

# **HARMONY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **2014 - 2015**

9788 State Highway 154 West

Big Sandy, Texas 75755

903-725-5492

[www.harmonyisd.net](http://www.harmonyisd.net)

Student Handbook

James Poole Elementary School

Irons-Smith Intermediate School

Junior High School

High School

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

The Harmony I. S. D Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct is available on-line at [www.harmonyisd.net](http://www.harmonyisd.net). I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year and that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Code. If you would like a hard copy of the handbook please request one at each campus office.

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Print name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

# Table of Contents

SECTION I IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS .....	8
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT .....	8
Working Together .....	8
“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities .....	9
Display of your child’s artwork, projects, and other special work products: .....	9
As a parent, you also have a right: .....	10
GRADING GUIDELINES .....	11
REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES .....	11
STATE-MANDATED TESTS .....	12
OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTING: COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS.....	12
MEDICINE AT SCHOOL.....	13
PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS .....	13
STEROIDS .....	14
STUDENT RECORDS.....	14
Directory Information .....	15
Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes .....	15
Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education .....	16
STUDENT OR PARENT COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS .....	16
RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL .....	16
Late Arrival to Class (tardies) .....	17
Withdrawing from School.....	17
SECTION II CURRICULUM-RELATED INFORMATION.....	18
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS .....	18
CLASS RANK / TOP TEN PERCENT / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT/GRADING POLICY.....	18
STATE SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS .....	20
CLASS SCHEDULES.....	20
COMPUTER RESOURCES .....	20
CORRESPONDENCE COURSES.....	20
COUNSELING .....	20

Academic Counseling .....	20
Personal Counseling .....	21
CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Taken the Course.....	21
CREDIT BY EXAM – If a Student Has Not Taken the Course.....	21
DUAL CREDIT COURSES / COLLEGE COURSES .....	22
CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS .....	22
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS .....	22
Offices and Elections.....	24
Eligible to Participate .....	25
GRADE CLASSIFICATION .....	25
PROMOTION AND RETENTION .....	25
GRADUATION .....	27
Requirements for a Diploma .....	27
Graduation Programs .....	27
Certificates of Coursework Completion .....	27
Students with Disabilities.....	27
Graduation Ceremony.....	27
HOMEWORK.....	29
SPECIAL PROGRAMS .....	29
TEXTBOOKS .....	31
SECTION III GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS .....	32
ATTENDANCE .....	32
Compulsory Attendance.....	32
Attendance for Credit .....	33
Driver License Attendance Verification .....	36
MAKEUP WORK.....	36
Routine and In-depth Makeup Work Assignments .....	36
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES / CONDITIONS.....	37
Bacterial Meningitis .....	37
HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS .....	38
Physical Activity for Students in Elementary Grades .....	38
School Health Advisory Council.....	38
Vending Machines.....	38

Other Health-Related Matters .....	39
Tobacco Prohibited .....	39
Asbestos Management Plan .....	39
Pest Management Plan .....	39
FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION.....	39
Reporting Procedures.....	40
Investigation of Reported Harassment.....	40
CONDUCT .....	41
Applicability of School Rules .....	41
Corporal Punishment .....	41
Disruptions .....	41
Radios, CD Players, Cell Phones, and Other Electronic Devices and Games .....	42
Social Events .....	42
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.....	42
Questioning of Students.....	42
Students Taken Into Custody .....	43
Notification of Law Violations .....	43
DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS.....	43
School Materials.....	43
Nonschool Materials... from students .....	44
Nonschool Materials... from others .....	44
DRESS AND GROOMING .....	44
STUDENT FEES .....	47
FUND-RAISING .....	48
IMMUNIZATION.....	48
PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS.....	48
PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE .....	48
PRAYER.....	49
SAFETY .....	49
Accident Insurance .....	49
Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies .....	49
Emergency Medical Treatment and Information .....	49
Emergency School-Closing Information .....	50

SCHOOL FACILITIES .....	50
Use By Students Before and After School.....	50
Conduct Before and After School .....	50
Use of Hallways During Class Time .....	50
Cafeteria Services .....	51
Library .....	51
Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups.....	51
Vandalism .....	51
SEARCHES .....	51
Students’ Desks and Lockers.....	51
Vehicles on Campus .....	52
Trained Dogs .....	52
TRANSPORTATION .....	52
School-Sponsored Trips.....	52
Buses and Other School Vehicles.....	52
VIDEO CAMERAS .....	54
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL.....	54
General Visitors.....	54
GLOSSARY .....	55

## **PREFACE**

To Students and Parents:

Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together will make this a successful year for our students.

The Harmony I.S.D. Student Handbook is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. In an effort to make it easier to use, the handbook is divided into three sections:

**Section I**—IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS—with information all parents will need about assisting their child and responding to school-related issues;

**Section II**—CURRICULUM-RELATED INFORMATION—to provide information to students and their parents about graduation programs, required courses, class rank, and extracurricular and other activities; and

**Section III**—GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS—describing school operations and requirements such as safety procedures, the dress code, and fees that may be charged.

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

Both students and parents must be familiar with the Harmony I.S.D. Student Code of Conduct, required by state law and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found as an attachment to this handbook, available on-line, or available in the principal’s office.

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

In case of conflict between board policy or the Student Code of Conduct and any provisions of student handbooks, the provisions of board policy or the Student Code of Conduct that were most recently adopted by the board are to be followed.

We encourage parents to review the entire handbook with their children and keep it as a reference during this school year. If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact a teacher, the counselor, or the principal. Also, please complete and return the parental acknowledgment form.

Please note that references to alphabetical policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. A copy of the district’s policy manual is available for review in the school office or online at [www.harmonyisd.net](http://www.harmonyisd.net).

## **SECTION I**

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

This section of the Harmony I. S. D. Student Handbook includes information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

#### ***PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT***

##### **Working Together**

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides. Ensure that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects. Be sure your child comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district. Discuss with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child. If your child is entering ninth grade, review the requirements of the graduation programs with your child. Monitor your child's academic progress and contact teachers as needed.
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office at 903-725-5492 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.

Elementary – 903-725-5496

Intermediate – 903-725-7077

Junior High – 903-725-5485

High School – 903-725-5495

- Becoming a school volunteer.
- Participating in campus parent organizations.
- Offering to serve as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement.
- Offering to serve on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction.

- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Display of your child’s artwork, projects, and other special work products:**

As a parent, if you choose that your child’s artwork, special projects, photographs, and the like not be displayed to the community on the district’s Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of communication, you must notify the principal in writing.

### **As a parent, you also have a right:**

- To request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teachers, including whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.
- To review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered to your child.
- To inspect a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to your child.
- To review your child's student records when needed. These records include:
  - Attendance records
  - Test scores
  - Grades
  - Disciplinary records
  - Counseling records
  - Psychological records
  - Applications for admission
  - Health and immunization information
  - Other medical records
  - Teacher and counselor evaluations
  - Reports of behavioral patterns
  - State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.
- To grant or deny any written request from the district to make a videotape or voice recording of your child. State law, however, permits the school to make a videotape or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:
  - When it is to be used for school safety
  - When it relates to classroom instruction or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity
  - When it relates to media coverage of the school.

- To remove your child temporarily from the classroom, if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate conflicts with your religious or moral beliefs. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. Further, your child must satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by the Texas Education Agency.
- To request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows.
- To request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3–12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child be excused, (2) the district determines that your child has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity.
- To request in writing, if you are a noncustodial parent, that you be provided for the remainder of the school year a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to misconduct that may involve placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) or expulsion.
- To request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the campus principal to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus.
- To request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds.
- To request the transfer of your child to another campus if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student on the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault.

## ***GRADING GUIDELINES***

In grades K - 12, achievement is reported to parents as:

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

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

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period parents will be given a written unsatisfactory progress report if their child's performance in any course is near or below 70, or is below the expected level of performance. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject.

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

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

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

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and should be returned to the school within two days.

### ***STATE-MANDATED TESTS: STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness), End of Course Tests, TAKS***

- In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state-mandated assessments.

[See policy EKB(LEGAL).]

STAAR-Modified, and STAAR-Alternate for students receiving special education services are administered to eligible students.

Linguistically accommodated testing (LAT), as well as the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) for students identified as limited English proficient, are also administered to eligible students.

### **OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTING: COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS**

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

## ***MEDICINE AT SCHOOL***

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

- Only authorized employees, in accordance with policy FFAC, may administer:
  - Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
  - Medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.
  - Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
  - Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.
- In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only:
  - In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district's medical advisor and
  - When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district's form.

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

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

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

## ***PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS***

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

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

## **STEROIDS**

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

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

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Both federal and state law safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older OR who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

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

- The parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless parental rights have been legally terminated and if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights. Federal law requires that, as soon as a student becomes 18 or is emancipated by a court, control of the records goes to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes.
- District staff members who have what federal law defines as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records. Such persons would include school officials (such as board members, the superintendent, and principals), school staff members (such as teachers, counselors, and diagnosticians), or an agent of the district (such as a medical consultant).
- Various governmental agencies or in response to a subpoena or court order.
- A school to which a student transfers or in which he or she subsequently enrolls.

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

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

Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. If circumstances prevent inspection during these hours, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records. The address of the superintendent/principals' office is 9788 State Highway 154 West, Big Sandy, TX 75755.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. If the district refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requestor has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG.

Copies of student records are available at a cost of ten cents per page, payable in advance. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price lunches and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge upon written request of the parent.

### **Directory Information**

The law permits the district to designate certain personal information about students as "directory information." This "directory information" will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, release of a student's directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of the child's first day of this school year.

### **Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes**

The district often requires the use of student information for school-sponsored purposes.

The district would like to use the student's name, address, and phone number. This information will not be released to the public without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

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

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

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

### **Please note:**

Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with federal law regarding student records. The district's policy regarding student records is available from the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's Web site at [www.harmonyisd.net](http://www.harmonyisd.net).

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 teachers' personal notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher—do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

## ***STUDENT OR PARENT COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS***

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

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

## ***RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL***

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

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

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

### **Late Arrival to Class (tardies)**

A student who is tardy to class by more than 15 minutes will be considered absent in that particular class.

### **Withdrawing from School**

A student under 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The school requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. The parent may obtain a withdrawal form from the principal's office.

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

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

## **SECTION II**

### **CURRICULUM-RELATED INFORMATION**

This section of the handbook contains information on academics and school activities, which is of particular interest to students. Students should take the time to review this information with their parents—especially if they are entering 9th grade or are a transfer student. The section includes information on graduation programs and requirements; options for earning course credit; extracurricular activities and other school-related organizations; and awards, honors, and scholarships.

#### ***ACADEMIC PROGRAMS***

The school counselor provides students and their parents information regarding academic programs to prepare for higher education and career choices. For more information, see policy EIF.

#### ***CLASS RANK / TOP TEN PERCENT / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT/GRADING POLICY***

##### High School

Progress reports will be issued each three weeks. Grades are determined by the following method. Semester average will be 50% daily grades and 50% test grades. Semester grades will be an average of the 3 six weeks grades for that semester.

Class ranking for the graduating seniors will be figured at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> six weeks grading period. Band, physical education, athletics, office aid, yearbook, choral music, vocal ensemble, instrumental ensemble, art, content development, STAAR remediation, summer homemaking, VAC classes and other work programs and driver's education grades will not be used in calculating the ranking.

Students completing the following classes will receive an additional 10 points of their final grade in each course.

Accounting	Chemistry Honor	English II Pre-AP	Honors Pre-Calculus
Calculus Honors	College English	English III AP	Anatomy & Physiology
US History	1301/1302	English IV AP	Spanish III Honors
1301/1302	English I Pre AP		Spanish IV Honors

Grades are determined by the following method. There should be a minimum of ten (10) daily grades and two (2) major test grades for each student each six weeks unless a project is approved by the principal.

##### Procedure for Calculating GPA for 2013 - 2014 Freshman and classes thereafter

1. Only core academic courses that ALL students have to take will be used to calculate the Grade Point Average. These will include: all English Courses, all Mathematics Courses, all Science Courses, and all Social Studies Courses that are offered at Harmony High School or through our Dual Credit.

This way, the variance in the difficulty of elective courses does not unfairly impact the outcome of rankings. Also, the weighted courses will compensate for the extra level of difficulty in the core curriculum areas.

2. Courses that receive weighted credit are:

Pre-Calculus or Calculus

Anatomy & Physiology

Dual Credit: English 1301/1302, College Govt/Economics, College Math, College Science # All must be approved prior to enrollment by the Principal in writing before it will be counted.

Honors Classes and/or Pre-AP and AP classes.

3. For each weighted class, add an additional 10 points to each semester grade for GPA purposes only, and it will not be reflected on transcript.

4. For the senior year, count the 1st semester as is. For the second semester, average the 4th and 5th 6-weeks grade and use the average of the two for the second semester grade.

5. Divide by the total number of semester grades on the transcript.

6. No grades for courses in which credit is earned outside the regular school day or regular school year shall be included in the computation of a student's weighted grade point average; this shall include courses for which credit was earned by examination, in summer school, night courses, through correspondence, or any other methods outside the regular scheduled school day. In addition, courses for which high school credit was earned before the student entered high school shall not be included in this calculation.

7. We will use as many decimal places as needed to break ties.

### Junior High

Grades are determined by the following method. There should be a minimum of ten (10) daily grades and two (2) major test grades for each student each six weeks unless a project is approved by the principal.

#### Six Weeks Grade

Daily Grades 1/2

Major Tests 1/2

#### Semester

1<sup>st</sup> Six weeks 1/3

2<sup>nd</sup> Six weeks 1/3

3<sup>rd</sup> Six weeks 1/3

#### Year

1<sup>st</sup> Semester 1/2

2<sup>nd</sup> Semester 1/2

All students with a non-rounded average of 90 or higher in academic classes will be considered as "honor" students and will be ranked according to grade averages.

For class ranking, a student's SEMESTER GRADES for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade years will be averaged. The fourth and fifth six weeks of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade year will be averaged and

considered as the final semester. All students with a non-rounded average of 90.0 or higher will be considered as “honor” students and will be ranked according to grade averages. The two students with the highest grade average and that have been in attendance at Harmony Junior High throughout all the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade grading periods will be considered as Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

\*Academic classes do not include Art, Athletics, Band, choir, or Physical Education.

### Intermediate School

Grades for the Intermediate School are determined by a six weeks average. Daily work/homework counts for 60% of the grade and tests count for 40%. These two averages are then averaged together for the six weeks grade. There are no six weeks or semester tests at the Intermediate level.

### Elementary

Grades for the Elementary campus are determined by averaging grades for the six weeks. There are no six weeks or semester tests on the Elementary campus.

## **STATE SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS**

- Under the Texas Early High School Graduation Scholarship Program, students who complete the Recommended or Advanced (Distinguished Achievement) High School Program may earn financial credits in varying amounts to apply toward college tuition. The amounts depend on the number of consecutive months in which the student completed graduation requirements and the number of early college credits earned and may be used at public or private higher education institutions within the state. The counselor can provide additional information about meeting the program’s eligibility requirements.
- Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the Recommended High School Program or Distinguished Achievement Program may be eligible under the TEXAS Grant Program for tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions. [For further information, see the principal or counselor and policy EJ.]

## **CLASS SCHEDULES**

Class schedules for each campus can be found at [www.harmonyisd.net](http://www.harmonyisd.net).

## **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

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

Students and their parents should be aware that e-mail using district computers is not private and may be monitored by district staff.

[For additional information, see policy CQ.]

## **CORRESPONDENCE COURSES**

The district permits high school students to take correspondence courses— by mail or via the Internet—for credit toward high school graduation.

A student in grades nine through twelve may earn a maximum of two units of credit by correspondence. These credits may be applied toward state or local graduation requirements. Student must arrange for correspondence courses through the counselor's office. The student must pay fees for the correspondence courses.

[For further information, see policy EEJC.]

## **COUNSELING**

### **Academic Counseling**

Students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn about course offerings, the graduation requirements of various programs, and early graduation procedures. Each spring, students in grades 5 through 11 will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next year and other information that will help them make the most of academic and vocational opportunities.

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

### **Personal Counseling**

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

**Please note:** The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent. Parental consent is not necessary when a psychological examination, test, or treatment is required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

[For more information, refer to policy FFE and FFG(EXHIBIT).]

### ***CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Taken the Course***

A student who has received prior instruction in a course or subject—but did not receive credit for it—may, in circumstances determined by the teacher, counselor, principal, or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject. To receive credit, a student must score at least 70 on the exam.

The attendance review committee may offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an exam. A student may not use this exam, however, to regain eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities.

Any costs associated with these exams for course credit in which the student has received prior instruction will be the responsibility of the student and/or their parent/guardian.

In all instances, the district will determine whether any opportunity for credit by exam will be offered.

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

### ***CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course***

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course for which the student has no prior instruction. The dates on which exams are scheduled will be sent by the Region VII Service Center.

A student will earn credit with a passing score of at least 90 on the exam.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the principal no later than 60 days prior to the scheduled testing date. The district will not honor a request by a parent to administer a test on a date other than the published dates. The parent will be responsible for paying an appropriate fee to the district or for purchasing the test from a university approved by the State Board of Education. [For further information, see policy EEJB.]

### ***DUAL CREDIT COURSES / COLLEGE COURSES***

Harmony High School will award dual credit for college courses taken providing that the course meets TEKS standards and the student has prior approval of the campus administrator. Fees may be involved.

### ***CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS***

Harmony I. S. D. will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

## ***EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS, & ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE***

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

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

- A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than a class identified as honors or advanced by either the State Board of Education or by the local board of trustees—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to ten absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum of five absences for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of two absences for state competition. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.
- A student who misses a class because of participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.

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

[For further information, see policies FM and FO.]

### **CHEERLEADERS**

#### High School

The purpose of the cheerleader is to promote and uphold school spirit, to develop a sense of good sportsmanship among the student body, and to establish better relationship between schools during athletic events.

Twelve cheerleaders will represent the school as the Varsity squad and eight cheerleaders will represent the school as the Junior Varsity squad. The Varsity squad will represent the High School at all Varsity football games and other athletic events as permitted. The Junior varsity squad will represent the school at all Junior Varsity football games and

some other athletic events as permitted. Because some members of the cheerleading squad may participate in some or all of these activities, a full squad may not be available for all athletic events.

Each cheerleader must be passing all individual subjects with a 70 or higher. If at the end of a six-week period, a cheerleader is failing a subject then he/she will be placed on suspension for a 3 week period. At the end of the 3 week period, he/she must be passing all subjects with a 70 for the suspension to be lifted.

Cheerleaders' tryouts will be conducted in the spring. In order for a student to tryout for cheerleader he/she must have an overall academic average of 70 and be eligible in accordance with no pass/no play eligibility requirements. Cheerleader candidates must be enrolled the full six-week period prior to tryouts. A faculty committee headed by the cheerleader sponsor will make certain all eligibility requirements are met before tryouts.

Candidates meeting eligibility requirements may have a practice tryout in front of the student body with the public invited to attend. The actual tryouts will be held before judges and will not be open to students, parents, or the general public. Only those people helping conduct the tryouts may attend the tryouts before the judges to aid with administrative duties.

Cheerleaders will be chosen by outside, independent judges. These judges will be trained in judging the qualification for cheerleader based on NCA and UCA standards. Juniors and seniors are not eligible for the Junior Varsity squad. Freshman candidates are not eligible for the Varsity squad. Elections results are confidential however, a parent may be shown the judges total score for his/her child but for no other candidate.

Other cheerleading rules will be found in the cheerleader constitution. A complete copy of the cheerleader policy/constitution may be obtained from the sponsor.

## **CHEERLEADERS**

### Junior High

The purpose of the cheerleader is to promote and uphold school spirit, to develop a sense of good sportsmanship among the student body, and to establish better relationship between schools during athletic events.

Five cheerleaders will be chosen from the 6<sup>th</sup> grade and five from the 7<sup>th</sup> grade during the spring semester each year. The cheerleaders will represent the school the following year at all Junior High football games and at home basketball games whenever scheduling of games allows.

Each cheerleader must maintain an overall academic average of 70 and passing all individual subjects with a 70 or better and have all "S" conduct grades. If at the end of a six-week period, a cheerleader's average is below 70, and/or failing a subject then he/she will be placed on suspension for a three-week period or until his/her average is back to and passing all subjects.

Cheerleader tryouts will be conducted in the spring. In order for a student to tryout for cheerleader he/she must have an overall average of 70 and must have passed all of his/her courses the six-week grading period prior to the date of the tryouts. Cheerleader candidates must be enrolled the full six-week period prior to tryouts. Cheerleader

candidates must pick an application up from the cheerleader sponsor and turn it in completed by the predetermined deadline. The cheer sponsor will screen the applications to make certain all eligibility requirements are met.

Cheerleader selections will be made by impartial, independent judges who are trained in judging the qualifications for cheerleader based on NCA and UCA standards; their decisions will be final.

Tryouts will be closed. Although election results are confidential, a parent may be shown the judges total scores for his/her child but for no other candidate.

Other cheerleading rules may be found in the cheerleader constitution. A complete copy of the cheerleader policy may be obtained from the sponsor.

## **Offices and Elections**

### **Junior High – Student Council**

The purpose of the Student Council is to represent their class through leadership and service, promote good relationships between classes and serve as ambassadors for the Junior High at a variety of events.

#### **Requirements**

The Student council member must maintain an 80 or above in each individual course and maintain all “S” citizenship grades. If at the end of a six-weeks period, a member’s grade falls below those requirements in any class, they will be placed on probation for the next three weeks. If at the end of the three-week probation period the member’s grades have not risen to the above expectations, they will be suspended from serving until the grade has risen to these expectations.

Student Council members will be required to attend monthly meetings (held during school hours) and assist with daily school activities. They will be expected to attend special school events and programs. Student Council members must maintain the highest personal and academic standards since they will serve as representatives of their class and Harmony Junior High.

#### **Elections:**

Student Council elections will be held in the fall of each year after the 1<sup>st</sup> six-week grading period. The election rules below will be followed:

- Students will be nominated by the teachers. Students must turn in the nomination form and parent approval form by the deadline date or they will not be placed on the election ballot for the peer vote.
- There will be no election campaigning such as posters, candy, stickers, etc. at any time.
- Officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer) will be 8<sup>th</sup> grade students selected by the Student Council members.

## **ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (FIELD TRIPS, PEP RALLIES, SPECIAL ASSEMBLIES)**

Field trips, pep rallies, and special assemblies are a privilege – they are not a right. If a student has excessive absences, excessive tardies, is failing or in danger of failing, or has excessive discipline referrals, they will not be eligible to attend or participate in these extra activities sponsored by the school. Students who are discipline problems on a regular basis may not be able to attend field trips without the approval of the principal. Student participation will be evaluated on an individual basis.

### ***GRADE CLASSIFICATION***

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

<u>Credits Earned</u>	<u>Classification</u>
6	Grade 10 (Sophomore)
12	Grade 11 (Junior)
18	Grade 12 (Senior)

### ***PROMOTION AND RETENTION***

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

In grades K-12, promotion is based on academic achievement. If a student fails more than one core subject, they may earn credit by taking an exam. They must score at least a 70 on an exam on the Essential Knowledge & Skills defined for that course or subject. These exams are given at the Region VII service center in Kilgore. All costs for taking these exams will be paid by the parents/guardians.

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

- In order to be promoted to grade 6, students enrolled in grade 5 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 5 assessment in English or Spanish.
- In order to be promoted to grade 9, students enrolled in grade 8 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 8 assessment in English.

Parents of a student in grades 3- 8 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year.

A student in grade 5 or 8 will have two additional opportunities to take a failed assessment. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained. However, the parent can appeal this decision to the grade placement committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous and the student must complete additional special instruction before beginning the next grade level. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policies at EIE]

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

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

## **GRADUATION**

### **Requirements for a Diploma**

To receive a high school diploma from the district, a student must successfully complete the required number of credits which is 26 for Harmony ISD and pass a statewide exit-level exam.

The grade 11 exit-level test, required for students in grade 11, covers English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies and requires knowledge of Algebra I,

Geometry, Biology, Integrated Chemistry and Physics, English III, and early American and United States History. A student who does not pass the exit-level assessment will have additional opportunities to take the test.

## **Graduation Programs**

The district offers the graduation programs listed below. All students entering grade 9 are required to enroll in the Recommended High School Program or Distinguished Achievement Program. Permission to enroll in the Minimum Graduation Program will be granted only if an agreement is reached among the student, the student's parent or person standing in parental relation, and the counselor or appropriate administrator. [See policy EIF.]

### Number of Credits

- Minimum Graduation Plan
- Recommended High School Program
- Distinguished Achievement Program
- If a student graduates under the House Bill 5 plan, they can graduate on the Foundation Plan with one of the endorsements or distinguished.

## **Certificates of Coursework Completion**

A certificate of coursework completion will be issued to a senior student who successfully completes state and local credit requirements for graduation, but fails to perform satisfactorily on the exit-level tests.

## **Students with Disabilities**

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

## **Graduation Ceremony**

To be eligible to participate in graduation ceremonies at Harmony High School, the student must meet all the following requirements. These requirements include:

- Must have passed 26 units of credit including state mandated course requirements. Unless opting for the Foundation Plan which requires 22 credits.
- Must have met attendance requirements.
- Must be enrolled and considered a full-time student the year of graduation. Exception: Students who complete course work in December, but are not on campus the spring semester will be allowed to participate.
- Part-time students are students who are in attendance on campus for only one-half day and are not enrolled in a vocational co-op program. A part-time student who is a fifth year senior may be a candidate for graduation if all other requirements are completed.

- Must successfully complete a course of study as prescribed by an Individual Education Plan for Special Students if applicable.

A student who requests Board approval to finish his/her high school diploma requirements by correspondence will waive all campus privileges including participation in graduation ceremonies.

Students who participate in graduation ceremonies must be properly attired as directed by the class sponsors and the principal and attend graduation practice.

### **Valedictorian/Salutatorian**

The valedictorian will be the honor graduate (see HONOR GRADUATES section) with the highest academic average. The salutatorian will be the honor graduate with the second highest academic average. In the event of ties a co-title will be awarded.

To be eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian a student must meet the following criteria:

- Must have been enrolled as a full time student at Harmony High School for a minimum of two years.
- Must begin the school year with a minimum of 18 credits.
- Must have completed the requirements for the state recommended program.
- Must not have an accelerated graduation plan of 3 or 3 ½ years.

**A student who does not qualify for the valedictorian or salutatorian because of the above criteria, but has the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> GPA average, will be ranked third in the class. This includes three-year and 3 ½ year graduates.**

### **Honor Graduates**

An honor graduate is a full-time student who has a four-year grade average of 90 or greater. An honor graduate's rank is determined by averaging the grades of his/her four high school years with the exception of art, athletics, band, choir, content development, office aide, physical education, summer homemaking, and yearbook, VAC classes and other work programs, and remediation classes. Students completing AP English, dual credit college English, honors chemistry, U.S. history 1301-1302, Spanish III honors, Spanish IV honors, honors pre-calculus and honors calculus will receive an additional 10 points of their posted final grade in each course. This 10 is added only at the time that grades are calculated for class rank (GPA) at the end of each six-weeks period, and at no time will the increased grade be placed on a student's academic record.

When calculating an honor graduate's grades, semester grades from all four years are averaged. However, grades are averaged at the end of the fifth six weeks of the student's senior year. Seniors taking a dual credit college course will be assigned a number grade by the college giving the course at the end of 6 weeks. Grades will be rounded to four decimal places. In case of a tie, co-valedictorian or co-salutatorian will be named. Each honor graduate's grades will be averaged by computer, twice by the counselor, and twice

by the high school secretary. If there is a discrepancy, the principal will also average the grades twice.

Honor grade calculations: semester average + 10 points = grade to be averaged

Example of a semester average of 92:  $92 + 10 = 102$

For two school years following their graduation, district graduates who ranked in the top ten percent of their graduating class are eligible for admission into four-year public universities and colleges in Texas. Students and parents should contact the counselor or principal for further information about how to apply and the deadline for application.

(For further information, see policies at EIC.)

## ***HOMWORK***

Homework is independent practice of a skill or content previously taught and practiced. If a student does not turn in a homework assignment, the teacher may give a zero or require the student to stay after school in their room for make-up. The parents are responsible for transportation for any student that is assigned “after school detention.” This zero represents failure to do the work, not inability or non-mastery. The teacher may document mastery of the assignment by:

- Asking the student questions over the assignment.
- Requiring the student to do the assignment in tutorials, during lunch, after school, etc.
- Documenting what action the teacher followed to ascertain if the student could do the assignment.

Failure to complete and turn homework in on time will result in loss of privileges that may be extended to other students. These privileges include but are not limited to: field trips, pep rallies, special assemblies, and classes considered electives.

## ***SPECIAL PROGRAMS***

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the campus principal.

### **Dyslexia Program**

Students with extreme difficulties in reading, writing and/or spelling may be referred to the campus Student Intervention Team (SIT). Specific classroom modifications, appropriate to the student’s needs and developmental language level, will be designed. If difficulties persist, students may be referred for dyslexia assessment. This assessment consists of a parent interview; Dyslexia Screening Instrument; teacher checklist; phonological awareness test; and reviewing achievement test data. Depending on the

student's age and stage of reading development, phonological processing skills, fluency, comprehension and written spelling will be assessed. Other data that documents the student's particular reading, writing and/or spelling difficulties will be gathered as needed. Intensive instruction conducted by specially trained personnel using a program consisting of the required components of instruction as outlined by The Dyslexia Handbook, Revised 2007 will be provided should the student be identified as dyslexic.

### **ESL(English as a Second Language)**

Students who are identified on their Home Language Survey as having a primary language other than English will be screened using an Oral Language Proficiency Test (PK-12) and a Norm Referenced Achievement Test (2-12) within four weeks of enrollment. A Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) consisting of the parents, administrator, teacher, ESL teacher, parent representative and interpreter, if needed, will meet to determine the student's eligibility and placement in the ESL program.

### **Gifted and Talented Program**

Students may be nominated for the Gifted and Talented Program by school staff, parents, and/or students. The assessment consists of achievement tests, aptitude tests, parent inventory, teacher inventory, and portfolios. Students who meet the criteria for the GT program as determined by the campus and district GT committee will be provided specialized instruction to meet their unique needs. Although referrals may be made throughout the year for GT, specific nomination periods are:

Kindergarten: January 10 – January 21. Grades 1-11: March 21 – April 1

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

Parents of students with learning difficulties or who may need special education services may request an evaluation for special education at any time. For more information, contact the campus principal.

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

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

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

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

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is the campus principal.

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

## **TEXTBOOKS**

State-approved textbooks are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. A student who is issued a damaged book should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return a book issued by the school loses the right to free textbooks until the book is returned or paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided textbooks for use at school during the school day.

## **SECTION III**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS**

Topics in this section of the handbook contain important information regarding school operations and requirements. Included are provisions on student welfare; health and safety issues; fees; the school's expectations for student conduct (other than Student Code of Conduct requirements); use of facilities, such as the cafeteria, library, and transportation services; and emergency closings. For additional information or questions you may have, please see the principal.

#### ***ATTENDANCE***

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

#### **Compulsory Attendance**

State law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 18 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction programs, extended year programs, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise legally exempt or excused. A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her eighteenth birthday is required to attend each school day. If a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, however, the district may revoke the student's enrollment. The student's presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespass.

If kindergarten, first grade, or second grade students are assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program under state law, compulsory attendance applies to attendance in the reading program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program as a result of the reading diagnosis test.

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction (termed "accelerated instruction" by the state) assigned by the grade placement committee and basic skills for ninth graders; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

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

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

- Is absent on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period.

### **Attendance for Credit**

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

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

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

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

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

When a student must be absent from school, the student—upon returning to school—must bring a note, signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older.

In Texas, a child between the ages of 6 and 18 – depending on when the child's birthday falls – is required to attend school unless otherwise exempted by law. School employees investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. To receive credit in a class, a student must be in attendance for at least 90% of the days per school year that the class is offered.

**A student who is in attendance for fewer than the required days may not be given credit for the class unless the attendance committee finds that the absence(s) are the result of extenuating circumstances. If extenuating circumstances exist, the student will be assigned Saturday school and/or another time to make up the time they missed. The district shall provide appropriate opportunity for the student to regain credit lost because of absences. The students may be required to make up time missed as assessed by the attendance committee.**

The District accepts the following as extenuating circumstances for the purpose of granting credit for a class:

- Medical and dental appointments.
- An excused absence based on extended personal sickness, death in the immediate family, quarantine, weather or road conditions making travel dangerous, any other unusual cause acceptable to the principal.
- Days of suspension.
- Participation in court proceedings or child abuse/neglect investigation.
- A migrant student's late enrollment or early withdrawal.
- Completion of a competency-based program for at-risk students.
- Late enrollment or early withdrawal of a student under the Texas Youth Commission.
- Teen parent absences to care for his or her child.
- Participation in a substance abuse rehabilitation program.

**We strongly urge parents to call when they know that their child will not be attending school. We will be calling to verify all absences if the parent does not call.**

When returning to school after an absence, a student must bring a note signed by the parent or doctor that describes the reason for the absence; notes signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will be considered a forgery and the student will be disciplined. Students will have three days to bring a note to verify the absence. If no note is brought to the office, the absence will be considered unexcused. The student must get an admit slip from the office before returning to class. **Students will be given a tardy for failing to get an admit slip before class starts and will receive the appropriate consequences.**

Students and parents will be notified when the student is close to the limit and again when they have gone over the 10% limit. The campus attendance committee will notify the parent in writing of their decision. If the attendance committee finds that there are no extenuating circumstances for the absence or if conditions established by the committee for earning or regaining credit are not met, the committee shall deny credit for the class. A student whose petition for credit is denied may appeal the attendance committee's decision to the superintendent and then the Board of Trustees.

Harmony ISD has the following attendance guidelines:

Grades Pre-K-3 – attendance is taken each morning at 10:00 a.m. If a student is tardy 3 or more times, they will not receive perfect attendance for the year.

Grades 4-12 – a student must be in attendance **EACH CLASS PERIOD** of the day to be counted present. If a student misses more than 15 minutes of a class period they are counted absent for that class period.

### **TARDY POLICY**

The accumulation of 4 tardies in the semester will lead to the student being placed into after-school detention. After-school detention will last until 4:30 pm each day. The parents will be responsible for a student's transportation home after detention. Students in extra-curricular activities after school will have to be late to practice. Students who miss after-school detention will be placed into in-school suspension (SAC). Tardy detention will be given on the fourth tardy of a semester. The fifth tardy = two detentions, the sixth tardy = three detentions, the seventh tardy = one day of SAC, the eighth tardy = three days of SAC. Charges may be filed if tardies persist after this point.

### **CHECK OUT PROCEDURE**

A student who must leave school during the day must bring a note from his or her parent, with a phone number, that morning. Students will not be allowed to leave school with anyone other than a parent or someone on their emergency contact list. A student who becomes ill during the school day should, with the teacher's permission or permission from the office, report to the school nurse. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent. Students will not be allowed to go home unless the school has notified parents.

**ANY STUDENT WHO LEAVES SCHOOL DURING THE DAY MUST SIGN OUT OR BE SIGNED OUT BY A PARENT (IF IN ELEMENTARY, INTERMEDIATE, OR JUNIOR HIGH) IN THE OFFICE BEFORE LEAVING SCHOOL. STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT SIGNED OUT IN THE OFFICE WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION.**

#### **Definitions:**

**Absent:** A student who misses more than 15 minutes of any class will be counted absent.

**Tardy:** A student who arrives for class before 15 minutes has elapsed. You cannot be both tardy and absent.

**Unexcused absence:** Absences not excused by law or by district policy, or for school-related activities, even if the student has parental permission to be absent. Students with unexcused absences will be required to make up all schoolwork missed. The highest grade a student may receive on this work is 85.

**Suspension:** This is a forced absence for disciplinary reasons. This absence will not count as a day against attendance credit, but the highest grade possible for work during this time is 85.

**Truancy:** This is defined as being absent without the knowledge of the parent/guardian or leaving school without signing out through the office or having more absences than

state law allows. The note must be brought to the office **within 3 days of the absence to remove the truancy**. Students shall be given a grade of zero for any assignments, class work, or test grade given on the day of the truancy. A truancy absence forfeits the student's privilege of make-up work. Students with truancy absences will not be exempt from the final exam.

**It is strongly recommended that doctor's appointments be scheduled outside of the school day. If a student must leave school for an appointment, a doctor's note or receipt is required when the student returns. Absences for appointment are subject to the 90% attendance requirement by the state of Texas and will be reviewed on an individual basis by the attendance committee.**

It is the student's responsibility to check with each teacher the day they return to school to determine the work needed to be done as make-up work and to arrange specific dates for completing the work and taking tests if any tests have been missed from school. If a student is absent for one day, one day will be given to make-up assignments, two days – two days to make-up work, etc. Students who miss for school-related activities will be given the same opportunity to make up work as any student with an excused absence. A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero (0) for the assignment.

### **Driver License Attendance Verification**

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

## ***MAKEUP WORK***

### **Routine and In-depth Makeup Work Assignments**

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

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing any makeup work. Students will have one day for each day absent to complete make-up work and get it turned in. [For further information, see policy EIAB.]

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

## ***COMMUNICABLE DISEASES / CONDITIONS***

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a communicable or contagious disease, the parent should contact the

school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

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

## **Bacterial Meningitis**

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

- What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is most common and the least serious. Bacterial meningitis is the most common form of serious bacterial infection with the potential for serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease, but requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

- What are the symptoms?

Someone with meningitis will become very ill. The illness may develop over one or two days, but it can also rapidly progress in a matter of hours. Not everyone with meningitis will have the same symptoms.

Children (over 1 year old) and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pains, and drowsiness or confusion. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body.

The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results.

- How serious is bacterial meningitis?

If it is diagnosed early and treated promptly, the majority of people make a complete recovery. In some cases it can be fatal or a person may be left with a permanent disability.

- How is bacterial meningitis spread?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing; sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes).

The germ does not cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become carriers of the germ for days, weeks, or even months. The bacteria rarely overcome the body's immune system and cause meningitis or another serious illness.

- How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include when there is a disease outbreak in a community or for people traveling to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. Also, a vaccine is recommended by some groups for college students, particularly freshmen living in dorms or residence halls. The vaccine is safe and effective (85–90 percent). It can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven to ten days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five years.

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

You should seek prompt medical attention.

- Where can you get more information?

Your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Department of State Health Services office to ask about meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the Web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>.

## **HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

### **Physical Activity for Students in Elementary Grades**

In accordance with EHAB, EHAC, the district will ensure that students in elementary school engage in at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day or 135 minutes per week. The district offers 50 minutes a day or 250 minutes per week to students in middle or junior high school. For additional information on the district's requirements and programs regarding elementary, middle, and junior high school student physical activity requirements, please see the principal.

### **School Health Advisory Council**

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council held mandatory meetings. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available from the superintendent [See also policies BDF and EHAA.]

### **Vending Machines**

The district has adopted policies and implemented procedures to comply with agency and food service guidelines for restricting student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines see the school principal. [See policies CO and FFA]

## **Other Health-Related Matters**

### **Tobacco Prohibited**

Electronic cigarettes are prohibited and any other product that is illegal for a minor to possess.

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

### **Asbestos Management Plan**

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, is available in the superintendent's office or with the IPM Coordinator.

### **Pest Management Plan**

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact the superintendent's office or the IPM Coordinator.

## ***FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION***

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from harassment and that their welfare is best served when they can work free from discrimination. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. District employees are expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, age, or disability. [See policy FFH] Prohibited harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office or on the district's Web site.

Examples of prohibited discrimination may include, but are not limited to, derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; bullying, threatening, or intimidating conduct; name-calling or slurs, taunting, teasing (even when presented as "jokes"), or rumors; aggression or assault; graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property. Examples of prohibited sexual harassment may include touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature. However, all romantic and inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

### **Reporting Procedures**

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited harassment should immediately report the problem to a teacher, counselor, principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent.

### **Investigation of Reported Harassment**

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law. Allegations will be promptly investigated. The district will notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited harassment by an adult associated with the district, or by another student, when the allegations, if proven, would constitute "sexual harassment" or "other prohibited harassment" as defined by board policy.

If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited harassment occurred, appropriate disciplinary or corrective action will be taken to address the harassment. The district may take disciplinary action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint did not rise to the level of harassment prohibited by law or policy.

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of prohibited harassment is prohibited. A person who makes a false claim or offers false statements or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

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

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, the district makes the following statements:

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

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

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex: David Cochran, 903-725-5492
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Carolyn Duke, 903-725-5492 ext. 145
- All other concerns: See the superintendent, Jed Whitaker, 903-725-5492.

### **Services for the Homeless and for Title I Participants**

Other designated staff you may need to contact include:

- Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, who coordinates services for homeless students: David Cochran, 903-725-5492
- Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs: David Cochran, 903-725-5492

## **CONDUCT**

### **Applicability of School Rules**

As required by law, the board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior—both on and off campus—and consequences for violation of the standards. Students need to be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules.

To achieve the best possible learning environment for all students, the Student Code of Conduct and other campus rules will apply whenever the interest of the district is involved, on or off school grounds, in conjunction with classes and school-sponsored activities. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Corporal Punishment**

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

### **Disruptions**

As identified by law, disruptions include the following:

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

attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with profane language or any misconduct.

- Interference with the transportation of students in district vehicles.

## **Electronic Devices**

Students are permitted to possess electronic devices (such as cell phones or iPads) at school. Electronic devices must remain turned off during the instructional day unless permission is given by the teacher for the devices to be turned on for instructional purposes. Should a cell phone or electronic device be collected for inappropriate use, it will be taken up and given to the campus principal. The principal may review the contents of the phone to determine or confirm the inappropriate use. Consequences for having a cell phone taken up are as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> offense – the principal will have a conference with the student and return the phone to the student at the end of the day. 2<sup>nd</sup> offense – the parent must come to school in order to have the phone returned. 3<sup>rd</sup> offense – the parent will have to pay \$15.00 to have the phone returned. Any offenses past 3 will also incur the \$15.00 fee to get the phone back, and may also result in disciplinary action for the student.

Students may be allowed to use electronic devices, including cell phones, for instructional purposes. The use of all electronic devices being used for instructional purposes will be under the supervision of a classroom teacher with prior approval of the principal.

[See policy FNCE.]

## **Social Events**

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

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

## ***LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES***

### **Questioning of Students**

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

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

- The principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

### **Students Taken Into Custody**

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

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

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

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

### **Notification of Law Violations**

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been 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 of delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.

[For further information, see policy GRA.]

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

### **School Materials**

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

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

### **Non-school Materials...from students**

Students must obtain prior approval from the campus principal before posting, circulating, or distributing written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. The decision regarding approval will be made in two school days.

The principal will designate proper location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing by students. See policy FNAA.

The student may appeal the principal's decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). Any student who posts material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without this approval will be removed.

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

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by policy GKDA. To be considered, 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 campus principal for prior review. The principal will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policy DGBA, FNG, or GF.]

Prior review will not be required for:

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

All 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**

The District's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, instill discipline, prevent disruption, avoid safety hazards, and teach respect for authority. If students are dressed in a manner conducive to learning then that atmosphere should be prevalent during the school day. First impressions of individuals and of a student body are based largely upon the manner of dress and personal hygiene. It should be the desire of each student to create a favorable school image to the public. The school earnestly solicits the cooperation of the parents and students in achieving this goal. Therefore, students who attend Harmony High School, Harmony Junior High, Harmony Irons-Smith Intermediate School, and James Poole Elementary School are expected to comply with the following dress code. The student and parent may determine the student's personal dress and grooming standards provided they comply with these general guidelines. This will give our district an excellent appearance to us as well as to others who may visit from time to time.

When any questions arise or there is any doubt about appropriateness of clothing, students and parents are encouraged to consult with school officials. The support of parents and compliance by students is essential in order to have the best possible atmosphere for learning in school. A good rule to go by is: **IF THERE IS ANY DOUBT ABOUT WHAT IS APPROPRIATE DRESS – THEN, DON'T WEAR IT.**

If you are a participant in any event representing Harmony ISD, the dress code will be followed at all school-related activities regardless of location. If you are a non-participant and attending a school sponsored activity whether at home or away, the dress code will be followed.

### **General Guidelines for Dress and Grooming**

#### **All Students:**

- Clothing should be of a nature to not cause a health and safety hazard to the student or others. The district prohibits pictures, emblems, or writing on clothing that is lewd, offensive, vulgar, obscene, or that advertises or depicts tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs, or any other substance prohibited under policy FNCF(L). This includes shirts that are imprinted with words or phrases that carry a double meaning and might be considered as suggestive or vulgar.
- The District prohibits any clothing or grooming that in the principal's judgment may reasonably be expected to cause disruption of, or interference with, normal school operations.
- Length of Clothing – Female and Male

High School and Junior High – Shorts, dresses or skirts must be of a length to reach to within 3" off the floor when kneeling. The following types of shorts are not allowed: short shorts, wind shorts, sweat shorts, bicycle shorts or any tight fitting shorts, boxer shorts, or jogging shorts.

Intermediate School and Elementary School – Students may wear shirts and/or blouses with jeans, full-length pants, skirts, capris, dresses, and appropriate shorts.

**APPROPRIATE SHORTS – SHORTS THAT ARE LONG ENOUGH THAT WHEN A STUDENT’S ARMS ARE HELD DOWN BY THEIR SIDES, THEIR FINGERTIPS DO NOT TOUCH ANY SKIN.**

- Sheer or “see through” clothing is prohibited.
- Sunglasses are prohibited inside the buildings unless prescribed by a doctor.
- Students may not wear caps, hats, headbands, or any other types of head coverings while at school. Exceptions to this rule will be made for spirit days.
- All clothing should fit in a manner to avoid comment. Tight fitting clothing that conforms to the body or extremely oversized clothing is prohibited.
- Articles of clothing must be worn as they are designed to be worn, e.g., suspender straps of overalls on the shoulders, shirts buttoned completely with the exception of the top button, jackets or coats on the shoulder, etc.
- Gang clothing – clothing that is known to be, or thought to be, clothing that is associated with gangs or gang activity is prohibited. Examples: “do rags”, bandannas (all colors, khaki work clothes, certain athletic apparel, inappropriate trench coats, etc.
- Pajamas and/or house shoes are not allowed.
- Appropriate footwear (shoes or sandals) must be worn.
- Clothing that is ragged, holey or severely torn is prohibited.
- Students may not wear studded or spiked collars or armbands, heavy chains, or chains attached to billfolds. Necklaces and/or bracelets are not to have spikes or a heavy chain appearance.
- Appropriate undergarments should be worn but not seen at any time.
- Appropriate dress is expected at all school-sponsored activities, on or off campus.
- No gauges may be worn in piercings.

**Female Students**

- Sun dresses and like apparel may be worn provided they are not cut too low in the front, lower armpit area, or the back for proper decorum. Shoulder straps should be at least 2” in width.
- All tops must completely cover the back, midriff and armpit area during normal school day activities. Halter tops, crop-tops, and tops that are backless or with a bare midriff or sports bra cut are not allowed.
- Clothing which exposes the midriff when the student goes through the normal activities of the school day (bending, stretching, reaching, etc.) is prohibited.

- No visible body piercing is allowed except for a maximum of two earrings per ear.
- Hair must be clean, well groomed and **OUT OF THE EYES**. The style and color of the hair must be of a nature as to not cause a classroom disruption.

### **Male Students**

- May not wear tank tops or like apparel without a t-shirt under the garment. Shirts with the sleeves torn out or cut out may not be worn.
- All pants, shorts, and similar type clothing designed to be worn at the waist may not be worn below the waist or made to sag so as to allow the underwear to show. Shirts may not be worn untucked with baggy clothing.
- Earrings or any form of body piercings are not allowed.
- Hair must be clean, well groomed and **OUT OF THE EYES**. The style and color of the hair must be of a nature as to not cause a classroom disruption.
- Neatly trimmed mustaches, beards, or goatees are allowed.

### **Violations of the dress code**

If the student's dress or grooming is objectionable under the above provisions, the teacher and/or principal shall request the student to make the appropriate corrections. Students will be given the opportunity to make corrections at that time. The school will provide some appropriate clothing that a student can change into for the day. If the student chooses not to comply, the student will be placed into SAC for the remainder of the day. Students will not be allowed to go home and change clothing.

### ***STUDENT FEES***

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

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

- Fees for lost or damaged textbooks or library books. Fee for overdue library books.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Credit by Exam if a student has prior instruction in the course.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school.
- A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit because of absences and whose parent chooses the program in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.

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

### ***FUND-RAISING***

Student clubs or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the principal at least 7 days before the event. [For further information, see policies FJ and GE.]

### ***IMMUNIZATION***

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Department of State Health Services, Immunization Division, can be honored by the district. The immunizations required are: diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella, mumps, tetanus, Haemophilus influenzae type B, poliomyelitis, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and varicella (chicken pox). The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the Department of State Health Services. Proof of immunization may be personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

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

## ***PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS***

Mandatory scoliosis, vision, and hearing screenings will be conducted by the school nurses.

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

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge.

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

## ***PRAYER***

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

## ***SAFETY***

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

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

## **Accident Insurance**

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

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

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

Fire Drills – Use of the fire alarm system or voice commands over the school intercom system.

Tornado Drills – Voice commands over the intercom system.

## **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

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

## **Emergency School-Closing Information**

Emergency school closing shall be broadcast over a number of local radio and television stations. These include but are not limited to the following?

Radio Stations – KYKX-FM 105.7, KNUE-FM 101.5, KMOO-FM 99.9

Television Stations – KLTV – Channel 7 – Tyler, KETK – Channel 56 – Longview

## **SCHOOL FACILITIES**

### **Use By Students Before and After School**

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

Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing the activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

Parents are requested **NOT** to bring students to school before 7:35 a.m. Students arriving before this time may not have supervision. Students arriving will go immediately to their assigned area. If a student is going to eat breakfast in the mornings, they must go to the cafeteria and eat their breakfast before coming into the building.

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately. The District is not responsible for children who play on the campus or attend non-school sponsored activities after school hours. **NO SUPERVISION IS PROVIDED.**

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

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on district premises and at school-sponsored events off district premises, such as play rehearsals, club meetings, athletic practices, and special study groups or

tutorials. Students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter standards of behavior for extracurricular participants established by the sponsor.

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

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

### **Cafeteria Services**

The district participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Free and reduced-price lunches are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. See the school secretary to apply.

The district follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day. [For more information, see policy CO.]

### **Library**

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

8:00 a.m. – 3:40 p.m. on a daily basis

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

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

A list of these groups is available in the principal's office.

### **Vandalism**

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

### **SEARCHES**

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

## **Students' Desks and Lockers**

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

Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of their assigned desks and lockers. Students may purchase a lock from the school office if desired.

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

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

## **Vehicles on Campus**

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

## **Trained Dogs**

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

[For further information, see policy FNF.]

## ***TRANSPORTATION***

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

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

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

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. Further information may be obtained by calling Bo Bohannon at 903-725-5492, ext. 160.

See the Student Code of Conduct for provisions regarding transportation to the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program.

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding in district vehicles,

students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Any student who fails to comply with that code or established rules of conduct while on school transportation may be denied transportation services and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Bus/district transportation is a privilege not a requirement or right. Students riding the bus are considered to be under the jurisdiction of the school from the time they board until they are discharged from the bus. The same type of conduct and discipline measures are expected of the students as would be of them while they are in the classroom. The bus driver has the authority and responsibility to maintain proper conduct and safety standards on the bus. The driver will take necessary actions to maintain proper discipline on the bus. Students who refuse to obey promptly the directions of the driver or refuse to obey the regulations of the school while on the bus will forfeit riding privileges for a specific period of time.

Students will be disciplined for any actions against our bus drivers or students.

Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop nearest home.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the bus, van, or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus or van.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving, feet on the floor, facing the front.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus or van and before crossing in front of the vehicle.
- Sit in assigned seat.
- Be courteous. Fighting, profanity, vulgarity, loud noises, and other aggressive or disruptive behaviors will not be tolerated on the school bus.
- Not use tobacco products of any kind on a school bus.
- Not distract the driver through misbehavior.

The following procedures shall be followed when a discipline concern arises on a bus serving a regular route or an extracurricular activity.

1<sup>st</sup> offense – Verbal warning by the bus driver documented and filed with the campus principal.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense – 1 to 3 days after school detention or SAC

3<sup>rd</sup> offense – Suspension of bus riding privileges for 5 days

4<sup>th</sup> offense – Suspension of bus riding privileges for 15 days

5<sup>th</sup> offense – Suspension of bus riding privileges for the remainder of the year.

In case of serious misconduct that endangers the safety of other passengers or the driver, the principal and parents shall be notified of the situation as soon as possible and steps listed above may be skipped. Disciplinary sanctions and changes in transportation for a student with a disability shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) for students considered disabled under IDEA or the individually designed program for students considered disabled under Section 504.

When students ride in a district van or passenger car, seat belts must be fastened at all times.

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

### ***VIDEO CAMERAS***

For safety purposes, video/audio equipment may be used to monitor student behavior on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used.

The principal will review the tapes routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### ***VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL***

#### **General Visitors**

No student visitors are allowed during the normal school day.

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

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

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

## **GLOSSARY**

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

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

**Alternative assessment instrument**, developed by the state, may be given to students in special education and students identified as limited English proficient.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Personal Graduation Plan (PGP)** is required by state law for any student in middle school or higher who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district

as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

**SAC** refers to the special assignment class (see ISS).

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

**Section 504** is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined by an ARD committee to be eligible for special education services, appropriate regular educational services will be provided.

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

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

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

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





