property or while attending an off-campus school-related activity.

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



### Health-Related Resources, Policies, and Procedures

#### Physical and Mental Health Resources (All Grade Levels)

Parents and students in need of assistance with physical and mental health concerns may contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at the Doss CCSD school office (830) 669-2411 for more information.

#### Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health (All Grade Levels)

The district has adopted board policies that promote student physical and mental health. (LOCAL) policies on the topics below can be found in the district's policy manual, available at <http://www.dossccsd.org/>.

- Food and nutrition management: CO, COA, COB
- Wellness and Health Services: FFA
- Physical Examinations: FFAA
- Immunizations: FFAB
- Medical Treatment: FFAC
- Communicable Diseases: FFAD
- School-Based Health Centers: FFAE
- Care Plans: FFAF
- Crisis Intervention: FFB
- Trauma-informed Care: FFBA
- Student Support Services: FFC
- Student Safety: FFF
- Child Abuse and Neglect: FFG
- Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation: FFH
- Freedom from Bullying: FFI

In addition, the District Improvement Plan details the district's strategies to improve student performance through evidence-based practices that address physical and mental health. The district has developed administrative procedures as necessary to implement the above policies and plans.

For further information regarding these procedures and access to the District Improvement Plan, please contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp, at (830) 669-2411.

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

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) held meetings. For additional information regarding the district's SHAC, contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp, at (830) 669-2411.

## Student-Parent Handbook

Notification of upcoming SHAC meetings will be posted at each campus administrative office at least 72 hours before the meeting. Notification of upcoming SHAC meetings, meeting minutes, and a recording of each meeting will be posted in the Doss CCSD school office.

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

To encourage healthy habits in our students, the district has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement it. For questions about the content or implementation of the district's wellness policy and plan, please contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp, at (830) 669-2411.

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

Homework has a place in the learning process. Practicing at home the skills taught at school are essential if the student is to attain the stature in his or her world, community, and home that is expected of him/her.

Students will be assigned exercises/activities/projects for completion at home which will help them practice skills/concepts taught at school. Tests will be scheduled to allow for opportunity to study at home. Parents are urged to set aside a daily time and workspace for homework.

Good study habits may originate in school, but must be developed in the home, on the student's own initiative and with the wholesome support of his/her parents and community.

### **Law Enforcement Agencies (All Grade Levels)**

#### **Questioning of Students**

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the Administrative Consultant will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, including without parental consent, if necessary, if it is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances, the Administrative Consultant will:

- Verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question the student at school.
- Ordinarily make reasonable efforts to notify the parents, unless the interviewer raises what the Administrative Consultant considers to be a valid objection.
- Ordinarily be present for the questioning or interview, unless the interviewer raises what the Administrative Consultant 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.

## Student-Parent Handbook

- 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 law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs for comparison in an investigation.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs to establish a student's identity where the child may have engaged in conduct indicating a need for supervision, such as running away.
- 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 (CPS), Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), 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 from a juvenile court to take a student into custody.

Before a student is released to a legally authorized person, the Administrative Consultant will verify the person's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the person's authority to take custody of the student.

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

### Notification of Law Violations

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been taken into custody, arrested, or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors that occur in school, on school property, or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property. These personnel will also be notified if the Administrative Consultant has reasonable grounds to believe the student has engaged in certain conduct.
- All appropriate district personnel regarding a student who is required to register as a sex offender. [See policy GRAA(LEGAL) for more information.]

### Leaving Campus (All Grade Levels)

Remember that student attendance is crucial. Appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours if possible. Absent extenuating circumstances, students will not regularly be released before the end of the school day.

State rules require parental consent before any student leaves campus for any part of the school day.

## Student-Parent Handbook

For students in elementary and middle school, a parent or authorized adult must come to the office and show identification to sign the student out. A campus representative will ask the student to report to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, we cannot allow any unescorted adult to go to the classroom or other area to pick up the student. If the student returns to campus the same day, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student back in through the main office upon the student's return. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse or other district personnel determines that the student should go home, the nurse will contact the student's parent and document the parent's wishes regarding release from school. Under no circumstances will a student in elementary or middle school be released unaccompanied.

### **During Lunch**

Off campus lunch is discouraged. Students will only be allowed to leave campus for lunch if necessary and signed out by parent or legal guardian only. The parent must sign the student in and out from the district office.

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

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

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

### **Lost and Found (All Grade Levels)**

A lost and found collection box is located in the campus office. A student who loses an item should check the lost and found box. The district discourages bringing personal items of high monetary value to school, as the district is not responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of each semester.

### **Makeup Work**

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

A teacher may assign makeup work to a student who misses class based on instructional objectives and the needs of the student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or meeting subject or course requirements.

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

## Student-Parent Handbook

The student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time so that the teacher and student may plan any makeup work. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school. With limited exceptions, all absences count for the 90 percent threshold set in state law regarding attendance for credit or final grade. [See **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade** on page 23.]

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

### **DAEP Makeup Work**

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

For questions regarding DAEP Makeup Work, please contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411.

#### **In-School Suspension (ISS) and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) Makeup Work (All Grade Levels)**

#### **Alternative Means to Receive Coursework**

While a student is in ISS or OSS, the district will provide the student with all course work for the student's foundation curriculum classes that the student misses as a result of the suspension.

#### **Opportunity to Complete Courses**

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

#### **Nondiscrimination Statement (All Grade Levels)**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, the district does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law in providing education services, activities, and programs, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The district provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

In accordance with Title IX, the district does not and is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The requirement not to discriminate extends employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the district's Title IX Coordinator (see below), to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

Other federal laws that prohibit discrimination include Title VI, Section 504, the Age Discrimination Act, the Boy Scouts Act, and Title II.

The district has designated and authorized the following employee as the Title IX Coordinator to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, or gender-based harassment: Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411.

Reports can be made at any time and by any person, including during non-business hours, by mail, phone, or email. During district business hours, reports may also be made in person. Upon the district receiving notice or an allegation of sex-based harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly respond in accordance with the process described at FFH(LOCAL).

The following district representatives have been designated to address concerns or inquiries about other kinds of discrimination: For concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability, see the ADA/Section 504 Coordinator: Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411. For all other concerns regarding discrimination, contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411.

[See policies FB, FFH, and GKD for more information.]

### Parent and Family Engagement (All Grade Levels)

#### Working Together

Experience and research tell us that a child succeeds in education with good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. A parent's involvement and engagement in this partnership may include:

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child every day 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 your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the school counselor or Administrative Consultant any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements and options for graduation with your child in middle school and again while your child is enrolled in high school.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** on page 32.]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, school counselor, or Administrative Consultant, please call the school office at (830) 669-2411 for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 57.]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [See **Volunteers** on page 67 and policy GKG for more information.]

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- Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include: Friends of Doss School – PO Box 66, Doss, TX 78618.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees that develop educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For more information, see policies BQA and BQB and contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830)669-2411.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and assisting the district in aligning local
- community values with health education instruction, and other wellness issues.
- [See **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)** on page 49 and policies BDF, EHAA, FFA for more
- information.]
- Being aware of the school’s ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child’s emotional or mental well-being.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. Regular board meetings are held on the first Tuesday each month at 7 p.m. in the school café. An agenda for a regular or special meeting is posted no later than 72 hours before each meeting and online at: <http://www.dossccsd.org/>.

[See policies BE and BED for more information.]

### **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence (All Grade Levels)**

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the Administrative Consultant to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. [See **Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags** on page 10.]

State law requires that one minute of silence follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others.

In addition, state law requires that each campus provide for the observance of one minute of silence in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, at the beginning of the first class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day. [See policy EC for more information.]

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

Each student has a right to pray individually, voluntarily, and silently or to meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt school activities. The school will not encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or 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 proficiency. In making promotion decisions, the district will consider: Teacher recommendation, Grades, Scores on criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessments, and, any other necessary academic information as determined by the district.

In addition, at certain grade levels, a student [with limited exceptions] will be required to pass the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1st and the date of the first administration of the STAAR.

### **Prekindergarten - Grade 3**

A parent may request in writing that a student repeat prekindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1, 2, or 3. Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request, and will invite the parent to participate.

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

In grades 1-8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in language arts and mathematics.

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

Certain students—some with disabilities and some classified as English language learners—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the district administrator or special education director.

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

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student at the middle school or junior high level who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment or is determined by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9. The PGP will be designed and implemented by the Administrative Consultant, teacher, or other staff member designated by the district administrator.

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 district administrator and policy EIF(LEGAL).] For a student receiving special education services, the student's IEP may serve as the student's PGP and would therefore be developed by the student's ARD committee.

**Release of Students from School** [See **Leaving Campus** on page 51.]

### **Remote Instruction**



The district may offer remote instruction in accordance with TEA guidelines. For information regarding remote instruction, contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411.

All district policies, procedures, guidelines, rules, and other expectations of student behavior will be enforced as applicable in a remote or virtual learning environment.

### **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences (All Grade Levels)**

Report cards with each student's performance and absences in each class or subject are issued at least once every **6 weeks**. At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will receive a progress report if their child's performance in any course/subject area is near or below 70 or is below the expected level of performance. If a student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be asked to schedule a conference with the teacher.

[See **Working Together** on page 54 for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the Administrative Assistant, pursuant to the board-adopted policy. Grading guidelines are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment. 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 **Grading Guidelines** on page 42 and policy EIA(LOCAL) for more information.]

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 Administrative Consultant 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.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school within **5 days**. The district may communicate academic information about a student electronically, including for progress reporting purposes. An electronic signature will be accepted by the district, but parents are entitled to request a handwritten signature of acknowledgment instead.

**Retaliation** [See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 34.]

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

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

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow all behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct or set by district employees.
- Remain alert to any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member, and promptly report any incidents to a district employee. A student may make anonymous reports about safety concerns by contacting the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.

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

### **Accident Insurance**

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

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

Periodically, the school will conduct preparedness drills of emergency procedures. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

### **Preparedness Training: CPR and Stop the Bleed**

The district will annually offer instruction in CPR at least once to students enrolled in in grades 7–12. The instruction can be provided as part of any course and is not required to result in CPR certification.

The district will annually offer students in grades 7–12 instruction on the use of bleeding control stations to respond to traumatic injury. For more information, see [Homeland Security's Stop the Bleed](#) and [Stop the Bleed Texas](#).

### **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

All parents are asked each year to complete a medical care authorization form, providing written parental consent to obtain emergency treatment and information about allergies to medications or drugs. Parents should contact the school nurse to update emergency care information (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.).

The district may consent to medical treatment, including dental treatment, if necessary, for students if:

- The district has received written authorization from a person having the right to consent;
- That person cannot be contacted; and
- That person has not given the district actual notice to the contrary.

The emergency care authorization form will be used by the district when a student's parent or authorized designee is unable to be contacted. A student may provide consent if authorized by law or court order.

Regardless of parental authorization for the district to consent to medical treatment, district employees will contact emergency medical services to provide emergency care when required by law or when deemed necessary, such as to avoid a life-threatening situation.

### **Emergency School Closing Information**

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that the district needs to notify parents of early dismissal, delayed opening, or restricted access to a campus because of severe weather, a security threat, or another emergency cause.

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number changes. State law requires parents to update contact information within two weeks after the date the information changes.

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will also alert the community in the following ways: electronic communication and radio notice. A full description and plan will be provided separately.

### **School Facilities**

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

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's asbestos management plan is available in the central administrative office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411.

#### **Food and Nutrition Services (All Grade Levels)**

The district does not participate in the School Breakfast Program or National School Lunch Program.

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

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

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area.

Parents who have questions or who want to be notified of the times and types of applications prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411.

#### **Conduct Before and After School (All Grade Levels)**

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities. Whether a school activity is on or off district premises, students must follow the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day. Misbehavior will be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

### **Use of Hallways during Class Time (All Grade Levels)**

During class times, loitering or standing in the halls is not permitted, and 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.

### **Use by Students Before and After School (All Grade Levels)**

The school lunchroom is open to students before school, beginning at 7:45 a.m. Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing an activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

Students must leave campus immediately after dismissal of school in the afternoon, unless the student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult.

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place.

### **School-Sponsored Field Trips (All Grade Levels)**

The district periodically takes students on field trips for educational purposes. A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip.

The district may ask the parent to provide information about a student's medical provider and insurance coverage and may also ask the parent to sign a waiver allowing for emergency medical treatment in the case of a student accident or illness during the field trip.

## **Searches**

### **Searches in General (All Grade Levels)**

In the interest of promoting student safety and drug-free schools, district officials may occasionally conduct searches.

District officials may search students, their belongings, and their vehicles in accordance with law and district policy. Searches of students will be conducted without discrimination, based on, for example, reasonable suspicion or voluntary consent or pursuant to district policy providing for suspicion less security procedures, including the use of metal detectors.

In accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, students are responsible for prohibited items found in their possession, including items in their personal belongings or in vehicles parked on district property.

If there is reasonable suspicion to believe that searching a student's person, belongings, or vehicle will reveal evidence of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, a district official may conduct a search in accordance with law and district regulations.

### **District Property (All Grade Levels)**

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Desks, lockers, district-provided technology, and similar items are the property of the district and are provided for student use as a matter of convenience. District property is subject to search or inspection at any time without notice. Students have no expectation of privacy in district property.

Students are responsible for any item found in district property provided to the student that is prohibited by law, district policy, or the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices (All Grade Levels)**

Use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district. [See policy CQ for more information.]

Any searches of personal electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with law, and the device may be confiscated to perform a lawful search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed.

[See **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources** on page 38 and policy FNF(LEGAL) for more information.]

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

The district may use trained dogs to screen for concealed, prohibited items, including drugs and alcohol. Screenings conducted by trained dogs will not be announced in advance. The dogs will not be used with students, but students may be asked to leave personal belongings in an area that is going to be screened, such as a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle. If a dog alerts to an item or an area, it may be searched by district officials.

**Sexual Harassment**[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 34.]

### **Special Programs (All Grade Levels)**

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, students who are homeless, students in foster care, bilingual students, migrant students, English learners, students diagnosed with dyslexia, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411.

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission's [Talking Book Program](#) provides audiobooks free of charge to qualifying Texans, including students with visual, physical, or reading disabilities such as dyslexia.

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

#### **Grades 3–8**

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

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8
- Reading, annually in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

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

STAAR Spanish is available for eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

### **Failure to Perform Satisfactorily on STAAR Reading or Math**

If a student in grades 3–8 does not perform satisfactorily on the state assessment, the district will provide accelerated instruction for the student. A student who does not attend accelerated instruction may violate school attendance requirements.

For a student who does not perform satisfactorily on the math or reading assessment in grades 3, 5, or 8, the district will establish an accelerated learning committee (ALC), which includes the student's parent, to develop an educational plan for accelerated instruction to enable the student to perform at the appropriate grade level by the conclusion of the next school year. The district will document the educational plan in writing and provide a copy to the student's parent.

The parent of a student in grades 3, 5, or 8 who fails to perform satisfactorily on the math or reading assessment may:

- Request that the district consider assigning the student to a particular classroom teacher in the applicable subject area, if more than one classroom teacher is available.
- File a grievance or complaint regarding the content or implementation of the ALC's educational plan. See **Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)** on page 30 and FNG(LOCAL).

### **Standardized Testing for a Student Enrolled Above Grade Level**

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

A student in grades 3–8 shall be assessed at least once in high school with the ACT or the SAT if the student completes the high school end-of-course assessments in mathematics, reading/language arts, or science prior to high school.

### **Standardized Testing for a Student in Special Program**

Certain students—some with disabilities and some classified as English learners—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the Administrative Consultant, school counselor, or special education director.

### **Personal Graduation Plans - Middle or Junior High School Students**

For a middle-school or junior high-school student who does not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated examination, a school official will prepare a personal graduation plan (PGP).

School officials will also develop a PGP for a student who is determined by the district to be unlikely to earn a high school diploma within five years of high school enrollment. 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.

[See the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp and policy EIF(LEGAL) for more information.]

For a student receiving special education services, the student’s IEP may serve as the student’s PGP and would therefore be developed by the student’s ARD committee.

### **Students in Foster Care (All Grade Levels)**

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district will provide enrollment and registration assistance, as well as other educational services throughout the student’s enrollment, to any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (temporary or permanent custody of the state, sometimes referred to as substitute care).

If you have questions, please contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411.

[See **A Student in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)** on page 16.]

### **Students Who are Homeless (All Grade Levels)**

A parent is encouraged to inform the district if his or her child is experiencing homelessness. District staff can share resources that may be able to assist families.

For more information on services for students who are homeless, contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411.

[See **A Student Who is Homeless** on page 17.]

### **Summer School (All Grade Levels)**

Contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411 for questions regarding summer school.

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

A student who is more than 15 minutes tardy to class may be assigned to detention hall or given another appropriate consequence.

### **Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials (All Grade Levels)**

Instructional materials are any resources used in classroom instruction as part of the required curriculum, such as textbooks, workbooks, computer software, or online services.

The district selects instructional materials in accordance with state law and policy EFA.

The district provides approved instructional materials to students free of charge for each subject or class. Students must treat instructional materials with care as directed by the teacher.

If a student needs a graphing calculator for a course and the district does not provide one, the student may use a calculator application with graphing capabilities on a phone, laptop, tablet, or other computing device. A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher.

Any student who does not return an item or returns an item in an unacceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage is paid for by the parent. However, the student will be provided the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day.

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

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

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 16, **Bullying** on page 25, and **A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services** on page 17, for other transfer options.]

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

#### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use school-provided transportation to and from the event. However, in accordance with campus procedures, a parent may provide written consent for his or her child to ride with or be released after the event to the parent or another adult designated by the parent. [See **School-Sponsored Field Trips** on page 60.]

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

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school and to any students who are experiencing homelessness. This service is provided at no cost to students.

Bus routes and stops will be designated annually. Any subsequent changes will be posted at the school and on the district's website. For the safety of the driver and all passengers, students must board district vehicles only at authorized stops and drivers must unload passengers only at authorized stops.



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A parent may designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated location must be an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, contact the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp at (830) 669-2411.

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses and other district vehicles are clean and safe. 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 vehicle in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the vehicle or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the vehicle.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the vehicle and before crossing in front of the vehicle.
- Follow any other rules established by the operator of the vehicle.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, including loss of the privilege to ride in a district vehicle.

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

Littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Video Cameras (All Grade Levels)**

For safety purposes, the district uses video and audio recording equipment 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 Administrative Consultant will review the video and audio recordings as needed and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

In accordance with state law, a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member (as this term is defined by law), the Administrative Consultant or Administrative Assistant, or the board may make a written request for the district to place video and audio recording equipment in certain self-contained special education classrooms. The district will provide notice before placing a video camera in a classroom or other setting in which a child receives special education services.

## Student-Parent Handbook

For more information or to request the installation and operation of this equipment, speak with the Administrative Consultant, Pam Seipp, who the district has designated to coordinate the implementation of and compliance with this law. [See policy EHBAF(LOCAL) for more information.]

[See **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law** on page 6 for video and other recording by parents or visitors to virtual or in-person classrooms.]

### Visitors to the School (All Grade Levels)

#### General Visitors

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

Individuals may visit classrooms or observe virtual instruction during instructional time only with approval of the Administrative Consultant and teacher. Visitors may not interfere with instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior or violations of student privacy will not be permitted.

[See **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law** on page 6 for video and other recording by parents or visitors to virtual or in-person classrooms.]

#### Unauthorized Persons

In accordance with Education Code 37.105, a school administrator, school resource officer (SRO), or district police officer has the authority to refuse entry to or eject a person from district property if the person refuses to leave peaceably on request and:

- The person poses a substantial risk of harm to any person; or
- The person behaves in a manner that is inappropriate for a school setting and persists in the behavior after being given a verbal warning that the behavior is inappropriate and may result in refusal of entry or ejection.

Appeals regarding refusal of entry or ejection from district property may be filed in accordance with policies FNG(LOCAL) or GF(LOCAL).

[See the Student Code of Conduct.]

### Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students

#### Business, Civic, and Youth Groups

The district may invite representatives from patriotic societies listed in Title 36 of the United States Code to present information to interested students about membership in the society.

### **Career Day**

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

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

The district invites and appreciates the efforts of volunteers who are willing to serve our district and students.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Elise Studer, Administrative Assistant at 830-669-2411 or at [estuder@doss.txed.net](mailto:estuder@doss.txed.net) for more information.

Subject to exceptions in accordance with state law and district procedures, the district requires a state criminal history background check for each volunteer, including parents, guardians, or grandparents of a child enrolled in the district. The volunteer must pay all costs for the background check.

### **Withdrawing from School (All Grade Levels)**

To withdraw a student under age 18 from school, the parent or guardian must submit a written request to the Administrative Consultant specifying the reasons for withdrawal and the final day the student will be in attendance. Withdrawal forms are available from the Administrative Consultant's office.

Please provide the school at least three days' notice of withdrawal so that records and documents may be prepared.

## Glossary

**Accelerated instruction**, also referred to as **supplemental instruction**, is an intensive supplemental program designed to help an individual student acquire the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level. It is required when a student does not meet the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment.

**Accelerated learning committee (ALC)** is a committee that must be established when a student does not perform satisfactorily on the math or reading assessment in grades 3, 5, or 8. The committee includes district personnel and the student's parent and develops an educational plan for accelerated instruction to enable the student to perform at the appropriate grade level by the end of the next school year.

**ACT**, or the American College Test, is one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions examinations. The test may be required for admission to certain colleges or universities.

**ACT-Aspire** is designed as a preparatory and readiness assessment for the ACT. This is usually taken by students in grade 10.

**ARD** stands for admission, review, and dismissal. The ARD committee convenes for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student and his or her parents are members of the committee.

**Attendance review committee** is responsible for reviewing a student's absences when the student's attendance drops below 90 percent, or in some cases 75 percent, of the days the class is offered. Under guidelines adopted by the board, the committee will determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences and whether the student needs to complete certain conditions to master the course and regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences.

**CPS** stands for Child Protective Services.

**DAEP** stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the Student Code of Conduct.

**DFPS** stands for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

**DPS** stands for the Texas Department of Public Safety.

**DSHS** stands for the Texas Department of State Health Services.

**ED** stands for the U.S. Department of Education.

**EOC (end-of-course) assessments** are state-mandated and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments are required for graduation. These examinations will be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History.

**ESSA** is the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

**FERPA** refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which 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 years of age or older directs the school not to release directory information.

**IEP** stands for individualized education program and is the written record prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services.

**IGC** is the individual graduation committee, formed in accordance with state law, to determine a student's eligibility to graduate when the student has failed to demonstrate satisfactory performance on no more than two of the required state assessments.

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

**PGP** stands for personal graduation plan, which is required for high school students and for any student in middle school who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

**PSAT** is the preparatory and readiness assessment for the SAT. It also serves as the basis for the awarding of National Merit Scholarships.

**SAT** refers to the Scholastic Aptitude Test, one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions examinations. The test may be required for admissions to certain colleges or universities.

**SHAC** stands for School Health Advisory Council, a group of at least five members, a majority of whom must be parents, appointed by the school board to help ensure that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district's health education instruction, as well as assist with other student and employee wellness issues.

**Section 504** is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined to be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), general education with appropriate instructional accommodations will be provided.

**STAAR** is the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, the state's system of standardized academic achievement assessments.

**STAAR Alternate 2** is an alternative state-mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

**STAAR Spanish** is an alternative state-mandated assessment administered to eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

**State-mandated assessments** are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Except under limited circumstances, students must pass the STAAR EOC assessments to graduate.

Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests, if necessary, for graduation.

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

**TAC** stands for the Texas Administrative Code.

**TEA** stands for the Texas Education Agency, which oversees primary and secondary public education in Texas.

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

**TSI** stands for the Texas Success Initiative, an assessment designed to measure the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering college-level freshmen students should have if they are to be successful in undergraduate programs in Texas public colleges and universities.

**TXVSN** stands for the Texas Virtual School Network, which provides online courses for Texas students to supplement the instructional programs of public school districts. Courses are taught by qualified instructors and are equivalent in rigor and scope to a course taught in a traditional classroom setting.

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

### Appendix:

#### Freedom from Bullying Policy

**Note:** School board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit <http://www.dosccsd.org/>. Below is the text of Doss CCSD’s policy FFI(LOCAL) as of the date this handbook was finalized for this school year.

Student Welfare: Freedom from Bullying

Policy FFI(LOCAL) adopted on 10/13/2017:

If the results of an investigation indicate that the bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District’s Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct.

## Acknowledgment of Receipt of Student Handbook

My child and I have received a copy of the Doss CCSD Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct for the 2022-2023 school year. I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year. I also understand that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. If I have any questions regarding this handbook or Code of Conduct, I will direct those questions to the Administrative Consultant at [pseipp@doss.txed.net](mailto:pseipp@doss.txed.net) or 830.669.2411.

Student's name: *(print)* \_\_\_\_\_

Student's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's or guardian's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of Student Handbook

My child and I have been offered the option to receive a paper copy of or to electronically access at <https://dossccsd.org/>, the Doss CCSD Student Handbook Student Code of Conduct for the 2022-2023 school year.

I accept responsibility for accessing the Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct by visiting the web address listed above.

I understand that if I wish to receive a paper copy of the Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, I must request a copy from the Administrative Assistant, Elise Studer, at [estuder@doss.txed.net](mailto:estuder@doss.txed.net).

I understand that the Student Handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year. I also understand that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. If I have any questions regarding this handbook or Code of Conduct, I will direct those questions to the Administrative Consultant at [pseipp@doss.txed.net](mailto:pseipp@doss.txed.net) or 830.669.2411.

Student's name: *(print)* \_\_\_\_\_

Student's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's or guardian's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

