# 2026-2027
# Somerset ISD
# Student Handbook

**VISION**

*To be the Standard of Excellence in Education*

**MISSION**

*Somerset ISD will invest in developing a highly skilled workforce that is committed to graduating students who are college, career, and/or military ready.*

**DISTRICT GOALS**

1. *Retain, recruit, and develop talent.*
2. *Improve academic performance.*
3. *Ensure operational efficiency.*
4. *Foster a safe, secure, and supportive learning environment.*

**Somerset Independent School District Board Members**

Tim Segura - President
Andrea De La Cruz - Vice President
Don Green - Secretary
Francisco De Luna, Jr. - Trustee
Elizabeth Hansen – Trustee
Michael Lujan - Trustee
Robert Sanchez - Trustee

**School Board Meeting Dates**

August 12, 2026
September 14, 2026
October 19, 2026
November 9, 2026
December 14, 2026
January 11, 2027
February 8, 2027
March 15, 2027
April 12, 2027
May 10, 2027
June 14, 2027
July 12, 2027

**School Board Meetings are held at the Somerset ISD Performing Arts Center, 7791 6th Street, Somerset, Texas 78069 and called to order at 6:30 p.m. The SISD Board of Trustees can call a "Special Board Meeting" when necessary.**

If any other changes are made to meeting time and/or location or if special meetings are to be held, an official notice will be posted on the district's bulletin board next to the front door of the district's Central Office, 7791 6th Street, Somerset, TX and is also available on the district website. www.sisdk12.net

## DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

Dr. José H. Moreno……..Superintendent
Tracy Padilla……Deputy Superintendent
Michael Sanchez……Chief of Facilities and Operations Officer
Luis Gomez…….. Chief Financial Officer
Brian Bielefeld……..Chief of Police
Dr. Maria Elena Meza……Executive Director of Instruction and Leadership
Jason Strunk……Executive Director of Athletics and Organizational Management
Giny Beltran……Senior Director of Special Programs
Mary Rodriguez……Senior Director of Instructional Services and Leadership
Michael Balderrama……..Director of Human Resources
John Kennedy…….. Director of Technology
Lisa Salazar……Director of Child Nutrition
Kelli Taylor……..Director of CTE and Strategic Partnerships
Yvette Trevino……Director of Health and Wellness
Elida Guerra……Director of Student Services
Manuel Campos ……Director of Transportation
Lisa Riojas ……Director of Assessment and Accountability
Kassie Duran ……..Director of Fine Arts
Natalie Martinez ……..Director of Communications

## SOMERSET HIGH SCHOOL

Cynthia Gamez……..Principal
Melody Teel……Associate Principal
Dr. Hugo Saucedo……Assistant Principal
Dr. Erlinda Valderas……Assistant Principal
Theresa Fisher……..Counselor
Paola Elizondo…….. Counselor
Sabrina Cardona…….. Counselor

## SHIRLEEN ZACHARIAS EARLY COLLEGE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Regina Moreno ……..Principal
Amanda Perry……Academic Dean
Stephanie Smith……Counselor

**SOMERSET JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

Roni Gonzales ……..Principal
Maggy Castillo…… Assistant Principal
Roger Gonzales…… Assistant Principal
Sandra Gonzalez…….. Counselor
Andrea Ortega……Counselor

**SAVANNAH HEIGHTS INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL**

Jessica Nombrana ……Principal
Margaret Freeman……Assistant Principal
Stephanie Reyna……..Counselor

**SOMERSET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Nieves Carrales……...Principal
Erica Barrientos……Assistant Principal
Tabitha Slaughter……Assistant Principal
Elvira Salmeron……...Counselor

**SSG MICHAEL P BARRERA VETERANS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Ana Cantu……Principal
Rosa Solis……Assistant Principal
Leslie Lizalde……Counselor

**SOMERSET EARLY CHILDHOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Sara Gonzales……..Principal
Juanita Lopez……...Counselor

**District and Campus Contact Information**

Superintendent's Office…… (210) 750-8955
Curriculum and Instruction …….(210) 750-8969
Business Office……(210) 750-8957
Athletics…… (210) 750-8980
Child Nutrition……(210) 750-8981
Human Resources……(210) 750-8956
Police Department…… (210) 750-8966
Barrera Veterans Elem……(210) 750-8963
Savannah Heights Inter……(210) 750-8964
Maintenance……..(210) 750-8955
Somerset Elementary…… (210) 750-8961
Special Education…… (210) 750-8968
Transportation ……(210) 750-8965
ZECLA…… (210) 750-8959
Somerset High School……(210) 750-8958
Somerset Junior High…… (210) 750-8967
Technology……(210) 750-8960
Early Childhood Elementary……..(210) 750-8962

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## Introduction

Welcome to the new school year. We are ready to learn, grow, and celebrate together. Education is a team effort. Students, parents, teachers, and other staff members working together will make this another successful year.

This **Somerset ISD Student Handbook** is a general reference guide that is divided into two sections:

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

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

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

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

Therefore, parents and students should become familiar with the Somerset ISD Student Code of Conduct. To review the Code of Conduct, visit the district's website at www.sisdk12.net. State law requires that the Code of Conduct be prominently displayed or made available for review at each campus.

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

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

**A hard copy of either the Student Code of Conduct or Student Handbook can be requested at your child's school.**

**Note:** References to board policy codes are included for ease of reference. The hard copy of the district's official policy manual is available for review in the district administration office, and an unofficial electronic copy is available at www.sisdk12.net
The policy manual includes:

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

## Section One: Parental Rights

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

**Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation or Provide a Mental Health Care Service** Unless required under state or federal law, a district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, screening, or treatment, without obtaining prior written parental consent.

The district will not provide a mental health care service to a student except as permitted by law.

The district has established procedures for providing a parent with a recommendation for an intervention for a student with early warning signs of mental health concerns or substance abuse or who has been identified as at risk of attempting suicide. The district's mental health liaison will notify the student's parent within a reasonable amount of time after the liaison learns that a student has displayed early warning signs and a possible need for intervention and provide information about available counseling options.

The district has also established procedures for staff to notify the mental health liaison regarding a student who may need intervention.

The mental health liaison can be reached at:

Yvette Trevino, Director of Health and Wellness
7790 East 3rd Street
Somerset, TX
Office: 210-750-8959

The mental health liaison can provide further information regarding these procedures as well as curriculum materials on identifying risk factors, accessing resources for treatment or support on and off campus, and accessing available student accommodations provided on campus.

See **Mental Health Support** for more information.

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

**Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction**; **Dating Violence**; and **Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children**.

**Annual Notification**

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) makes recommendations for curriculum materials, and the school board adopts the materials and determines the specific content of the instruction.

Somerset ISD and the Somerset ISD Board of Trustees have adopted Human Sexuality Instruction to implement with district students in grades 6 through 9. Notice of this instruction is placed annually in the district's Student Handbook and is also located on the district webpage under the School Health and Wellness Services section.

State law requires instruction related to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) for students in grades 6-12. Parents/guardians will receive written notice to participate/opt in at least 14 days prior to the beginning of instruction.

Texas Law and Requirements for Human Sexuality Instruction can be found in the Texas Education Code 28.004.

**Parent/Guardian Rights**

In accordance with state law, a parent may:

- Review, receive a copy of, or purchase a copy of curriculum materials depending on the copyright of the materials. This information is available through the office of the Director of Health and Wellness located at the ZECLA campus.
- Remove his or her child from any part of the human sexuality instruction without academic, disciplinary, or other penalties.
- Become involved in the development of this curriculum by becoming a member of the district's SHAC or attending SHAC meetings. (See the campus principal for details.)
- Use the district's grievance procedure concerning a complaint. See **Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)** and FNG(LOCAL).

**Consent Before Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking**

**Annual Notification**

Before a student receives instruction on the prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence and sex trafficking, the district must obtain written consent from the student's parent. Parents will be sent a request for written consent at least 14 days before the instruction will begin.

Students in junior high school and high school receive instruction related to the prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) makes recommendations for curriculum materials, and the school board adopts the materials and determines the specific content of the instruction.

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

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

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

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

**Consent to Receive Parenting/Paternity Awareness Instruction if a Student is under Age 14**

A student under age 14 must have parental permission to participate in the district's Parenting and Paternity Awareness Program (https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/child-support/programs and-initiatives/parenting-and-paternity-awareness-papa/papa-educators/papa-curriculum). This program was developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE) to be incorporated into health education classes.

**Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student When Not Already Permitted by Law**

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

- Is to be used for school safety,
- Relates to classroom instruction or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity,

• Relates to media coverage of the school, or
• Relates to the promotion of student safety as provided by law for a student receiving special education services in certain settings.

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

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

## Electronic Communications between Students and Staff

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

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

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

A parent who does not want his or her child to receive one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee should contact the campus principal.

## Objecting to the Release of Directory Information

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

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

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

Directory information will be released to anyone who follows the Public Information Request process.

However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of this information. Any objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of the student's first day of instruction for this school year. See **Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information**, included in the forms packet.

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

For all other purposes, the district has identified the following as directory information: student names; address; telephone listing; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of

study; degrees, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; grad level; most recent educational institution attended; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and weight and height of members of athletic teams (FL LOCAL). If a parent does not object to the use of student's information for these purposes, the school must release this information when requested by an outside entity or individual.

If a parent objects to the release of the student's information included on the directory information response form, this objection also applies to the use of that information for school-sponsored purposes such as:

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

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

**Objecting to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

Unless a parent has advised the district not to release his or her student's information, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires the district to comply with requests from military recruiters or institutions of higher education for the student's:

- Name,
- Address, and
- Telephone listing.

Military recruiters may also have access to a student's district-provided email address, unless a parent has advised the district not to release this information.

See **Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education,** included in the forms packet.

## Participation in Third-Party Surveys

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

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

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

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, and ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent; or
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student's eligibility for a program.

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

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

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

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

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

A parent may inspect:

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

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

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

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

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

- A parent provides a written statement requesting that his or her child be excused;
- The district determines that the student has a conscientious objection to the recitation; or
- A parent is a representative of a foreign government to whom the U.S. government extends diplomatic immunity.

See policy EHBK(LEGAL) for more information.

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

A parent may request that his or her child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be made in writing.

State law, however, requires that all students participate in one minute of silence following recitation of the pledges.

See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** and policy EC(LEGAL) for more information.

**Religious or Moral Beliefs**

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

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

**Tutoring or Test Preparation**

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

- Informal observations;

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

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

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

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

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

**District Review of Instructional Materials**

A parent has the right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered, whether instruction is delivered in-person, virtually, or remotely. The district will provide login credentials to each student's parent for any learning management system or online learning portal used in instruction to facilitate parent access and review.

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

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

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

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

## Student Records

**Accessing Student Records**

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

- Attendance records;
- Test scores;
- Grades;
- Disciplinary records;
- Counseling records;
- Psychological records;
- Applications for admission;
- Health and immunization information;
- Other medical records;
- Teacher and school counselor evaluations;
- Reports of behavioral patterns;
- Records relating to assistance provided for learning difficulties, including information collected regarding any intervention strategies used with the child, as the term "intervention strategy" is defined by law;
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to the child; and
- Teaching materials and tests used in the child's classroom.

**Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records**

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

For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is anyone age 18 or older or who attends a postsecondary educational institution.

These rights, as discussed here and at **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information**, are the right to:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Legitimate educational interest may include:

- Working with the student;
- Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities;
- Compiling statistical data;
- Reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility; or
- Investigating or evaluating programs.

School officials may include:

- Board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals;
- Teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or medical staff;
- A person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a specific institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third-party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, school resource officer, or volunteer;
- A person appointed to serve on a team to support the district's safe and supportive school program;
- A parent or student serving on a school committee; or
- A parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties.

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

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

See **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** to prohibit this disclosure.

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

A parent or eligible student who wants to inspect the student's records should submit a written request to the custodian of records identifying the records he or she wants to inspect.

Records may be reviewed in person during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will be available to explain the record and to answer questions.

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

You may contact the custodian of records for currently enrolled students at your child's school.

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

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

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

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

The district's student records policy is found at policy FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL) and is available at the principal's or superintendent's office www.sisdk12.net.

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

## Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications

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

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

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

## A Student with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances

### Children of Military Families

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

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

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

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

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

Additional information may be found at Military Family Resources at the Texas Education Agency (https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/military-family-resources).

**Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments**

**Multiple-Birth Siblings**

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

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

**Safety Transfers/Assignments**

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

The board may transfer a student who has engaged in bullying to another classroom. The board will consult with the parent of a child who has engaged in bullying before deciding to transfer the child to another campus.

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

See **Bullying**, and policies FDB and FFI for more information.

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

See policy FDE for more information.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

If a student in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets its graduation criteria.

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

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

See **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration**, **Course Credit**, and **Students in Foster Care**.

**A Student Who Is Homeless**

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

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

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

If a student who is homeless in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, state law allows the student to request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

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

See **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration**, **Course Credit**, and **Students who are Homeless**.

**A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services**
For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS). The implementation of MTSS has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

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

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

**Special Education Referrals**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Contact Person for Special Education Referrals**

The designated contact person regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services is *Giny Beltran, Senior Director of Special Programs* at 210-750-8969.

For questions regarding post-secondary transitions, including the transition from education to employment, for students receiving special education services, contact the district's transition and

employment designee *Giny Beltran, Senior Director of Special Programs* at 210-750-8969

***Section 504 Referrals***

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

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

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is *Giny Beltran, Senior Director of Special Programs* at 210-750-8969.

See **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504**. Visit these websites for information regarding students with disabilities and the family:

• Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process (https://fw.esc18.net/display/Webforms/ESC18-FW-LandingPage.aspx?DT=G&LID=en) • Partner Resource Network (http://prntexas.org/)

• SPEDTEX: Special Education Information Center (https://www.spedtex.org/) • Texas First Project (http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

See **English Learners** and **Special Programs**.

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

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

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

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

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

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

This section contains important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. It is organized alphabetically to serve as a quick-reference guide. Where applicable, the topics are further organized by grade level.
Parents and children should take a moment together to become familiar with the issues addressed in this section. For guidance on a particular topic, please contact your campus administrator.

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

Two important state laws—one dealing with compulsory attendance and the other with how attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or course credit—are discussed below.
More information also at TEA Guidance Compulsory Attendance

### Compulsory Attendance

**Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten**
Students enrolled in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten are required to attend school and are subject to the compulsory attendance requirements as long as they remain enrolled.

**Ages 6–18**
State law requires that a student who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reached their 19th birthday, shall attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended-year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

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

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

**Compulsory Attendance—Exemptions**

**All Grade Levels**

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

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining U.S. citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences related to autism services, if the student returns to school on the same day of the appointment and brings a note from the health-care provider;
- Absences resulting from a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes a student's attendance infeasible, with certification by a physician;
- For students in the conservatorship of the state:
- An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
- Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

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

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

**Secondary Grade Levels**

The district will allow a student who is 15 years of age or older to be absent for one day to obtain a learner license and one day to obtain a driver's license, provided that the board has authorized such excused absences under policy FEA(LOCAL). The student will be required to provide documentation of his or her visit to the driver's license office for each absence and must make up any work missed. See **Driver License Attendance Verification.**

The district will allow junior and senior students to be absent for up to two days per year to visit a college or university, provided:

- The board has authorized such excused absences under policy FEA(LOCAL);
- The principal has approved the student's absence; and
- The student follows campus procedures to verify the visit and makes up any work missed.

The district will allow a student 17 years old or older to be absent for up to four days during the period the student is enrolled in high school to pursue enlistment in the U.S. armed services or Texas National Guard, provided the student verifies these activities to the district.

The district will allow a student to be absent for up to two days per school year to serve as:

- An early voting clerk, provided the district's board has authorized this in policy FEA(LOCAL), the student notifies his or her teachers, and the student receives approval from the principal prior to the absences; or
- An election clerk, if the student makes up any work missed.

The district will allow a student in grades 6–12 to be absent for the purpose of sounding "Taps" at a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran.

**Compulsory Attendance—Failure to Comply**
**All Grade Levels**
School employees must investigate and report violations of the compulsory attendance law.
A student who is absent without permission from school, any class, any required special program, or any required tutorial will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

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

**Ages 6–18**
When a student ages 6–18 incurs three or more unexcused absences within a four-week period, the law requires the school to send notice to the parent.
The notice will:
• Remind the parent of his or her duty to monitor the student's attendance and require the student to attend school;
• Request a conference between school administrators and the parent; and
• Inform the parent that the district will initiate truancy prevention measures, including a behavior improvement plan, school-based community service, referrals to counseling or other social services, or other appropriate measures.

Each campus has an Attendance Committee/truancy prevention administrator.

For any questions about student absences, parents should contact the facilitator or any other campus administrator.

A court of law may impose penalties against the parent if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. The district may file a complaint against the parent if the student incurs ten or more unexcused absences within a six-month period in the same school year.
If a student age 12–18 incurs ten or more unexcused absences within a six-month period in the same school year, the district, in most circumstances, will refer the student to truancy court.
See policies FEA(LEGAL) and FED(LEGAL) for more information.

**Age 19 and Older**
After a student age 19 or older incurs a third unexcused absence, the district is required by law to send the student a letter explaining that the district may revoke the student's enrollment for the remainder of the school year if the student has more than five unexcused absences in a semester. As an alternative to revoking a student's enrollment, the district may implement a behavior improvement plan.

**Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (All Grade Levels)**
To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student in kindergarten–grade 12 must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit or a final grade for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the approval of the judge presiding over the case will also be required before the student receives credit or a final grade for the class.

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

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

- All absences, whether excused or unexcused, must be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days.
- If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed above at **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance** will be considered extenuating circumstances for purposes of attendance for credit or the award of a final grade.
- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district.
- In reaching a decision about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will review absences incurred based on the student's participation in board approved extracurricular activities. These absences will be considered by the attendance committee as extenuating circumstances in accordance with the absences allowed under FM (LOCAL) if the student made up the work missed in each class.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absence. With the exception of absences due to serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment, all absences, excused or unexcused, may be held against a student's attendance requirement.
- To determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for any absences, the principal or attendance committee will consider:
    - o Whether the student has mastered the essential knowledge and skills and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
    - o If the student completes makeup work, absences listed under **Compulsory Attendance— Exemptions** and absences for extracurricular activities will be considered extenuating circumstances.
    - o Whether the student or the student's parent had any control over the absences.
    - o Any information presented by the student or parent to the committee about the absences.

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

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

Students who arrive after the start of the school's starting time shall receive an unexcused tardy. A child arriving after 10:00 a.m. is considered absent for the day. The parent must provide a written note explaining the reason for the absence. The school shall determine if the absence is an excused or unexcused absence.

**Elementary School Hours (Early Childhood Education, Somerset Elementary, Barrera Veterans Elementary, and Savannah Heights Intermediate):**

Office Hours ..... 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Instructional Hours..... 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Secondary School Hours (Somerset JH, Somerset HS, and ZECLA):**

Office Hours ..... 7:45 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Instructional Hours.....8:35 a.m. – 4:05 pm.

**Documentation after an Absence (All Grade Levels)**
A parent must provide an explanation for any absence upon the student's arrival or return to school. The student must submit a note signed by the parent. The campus may accept a phone call from the parent but reserves the right to require a written note.
A note signed by the student will not be accepted unless the student is age 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law.
The campus will document in its attendance records whether the absence is excused or unexcused.
**Note:** The district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence, unless the absence is an exemption under compulsory attendance laws.

**Doctor's Note after an Absence for Illness (All Grade Levels)**
Upon returning to school, a student absent for more than 3 consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the absence. Otherwise, the absence may be considered unexcused and in violation of compulsory attendance laws.
Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the absence to determine whether an absence will be excused or unexcused.

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

**Driver License Attendance Verification (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**
A currently enrolled student seeking a driver's license shall submit the Texas Department of Public Safety Verification of Enrollment and Attendance Form (VOE), signed by the parent, to the campus central office at least 10 days before it is needed.
**The district will issue a VOE only if the student meets class credit or attendance requirements.** The VOE form is available online. (https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/driver/forms/VOE.pdf)
Further information may be found on the Texas Department of Public Safety website (https://www.dps.texas.gov/section/driver-license/how-apply-texas-driver-license-teen).
See **Compulsory Attendance—Exemptions for Secondary Grade Levels** for information on excused absences for obtaining a learner license or driver's license.

**Accountability under State and Federal Law (All Grade Levels)**
Somerset ISD and each of its campuses are held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of accountability is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, including:

- The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the district, compiled by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), based on academic factors and ratings;
- A School Report Card (SRC) for each campus in the district, compiled by TEA;
- The district's financial management report, which includes the financial accountability rating assigned to the district by TEA; and
- Information compiled by TEA for the submission of a federal report card that is required by federal law.

Accountability information can be found on the district's website at www.sisdk12.net. Hard copies of any reports are available upon request to the district's administration office.
TEA maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at TEA Performance Reporting Division (https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic accountability/performance-reporting).

## Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test (Grades 10–12)

A student in grades 10–12 will be offered an opportunity to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test and consult with a military recruiter.
Contact the principal for information about this opportunity.

## Awards and Honors (All Grade Levels)

All campuses provide opportunities to recognize students who earn awards and honors. These events are scheduled by each campus with proper notice provided, as appropriate.

## Bullying (All Grade Levels)

The district strives to prevent bullying, in accordance with the district's policies, by promoting a respectful school climate; encouraging reporting of bullying incidents, including anonymous reporting; and investigating and addressing reported bullying incidents.
Bullying is defined in state law as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

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

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

- A cellular or other type of telephone
- A computer
- A camera
- Electronic mail
- Instant messaging
- Text messaging
- A social media application
- An internet website
- Any other internet-based communication tool.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include:

- Hazing
- Threats
- Taunting/Teasing
- Confinement
- Assault
- Demands for money
- Destruction of property
- Theft of valuable possessions
- Name-calling
- Rumor-spreading
- Ostracism.

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

A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by the district website at: www.sisdk12.net.

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

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

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

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

Upon recommendation of the administration, the board may transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's parent, the board may transfer the student to another campus in the district.
The parent of a student who has been determined to be a victim of bullying may request that the student be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district. See **Safety Transfers/Assignments**.

A copy of the district's bullying policy is available in the principal's office, superintendent's office, and on the district's website, and is included at the end of this handbook as an appendix.
A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation may appeal through policy FNG(LOCAL).

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

## Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Other Work-Based Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Somerset I.S.D. offers career and technical education programs in:

Agriculture
JROTC
Arts
Audio/Video Tech & Communications
Business
Health Science
Manufacturing
Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics
Public Safety
Human Services
Hospitality & Tourism

Admission to these programs is based on interest, aptitude, age appropriateness and class space availability.

**CTE Nondiscrimination Statement**
It is the policy of Somerset I.S.D. not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap in its vocational programs, services or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

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

For admission information and eligibility requirements to these programs, see your school counselor.

The district offers other work-based programs; see your counselor for more information. Admission and enrollment to these programs is based on eligibility requirements.
The district will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation in all educational and vocational programs.

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact *Tracy Padilla, Deputy Superintendent, 7791 Sixth Street, PO Box 279, Somerset, TX 78069, 210.750.8969 a*nd/or the Special Programs Director, *Giny Beltran, 7791 Sixth Street / P.O. Box 279, Somerset, TX 78069, 210.750.8969.*

See **Nondiscrimination Statement** for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator and ADA/Section 504 coordinator.

## Celebrations (All Grade Levels)

Although a parent or grandparent may provide food to share for a school-designated function or for a student's birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss any classroom allergies with the teacher before bringing food to share.
Occasionally, the school or a class may host functions or celebrations tied to the curriculum that involve food. The school or teacher will notify students and parents of any known food allergies when soliciting potential volunteers to provide food.
See **Food Allergies**.

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

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, neglect, school staff misconduct, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children, which may be initiated by contacting the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)/Child Protective Services (CPS). The plan can be assessed at www.sisdk12.net. Trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking.

### Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse

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

### Duty to Report

Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, to report the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS)/Department of Family and Protective Services DFPS.
A child who has been or is being sexually abused may exhibit physical, behavioral, or emotional warning signs, including:
▪ Difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, claims of stomachaches and headaches;
▪ Verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children,
fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, Sexually suggestive behavior; or
▪ Withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

Be aware that children and adolescents who have experienced dating violence may show similar physical, behavioral, and emotional warning signs. See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** and **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking**.

### School Staff Misconduct

Possible warning signs of school staff misconduct include:

- Inappropriate boundaries or communications with a student, including inappropriate relationships
- Violating school or district communication policies, such as improper use of messaging apps or social media.
- Showing favoritism toward certain students in a way that compromises fairness or student well-being
- Creating, using, or sharing inappropriate AI-generated images involving students or staff
- Neglecting, abusing, or physically harming a student
- Providing alcohol or drugs to a student
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on school property or during school activities
- Possessing a weapon on school property or during school activities
- Committing a felony
- Engaging in fraudulent or deceptive practices involving the school system or State Board of Education Certification (SBEC)

**Description and Warning Signs of Trafficking**

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

Traffickers are often trusted members of a child's community, such as friends, romantic partners, family members, mentors, and coaches.

Some traffickers make contact with victims online.

Possible warning signs of sexual trafficking in children include:

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

Additional warning signs of labor trafficking in children include:

- Being unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips;
- Being employed but not having a school-authorized work permit;
- Being employed and having a work permit but clearly working outside the permitted hours for students;
- Owing a large debt and being unable to pay it off;
- Not being allowed breaks at work or being subjected to excessively long work hours;
- Being overly concerned with pleasing an employer and/or deferring personal or educational decisions to a boss;
- Not being in control of his or her own money;
- Living with an employer or having an employer listed as a student's caregiver; and
- A desire to quit a job but not being allowed to do so.

See **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking**.

**Reporting and Responding to Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children**
Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused, trafficked, or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, to report the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

A child who has experienced sexual abuse or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Children may be more reluctant to disclose sexual abuse than physical abuse and neglect and may only disclose sexual abuse indirectly. As a parent or trusted adult, it is important to be calm and comforting if your child or another child confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

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

To find out what services may be available in your county, see Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County: (http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and Early Intervention Programs available in your county.

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

**Further Resources on Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children**
The following websites might help you become more aware of child abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children:
- Child Welfare Information Gateway (https://www.childwelfare.gov) (https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/*whatiscan*.pdf)
- KidsHealth, For Parents, Child Abuse (https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/child-abuse.html)
- Office of the Texas Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team: (https://gov.texas.gov/organization/cjd/childsextrafficking)
- Human Trafficking of School-aged Children (https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other services/human-trafficking-of-school-aged-children)
- Child Sexual Abuse: A Parental Guide from the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault (https://taasa.org/product/child-sexual-abuse-parental-guide/)
- National Center of Safe Supportive Learning Environments: Child Labor Trafficking (https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/human-trafficking-americas-schools/child-labor trafficking)

## Class Rank/Highest-Ranking Student (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

The District shall include in the calculation of class rank grades earned in all high school credit courses regardless of when the credit was earned, unless excluded below. The calculation of class rank shall exclude grades earned in or by physical education, athletics, music and local credit courses.

The valedictorian and salutatorian shall be the eligible students with the highest and second highest ranking, respectively.
To be eligible for such recognition, a student must:

1. Be enrolled in Somerset High School by the eighth school day of the first semester (fall) of the student's junior year;
2. Thereafter be enrolled at Somerset High school for four full consecutive semesters (junior year fall and spring; senior year fall and spring);
3. Have completed the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program for graduation or the

Foundation Program with Distinguished Level of Achievement; and

4. Not have been assigned to the disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) nor have been expelled during the student's high school career.

5. Have a good attendance record.

In case of a tie in weighted numerical grade averages after calculation to the thousandths place, the District shall apply the following methods, in this order, to determine recognition as valedictorian or salutatorian:

1. Compare the number of AP and dual credit courses taken by each student involved in the tie.

2. Calculate the numerical grade average for all AP and dual credit courses taken by each student involved in the tie.

**Honor Graduates**

The District shall recognize as an honor graduate each student who has earned a final numerical average in accordance with the following:

Honor Graduate Designation Final Numerical Average
Summa Cum Laude 100 +
Magna Cum Laude 95–99
Cum Laude 90–94
(See policy EIC LOCAL)
See policy EIC for more information.

## Class Schedules (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

All students are expected to attend school for the entire school day and maintain a full class schedule. Exceptions may be made occasionally by the campus principal for students in grades 9–12 who meet specific criteria and receive parental consent to enroll in less than a full-day schedule.
See **Schedule Changes** for information related to student requests to revise their course schedule.

## College and University Admissions and Financial Aid (All Grade Levels)

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

- Completes the distinguished level of achievement/foundation graduation program with endorsements (see **Foundation Graduation Program)** or
- Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT
- Beginning in the fall of 2028, achieves a score set by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board on a college entrance examination designated by coordinating board rules

The student is ultimately responsible for meeting the admission requirements of the university or college, including timely submission of a completed application.

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

For example: The University of Texas at Austin may limit the number of automatically admitted students to 75 percent of the University's enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshmen.
The University will admit the top six percent of a high school's graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through a holistic review process.

As required by law, the district will provide written notice concerning:

• Automatic college admission;
• Curriculum requirements for financial aid;
• Benefits of completing the requirements for automatic admission and financial aid; and
• The Texas First Early High School Completion Program and the Texas First Scholarship Program. Parents and students will be asked to sign an acknowledgment that they received this information.

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

See **Class Rank/Highest-Ranking Student** for information specifically related to how the district calculates a student's rank in class, and requirements for **Graduation** for information associated with the foundation graduation program.

See **Students in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)** for information on assistance in transitioning to higher education for students in foster care.

## College Credit Courses (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Students in grades 9–12 may earn college credit through the following opportunities:

- Certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include courses termed dual credit, Advanced Placement (AP), or college preparatory;
- Enrollment in AP or dual credit courses through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN);
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with Alamo Colleges and Palo Alto College which may be offered on or off campus; and
- Enrollment in courses taught at other colleges or universities.
- Enrollment in these programs is based on enrollment at Somerset High School and Early College Leadership Academy.
- Enrollment in courses taught at other colleges or universities; and
- Certain Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses.

A student may be eligible for subsidies based on financial need for AP. See **Fees (All Grade Levels)** for more information.

A student may also earn college credit for certain Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses. See **Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Other Work-Based Programs (Secondary Grade Levels Only)** for information on CTE and other work-based programs.

All these methods have eligibility requirements and must be approved prior to enrollment in the course. Please see the school counselor for more information. Depending on the student's grade level and the course, a state-mandated end-of-course assessment may be required for graduation.

Not all colleges and universities accept credit earned in all dual credit or AP courses taken in high school for college credit. Students and parents should check with the prospective college or university to determine if a particular course will count toward the student's desired degree plan.

## Communications (All Grade Levels)

### Parent Contact Information

A parent is legally required to provide in writing the parent's contact information, including address, phone number, and email address.
A parent must provide the contact information to the district upon enrollment and again within two weeks after the beginning of each following school year while the student is enrolled in the district.

If the parent's contact information changes during the school year, the parent must update the information in writing no more than two weeks after the date the information changes.
A parent may update contact information by contacting the campus registrar or attendance clerk.

**Automated Emergency Communications**
The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. An emergency situation may include early dismissal, delayed opening, or restricted access to the campus due to severe weather, another emergency, or a security threat. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number changes.
See **Safety** for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.

**Automated Non-Emergency Communications**
Your child's school periodically sends information by automated or pre-recorded messages, text messages, or real-time phone or email communications that are closely related to the school's mission and specific to your child, your child's school, or the district.
Standard messaging rates of your wireless phone carrier may apply.
If you do not wish to receive such communications, please contact your child's principal. See **Safety** for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency.

## Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels)

Usually, student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed informally by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal.
For those complaints and concerns that cannot be resolved informally, the board has adopted a Student and Parent Complaints/Grievances policy at FNG(LOCAL).
This policy can be viewed in the district's policy manual, available online at www.sisdk12.net. The complaint forms can be accessed online with the principal's or superintendent's office.

1. To file a formal complaint a parent or student should complete and submit the complaint form. In general, the written complaint form should be completed and submitted to the campus principal in a timely manner.
2. If the concern is not resolved, a parent or student may request a conference with the superintendent.
3. If the concern is still unresolved, the district provides a process for parents and students to appeal to the board of trustees.

## Conduct (All Grade Levels)

**Applicability of School Rules**
The board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that defines standards of acceptable behavior— on and off campus, during remote and in-person instruction, and on district vehicles—and outlines consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules.
During summer instruction, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the school year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

**Campus Behavior Coordinator**
Each campus has a campus behavior coordinator to apply discipline management techniques and administer consequences for certain student misconduct, as well as provide a point of contact for student misconduct. The contact information for each campus behavior coordinator is available on the

district's or campus website at www.sisdk12.net .

## Deliveries

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

## Disruption of School Operations

Disruption of school operations is not tolerated and may constitute a misdemeanor offense. As identified by state law, disruptions include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Assisting/inviting anyone who is not a student or staff onto school property without them properly checking-in through the front office and or getting permission from the school principal.

Disruption of classes or other school activities while on or within 500 feet of district property includes:

- Making loud noises;
- Trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and
- Entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.
- Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district is also considered a disruption.

### Social Events

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

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

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

### Student Birthdays/Holidays (Secondary Campuses)

Gifts, flowers and balloons for student birthdays may not be delivered to school. Cakes/cupcakes WILL NOT be permitted at school.

### CONFERENCES

To schedule a conference with your child's teacher please contact the school secretary. A time will be arranged for you to talk with the teacher during the teacher's conference period. **Conferences will not be held during instructional time**.

A conference may also be arranged by means of communicating through the progress report, school email, or a note to/from your child's teacher.

## Counseling

The district has a comprehensive school counseling program that includes:

- A guidance curriculum to help students develop their full educational potential, including the student's interests and career objectives;
- A responsive services component to intervene on behalf of any student whose immediate personal concerns or problems put the student's continued educational, career, personal, or social development at risk;
- An individual planning system to guide a student as the student plans, monitors, and manages the student's own educational, career, personal, and social development; and
- Systems to support the efforts of teachers, staff, parents, and other members of the community in promoting the educational, career, personal, and social development of students.

The district will make a preview of the program, including all materials and curriculum, available to parents to review during school hours.

**Academic Counseling**

**Elementary and Junior High School Grade Levels**

The school counselor will provide information to students and parents about college and university admissions and the importance of planning for postsecondary education, including appropriate coursework and financial aid availability and requirements.

In either grade 7 or 8, each student will receive instruction on how best to prepare for high school, college, and a career.

**High School Grade Levels**

High school students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn more about course offerings, graduation requirements, and early graduation procedures.

Each year, high school students will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next school year, how to make the most of academic and career and technical education (CTE) opportunities, and the importance of postsecondary education.

The school counselor will also provide information each year a student is enrolled in high school regarding:

- The importance of postsecondary education;
- The advantages of earning an endorsement and completing the foundation program with the distinguished level of achievement;
- The disadvantages of pursuing a high school equivalency exam (GED) as opposed to earning a high school diploma;
- Financial aid eligibility and how to apply for financial aid;
- Automatic admission to state-funded Texas colleges and universities;
- Eligibility requirements for the TEXAS Grant;
- Availability of district programs that allow students to earn college credit;
- Availability of tuition and fee assistance for postsecondary education for students in foster care; and
- Availability of college credit awarded by institutions of higher education to veterans and military service members for military experience, education, and training.

Additionally, the school counselor can provide information about workforce opportunities after graduation or technical and trade school opportunities, including opportunities to earn industry

recognized certificates and licenses.
See **Scholarships and Grants** for more information.

**Personal Counseling (All Grade Levels)**
The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal, social, and family concerns, including emotional or mental health issues and substance abuse. A student who wishes to meet with the school counselor should notify their teacher. As a parent, if you are concerned about your child's mental or emotional health, please speak with the school counselor for a list of resources that may be of assistance.

If your child has experienced trauma, contact the school counselor for more information.
See **Mental Health Support**, **Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children**, and **Dating Violence**

## Course Credit (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student at any grade level enrolled in a high school course will earn credit for the course only if the final grade is 70 or above. For a two-part (two-semester, 1-credit course), the student's grades from both halves (semesters) will be averaged and credit will be awarded if the combined average is 70 or above. If the student's combined average is less than 70, the student will be awarded credit only for the half (semester) with the passing grade. Students must meet the 90% attendance rule to earn credit.

**Credit by Examination—If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject (Grades 6–12)**
A student who has previously taken a course or subject but did not receive credit or a final grade for it may, in circumstances determined by the principal or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit or a final grade by passing an examination approved by the district's board of trustees on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject.
Examples of prior instruction include incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a non-accredited school. The opportunity to earn credit by examination after the student has had prior instruction is sometimes referred to as "credit recovery."
The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an examination.
If a student is granted approval to take an examination for credit, the student must score at least 70 on the examination to receive credit for the course or subject.
See the school counselor and policy EHDB(LOCAL) for more information.

**Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course/Subject**
A student will be permitted to earn credit by examination for an academic course or subject area for which the student had no prior instruction for advancement or to accelerate to the next grade level.

The examinations offered by the district are approved by the district's board of trustees. Testing windows for these examinations will be published in district publications and on the district's website. A student may take a specific examination only once per testing window.
The only exceptions to the published testing windows will be for examinations administered by another entity or to accommodate a student experiencing homelessness or a student involved in the foster care system.

When another entity administers an examination, the student and the district must comply with the testing schedule of the other entity.
If a student plans to take an examination, the student or parent must register with the school counselor no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. See policy EHDC for more information.

## Student Acceleration

**Kindergarten Acceleration (EHDC LOCAL)**
The Board shall approve procedures developed by the Superintendent or designee to allow a child who is five years old at the beginning of the school year to be assigned initially to grade 1 rather than kindergarten. Criteria for acceleration may include:

- Scores on readiness tests or achievement tests that may be administered by appropriate District personnel.
- Recommendation of the kindergarten or preschool the student has attended.
- Chronological age and observed social and emotional development of the student.
- Other criteria deemed appropriate by the principal and Superintendent.

**Students in Grades 1–5**
A student in elementary school is eligible to accelerate to the next grade level if:

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

**Students in Grades 6–12**
A student in grade 6 or above is eligible to earn course credit with:

- A passing score of at least 80 on an examination approved by the board; or
- A scaled score of 50 or higher on an examination administered through the College Level Examination Program (CLEP); or
- A score of 3 or higher on an AP examination, as applicable.
- A student may take an examination to earn high school course credit no more than twice. If a student fails to achieve the designated score on the applicable exam before the beginning of the school year in which the student would need to enroll in the course according to the school's high school course sequence, the student must complete the course.

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

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

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

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly address inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law.
A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office www.sisdk12.net. See policy FFH for more information.

**Dating Violence**
Dating violence will not be tolerated at school. To report dating violence, see **Reporting Procedures**.

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual,

verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship or any of the person's past or subsequent partners.

This type of conduct is considered harassment if it is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical or sexual assaults;
- Name-calling;
- Put-downs;
- Threats to hurt the student, the student's family members, or members of the student's household;
- Destroying property belonging to the student;
- Threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship;
- Threats to harm a student's past or current dating partner;
- Attempts to isolate the student from friends and family;
- Stalking; or
- Encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

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

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

For more information on dating violence, see:

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

See **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking**.

### Discrimination

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

### Harassment

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to:

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

**Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment**

Sexual harassment and gender-based harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student are prohibited.

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to:

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

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

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

Gender-based harassment can occur regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student may include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors;
- Physical aggression or assault;
- Threatening or intimidating conduct; or
- Other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

## Pregnancy or Related Conditions

The district does not discriminate on the basis of pregnancy or a related condition. Please contact the campus principal for pregnancy-related accommodations.

## Retaliation

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

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

**Reporting Procedures**

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

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

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

FFH.

**Investigation of Report**

1. Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated.
2. To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student. However, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and comply with law.
3. If a law enforcement or other regulatory agency notifies the district that it is investigating the matter and requests that the district delay its investigation, the district will resume its investigation at the conclusion of the agency's investigation.
4. During the course of an investigation and when appropriate, the district will take interim action to address the alleged prohibited conduct.
5. If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary action and, in some cases, corrective action will be taken to address the conduct. The district may take disciplinary and corrective action even if the conduct was not unlawful.

All involved parties will be notified of the outcome of the district investigation within the parameters and limits allowed under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL).

## Discrimination

See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**.

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

**School Materials**

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with the prior approval of the principal, sponsor, or teacher. Such items may include school posters, newspapers, yearbooks, brochures, flyers, and the like.
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 principal before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing more than 10 copies of written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. Approval will be granted or denied within two school days.
The principal has designated the campus administrative offices as the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection by students. See policy FNAA for more information. A student may appeal a decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). Any student who sells, posts, circulates, or distributes non-school material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.
See policy FNG(LOCAL) for student complaint procedures.

**From Others**

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or

groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by policy GKDA.
To be considered for distribution, any 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 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 policies at DGBA or GF.
The principal has designated the campus administrative offices as the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection.
Prior review will not be required for:

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

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

## Dress and Grooming (All Grade Levels)

The district's dress code teaches grooming and hygiene, prevents disruption, minimizes safety hazards, and maintains a positive learning climate. Research has indicated that student behavior is influenced by student dress and grooming. In order to help ensure proper and acceptable behavior on the part of the student, it becomes necessary to establish certain guidelines to aid parents and students in selecting the proper attire for school wear and provide consistency district-wide.

If the principal or designated administrator determines that a student's grooming and/or clothing violates the school's dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school. Any student who does not comply with the dress code will be removed from the regular school setting until the student complies with this code. If so, attendance recovery hours will be required for all missed classes. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.
**If there are differences of opinion as to the appropriateness of dress, grooming, and/or determining whether or not a student's attire is disruptive or distracting to the educational environment of the school, the final determination will be made by an administrator.**

The Dress Code is in effect for students while attending school functions or school-sponsored activities on or off school property. Exceptions to this code for certain school-related events are determined by each administrator. Cheer team members will be allowed to wear their extra-curricular uniform without modifications on the day of their scheduled event/activity.
Regulations shall be established concerning the grooming of students for those classes where safety in the use of power machinery and sanitary conditions in food preparation is mandatory. Students enrolled in these classes shall be informed of those regulations and are expected to conform while in these classes.

**SISD DRESS CODE FROM Student Code of Conduct**
**Guidelines: Students are expected to be in dress code on the first day of school and every school day.**

1. **Midriff/Short blouses or cropped tops** that expose the torso/stomach are not allowed even under zipped jackets or sweaters. Blouses/tops that shift up and expose the torso/stomach when arms are raised or expose cleavage are prohibited. Muscle/tank/sleeveless/halter tops/spaghetti straps are not allowed.

2. **Jeans/pants** with slits/tears/rips/holes that expose the skin at or above the knee must be worn with tights or leggings underneath to avoid exposing skin at or above the knee. Slits/tears/rips/holes throughout the jeans/pants may not exceed two inches in width and/or length, regardless where they are located. All pant waistbands must be worn securely at the waist. Pajama pants are prohibited.

3. **Shorts/skirts/dresses** must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee (including the slit) even if tights/leggings are worn underneath. Cutoff, boxer, and biker/spandex shorts are not permitted.

4. **Footwear** which has toes reinforced with steel, hard plastics or similar materials is specifically prohibited. House shoes and slippers are prohibited.

5. **Headwear** such as hats, caps, beanies, and hoods on hooded sweatshirts and jackets may not be worn.

6. **Hair** must be neat and clean. Unnatural-colored (bright natural color), multi-colored, spiked, or distracting hair styles are not permitted. Eyebrows that are slashed or shaven are prohibited.

7. **Outerwear** of overcoats, topcoats, and trench coats are not allowed.

8. **Undergarments** may not be visible or exposed.

9. **Accessories** such as headphones, sunglasses, leather spiked/studded bands, heavy wallet chains, or stockings on arms or head are prohibited.

10. **Piercings** are limited to three earrings. Nose piercings are limited to one stud and **excludes all nose hoops and nose rings**. Tongue, facial and eyebrow piercings are not permitted.

11. **Skin markings** such as tattoos, visible markings, writing, and drawings on the body must be appropriate for the school environment or are expected to be covered.

12. **Style:** The District prohibits any clothing or grooming that, in the administrator's judgment, may reasonably be expected to cause disruption of, or interference with normal school operations, or that is determined by the school's principal or designee to be gang-related or, in reasonable probability, would be construed as gang-related.

    The District prohibits pictures, emblems, or writings that are lewd, offensive, vulgar, or obscene, or that advertises or depicts tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs, or any other substance or paraphernalia prohibited under Policy FNCF (LEGAL/LOCAL).

If the administrator determines that a student's grooming or clothing violates the school's dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school and return to the classroom. If the problem cannot be corrected at school, the principal will work with the student and parent to obtain an acceptable change of clothing for the student in a way that minimizes loss of instructional time. Repeated or severe offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The final decision as to whether the dress code has been violated rests with the campus administrator.

### Possession of Telecommunications/Cell Phone or Other Electronic Devices

House Bill 1481 prohibits the use of personal communication devices by students during the school day. Device types include cell phones, smartphones, tablets. Smartwatches, wireless earbuds, and other electronic devices with telecommunication or digital communication capabilities. While on school property, the student shall store any personal communications device in accordance with administrative regulations.

A student who violates this policy or any regulations shall be subject to discipline in accordance with the Board-adopted Code.

An authorized District employee shall confiscate a student's personal communications device that is used in violation of this policy or any applicable regulations.

The District shall not dispose of the personal communication device. The District shall provide appropriate notice, and devices that are not retrieved shall be stored according to administrative regulations.

**Exceptions**
A student shall be authorized to use a personal communication device on school property during the school day only under the following circumstances:

- The student's use is necessary for implementation of the student's individualized education program, a 504 plan, or a similar program or plan;
- The student's use is required due to a documented need based on a directive from a qualified physician; or
- The student's use is necessary to comply with a health or safety requirement imposed by law or as part of the District or safety protocols.

See **Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials** for graphing calculator applications on computing devices.
A student must have approval to possess other personal telecommunications devices on campus such as laptops, tablets, or other portable computers.

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

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

**Refusal to turn in a phone when requested will result in further disciplinary consequences.**

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

In accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel. See **Searches** and policy FNF for more information.

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

**Student-owned laptops are not allowed on school property.** This equipment will be confiscated by a teacher or administrator and kept in a secure place and returned only to a parent/guardian at the end of the school day. For the second offense, the equipment will be returned only to a parent/guardian at the end of the semester.

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

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

All personal devices must be turned off during the instructional day when not in use for approved

instructional purposes. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

**Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources**

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

**Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources**

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, whether on district-owned or personally owned equipment, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

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

This type of behavior may constitute bullying or harassment, as well as impede future endeavors of a student. We encourage parents to review with their child the "Before You Text" Sexting Prevention Course (https://txssc.txstate.edu/tools/courses/before-you-text/), a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of sexting.

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

## Student Expectations for the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools can support learning, creativity, problem-solving, and productivity when used responsibly. Somerset ISD encourages students to use AI in ways that support academic growth while maintaining honesty, integrity, and digital citizenship.

Students are expected to follow these guidelines when using AI tools in school or for school-related assignments:

**Use AI as a Learning Tool**
AI should be used to support learning, brainstorming, studying, practicing skills, organizing ideas, or receiving feedback. AI should not replace a student's own thinking, creativity, or effort.

**Complete Your Own Work**
Students must submit original work that reflects their own understanding and learning. Assignments completed entirely by AI and submitted as a student's own work may be considered academic dishonesty unless specifically permitted by the teacher.

**Follow Teacher Directions**
Teachers may determine when and how AI tools can be used in their classrooms or assignments.

Students are expected to follow all classroom expectations regarding AI use.

**Protect Privacy and Personal Information**

Students should never enter confidential or personal information into AI platforms, including:

- Student ID numbers
- Passwords
- Home addresses or phone numbers
- Grades or test information
- Personal information about other students or staff

**Use AI Responsibly and Respectfully**

AI tools must not be used to:

- Cheat or plagiarize
- Bully, harass, or threaten others
- Create inappropriate, harmful, or offensive content
- Spread false or misleading information
- Violate district technology policies or campus rules

**Verify Information**

AI tools can sometimes provide inaccurate or incomplete information. Students are responsible for checking facts, sources, and accuracy before using AI-generated content in assignments or projects.

**Respect Copyright and Intellectual Property**

Students should give proper credit when required and avoid presenting AI-generated work, images, or writing as entirely their own if disclosure is expected by the teacher.

**Use Approved Platforms**

Students should only use AI applications and digital tools approved or permitted by Somerset ISD and their teacher during school-related activities.

**Demonstrate Digital Citizenship**

Students are expected to use AI ethically, safely, and responsibly in alignment with Somerset ISD's student code of conduct and technology acceptable use policies.

Failure to follow these expectations may result in disciplinary consequences consistent with district policies regarding academic integrity, technology misuse, and student conduct.

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

See **Graduation** and **Standardized Testing**

## Emergent Bilingual Students (All Grade Levels)

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

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

program.

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

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

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

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

State law requires the district to obtain written parental consent before a student may participate in a student club that is authorized or sponsored by the district. A parent may obtain consent forms for student clubs on their campus website or reaching out to the sponsor.

Some of these activities may result in events that occur off-campus. When the district arranges transportation for these events, students are required to use the transportation provided by the district to and from the events. Exceptions to this may only be made with the approval of the activity's coach or sponsor. See **Transportation.**

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

[See http://www.uiltexas.org for additional information on all UIL-governed activities.]

Student safety in extracurricular activities is a priority of the district. The equipment used in football is no exception. As a parent, you are entitled to review the district's records regarding the age of each football helmet used by the campus, including when a helmet has been reconditioned.

In addition, the following provisions apply to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives at the end of grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than an Advanced Placement; honors, or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science social studies, economics, or language other than English—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student who receives special education services and who fails to meet the standard in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse but may not participate in any competitive activity.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to 10 absences not related to post-district

competition, a maximum of 5 for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of 2 absences for state competition. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.

● An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.

**NOTE: All students/parents/guardians must sign the Extracurricular Activity Contract provided at the back of the Student Code of Conduct and return this document by August 30, 2025. A separate signature is required for the spring semester.**

**Standards of Behavior**

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

**Offices and Elections**

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

**Fees (All Grade Levels)**

Basic educational program materials are provided at no charge to a student. However, a student is expected to provide his or her own basic supplies, as outlined in the school supply list. A student may also be required to pay certain other costs, fees, or deposits, including:

- Materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations.
- Admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, and the like.
- Voluntarily purchased student health and accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school. See **Buses and Other School Vehicles**.
- A maximum fee of $50 for an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit or has not been awarded a final grade because of absences and whose parent chooses the program for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirements. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.
- In some cases, a fee for a course taken through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN).

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 campus principal. See policy FP for more information.

**Technology Repair/Replacement Costs:**

- Bag- $25
- Charger- $50
- Chromebook replacement- $375
- Keyboard- $25
- Other damages- $25, $150 TBD
- Screen replacement - $125

## Fundraising (All Grade Levels)

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

## Gang-Free Zones (All Grade Levels)

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

**Gender-Based Harassment**

See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**.

## Grade-Level Classification (Grades 9–12 Only)

After grade 9, students are classified according to the number of credits earned toward graduation.

| Credits Earned | Classification |
|---|---|
| 0-4 | Grade 9 (Freshman) |
| 5 | Grade 10 (Sophomore) |
| 11 | Grade 11 (Junior) |
| 18 | Grade 12 (Senior) |

## Grading Guidelines (All Grade Levels)

Grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated and distributed to students and their parents by the classroom teacher. These guidelines have been reviewed by each applicable curriculum department and have been approved by the campus principal.

These guidelines establish the minimum number of assignments, projects, and examinations required for each grading period.

In addition, these guidelines establish how the student's mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.).

Grading guidelines also outline in what circumstances a student will be allowed to redo an assignment

or retake an examination for which the student originally made a failing grade.
Procedures for a student to follow after an absence will also be addressed. Teachers will record grades with a minimum of two grades per week, per core content area.

1. After receiving additional instruction, students will be permitted to retake any major test that he/she failed, with the exception of semester exams, within five school days.
2. A grade of 70 is the maximum that can be earned on the re-evaluation and is recorded. If a student fails the re- evaluation of the TEKS, the higher of the two grades is recorded and the lower score removed, not averaged.

Grading consequences for academic dishonesty, including cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism (including the unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) such as ChatGPT), and unauthorized communication between students during an examination.

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

**Elementary Campuses Grade Reporting**
Students in grades PK – 6 will have nine grading/reporting periods. Report cards will be sent home on the four dates identified on the official district calendar and should be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the school.
Work samples will be sent home regularly throughout the school year to keep parents informed about the child's progress. If your child is working below grade level it will be indicated in the comments section.

**Grades Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten**
In Pre-Kindergarten, student progress of the Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines introduced by the teacher is reported every quarter. In Kindergarten, student progress of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and district-level performance expectations are reported based on each student's individual performance levels.

**Grades First Through Sixth**
In grades first through sixth, the schools will report quarter of language arts, reading, math, social studies and science grades to parents using numeric scores.

**Grades 7-12**
Schools will report nine week grades to parents using grades using numerical scores. Grading Reporting:

| Kindergarten* | 1st – 6th Grade and 7th – 12th Grade |
|---|---|
| E- Excellent | A = 90 to 100 |
| S- Satisfactory | B = 80 to 89 |
| N – Needs Improvement | C = 75 to 79 |
| U- Unsatisfactory | D = 70 to 74 |
| | F = 69 and below |

***Pre-kindergarten will use a developmentally appropriate checklist.***

**Semester and Final Exams (High School Credit Classes)**
1. Semester exams are administered in all high school credit courses at the end of each semester.

2. Semester and final exams will count for **16%** of the semester and/or final average.

**Weight of Grades – Science Courses only**
All nine week averages shall be calculated on a percentage system for each type of assignment.

**Daily Grades**
1. Daily grades will comprise **50% of the nine week averages for all science classes**.
2. Daily grades may include class work, homework, notebooks, quizzes, and other assignments.
3. A minimum of two grades per week shall be recorded during each nine week grading period.
4. Exceptions must be approved by the campus principal.

**Assessments**
1. Assessments grades will comprise **30% of the quarter average in all science classes**.
2. Assessment grades may include alternative assessments, examinations, tests, projects, term papers, unit assessments and other assignments.
3. A minimum of one assessment grade shall be recorded during a 3-week period.
4. Exceptions must be approved by the campus principal.

**Labs**
1. Lab grades will comprise **20% of the quarter average for all science classes**.
2. Lab grades may include write-ups, reports, and artifacts completed or created by students at the end of a lab experience.
3. A minimum of four lab grades shall be recorded during each grading period.
4. Exceptions must be approved by the principal.

**Weight of Grades –Core and Elective Courses Other Than Science**
**Daily Grades**
1. Daily grades will comprise **70% of the quarter average in all classes**.
2. Daily grades may include class work, homework, notebooks, quizzes, and other assignments.
3. A minimum of two grades per week shall be recorded during each grading period.
4. Exceptions must be approved by the principal.

**Major Grades**
1. Major grades will comprise **30% of the quarter average in all classes.**
2. Major grades will include; alternative assessments, examinations, tests, semester projects, term papers, Unit Assessments, and other assignments.
3. A minimum of one major grade shall be recorded during each 3-week period with at least 3 total major grades per quarter.
4. Exceptions must be approved by the principal.

**UIL eligibility may be lost at the six-week mark. Note: UIL eligibility is different from the nine-week grading cycle.**

**Honor Roll**
The honor roll will be announced at the end of each grading period for grades one through sixth.

The honor roll will consist of two categories:

- Students having all A's
- Students having all A's and B's.

Students will also be recognized for perfect attendance each nine weeks.

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

## Graduation (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

### Requirements for a Diploma

A student must meet the following requirements to receive a high school diploma from the district:

- Achieve passing scores on certain end-of-course (EOC) assessments or approved substitute assessments, unless specifically waived as permitted by state law;
- Complete the required number of credits established by the state and any additional credits required by the district;
- Complete any locally required courses in addition to the courses mandated by the state;
- Demonstrate proficiency, as determined by the district, in the specific communication skills required by the State Board of Education (SBOE); and
- Complete and submit a free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or a Texas application for state financial aid (TASFA).

### Testing Requirements for Graduation

Students are required, with limited exceptions and regardless of graduation program, to perform satisfactorily on End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in:

1. English I
2. English II
3. Algebra
4. Biology, and
5. US History.

A student who does not achieve the required score will have opportunities to retake an assessment.

State law allows a student to meet EOC requirements by substituting satisfactory performance on approved national standardized assessments or on the state-developed assessment used for entrance into Texas public universities. See the school counselor for more information on the state testing requirements for graduation.

If a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an EOC assessment, the district will provide remediation in the applicable content area. This may require the student's participation outside normal school operating times.

In limited circumstances, a student who fails to demonstrate proficiency on up to two of the required assessments may still be eligible to graduate if an individual graduation committee, formed in accordance with state law, unanimously determines that the student is eligible to graduate. See **Standardized Testing**.

### Foundation Graduation Program

Every Texas public school student will graduate under the foundation graduation program.

Endorsements earned by a student will be noted on the student's transcript.

A student can complete the foundation graduation program with a "distinguished level of achievement," which reflects the completion of at least one endorsement and Algebra II as one of the required advanced mathematics credits.

**The foundation graduation program requires completion of the following credits:**

| **Course Area** | **Number of credits**<br><br>**Foundation Graduation Program** | **Number of credits**<br><br>**Foundation Graduation Program <u>with an Endorsement</u>** |
|---|---|---|
| English/Language Arts | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics | 3 | 4* |
| Science | 3 | 4 |
| Social Studies, including Economics | 3 | 3 |
| Physical Education** | 1 | 1 |
| Language other than English*** | 2 | 2 |
| Fine Arts | 1 | 1 |
| Electives | 5 | 7 |
| Miscellaneous | **Arts and Humanities:** Art, Band, Dance, Foreign Language, Music/Mariachi, Theatre Arts<br>**Business and Industry:** Ag-Mechanics, Ag Animal Science, Auto Tech, Business Finance, Culinary Arts, AV Technology & Communications, Information Technology, Welding<br>**Public Services:** Cosmetology, JROTC, Health Science, Criminal Justice, Emergency Medical Technician<br>**Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM):** Aerospace, | **Arts and Humanities:** Art, Band, Dance, Foreign Language, Music/Mariachi, Theatre Arts<br>**Business and Industry:** Ag-Mechanics, Ag Animal Science, Auto Tech, Business Finance, Culinary Arts, AV Technology & Communications, Information Technology, Welding<br>**Public Services:** Cosmetology, JROTC, Health Science, Criminal Justice, Emergency Medical Technician<br>**Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM):** Aerospace, |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Health Science<br>Focus, Robotics/Drafting,<br>Math Focus,<br>Science Focus | Health Science<br>Focus, Robotics/Drafting,<br>Math Focus,<br>Science Focus |
| **TOTAL** | **22 credits** | **26 credits** |

A **Graduation Plan** will be completed for each high school student.

State law generally prohibits a student from graduating solely under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement. However, after the student's sophomore year, the student and student's parent may request that the student graduate without an endorsement. The district will advise the student and the student's parent of the specific benefits of graduating with an endorsement. The student and the student's parent must then submit written permission to the school counselor for the student to graduate without an endorsement. A student who wishes to attend a four-year university or college after graduation must carefully consider whether graduation under the foundation program without an endorsement will satisfy the admission requirements of the student's desired college or university.

A student graduating under the foundation graduation program can also earn performance acknowledgments on his or her transcript. Performance acknowledgments are available for outstanding performance in bilingualism and bi-literacy, in a dual credit course, on an AP or IB examination, on certain national college preparatory and readiness or college entrance examinations, or for earning a license or certificate recognized at the state, national, or international level. The school counselor can provide more information about these acknowledgments.

A student is not required to complete an Algebra II course to graduate under the foundation graduation program, and the district will annually notify a student's parent of this fact. However, not taking Algebra II will make a student ineligible for automatic admission to four-year public universities and colleges in Texas and for certain financial aid and grants while attending those institutions.

A school district will permit a student to satisfy the curriculum requirements for graduation under the foundation program with the distinguished level of achievement, including an endorsement, by successfully completing courses in the core curriculum of a public Texas institution of higher education. Please see your counselor for more information.
Additional considerations apply in some course areas, including:

- **Mathematics.** To obtain the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program, a student must complete an endorsement and take Algebra II as one of the 4 mathematics credits. A student's completion of the distinguished level of achievement is a requirement to be considered for automatic admission to a Texas four-year college or university and will be included on a student's transcript.
- **Physical Education.** A student who is unable to participate in physical activity due to a disability or illness may be able to substitute a course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, or another locally determined credit-bearing course for the required credit of physical education. This determination will be made by the student's ARD committee, Section 504 committee, or other campus committee, as applicable.
- **Languages other than English.** Students are required to earn 2 credits in the same language other than English to graduate. Any student may substitute computer programming languages for these credits.

• A student may satisfy one of the 2 required credits by successfully completing in elementary school a dual language immersion program or a course in American Sign Language.
• In limited circumstances, a student may be able to substitute this requirement with other courses, as determined by a district committee authorized by law to make thes decisions for the student.

**Available Endorsements**
A student must specify upon entering grade 9 which endorsement he or she wishes to pursue.

**Financial Aid Application Requirement**
Before graduating from high school, each student must complete and submit an application for financial aid for post-secondary education. Students must complete and submit either a free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or a Texas application for state financial aid (TASFA).
A student is not required to complete and submit a FAFSA or TASFA if:

- The student's parent submits a form provided by the district indicating that the parent authorizes the student to opt out;
- A student who is 18 years of age or older or a legally independent minor submits a form provided by the district indicating that the student opts out; or
- A school counselor authorizes the student to opt out for good cause.

Please contact the school counselor for more information.

To confirm that a student has completed and submitted a TASFA, the student must submit:

- A screenshot that includes the processed date field of the FAFSA ApplyTexas Counselor Suite;
- Notification, such as a copy of an email, from the United States Department of Education verifying completion of the FAFSA;
- A copy or screenshot of the FAFSA acknowledgment page;
- A screenshot of the TASFA submission acknowledgment page (from those institutions that offer an electronic form);
- An acknowledgment receipt from an institution of higher education (IHE); or ▪ A copy of a financial aid award letter from an IHE.

**Personal Graduation Plans**
A personal graduation plan will be developed for each high school student.
The district encourages all students to pursue a personal graduation plan that includes the completion of at least one endorsement and to graduate with a distinguished level of achievement. Attainment of the distinguished level of achievement entitles a student to be considered for automatic admission to a public four-year college or university in Texas, depending on his or her rank in class.

The school will review personal graduation plan options with each student entering grade 9 and his or her parent. Before the end of grade 9, a student and his or her parent will be required to sign off on a personal graduation plan that promotes college and workforce readiness, promotes career placement and advancement, and facilitates the transition from secondary to postsecondary education.

The student's personal graduation plan will outline an appropriate course sequence based on the student's choice of endorsement.
Please review TEA's Graduation Toolkit (https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/news-and multimedia/brochures/tea-brochures).

A student may, with parental permission, amend his or her personal graduation plan after the initial confirmation.

**Available Course Options for All Graduation Programs**
Each spring, the district will update students on the courses required or offered in each curriculum area so students can enroll for the upcoming school year.
**Note:** The district may require the completion of certain courses for graduation even if these courses are not required by the state for graduation.
Not all courses are offered at every secondary campus in the district. A student who wants to take a course not offered at his or her regular campus should contact the school counselor about a transfer or other alternatives. If the parents of at least 22 students request a transfer for a course in the required curriculum other than fine arts or career and technical education (CTE), the district will offer the course the following year either by teleconference or at the school from which the transfers were requested.

**Certificates of Coursework Completion**
A certificate of coursework completion will be issued to a student who has successfully completed state and local credit requirements for graduation but has not yet demonstrated satisfactory performance on the state-mandated tests required for graduation.

**Students with Disabilities**
Admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committees will make instructional and assessment decisions for students with disabilities who receive special education services in accordance with state law.
Upon the recommendation of the ARD committee, a student with a disability who receives special education services may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her individualized education program (IEP) and in accordance with state rules.

A student who receives special education services may earn an endorsement under the foundation program. If the student's curriculum requirements for the endorsement were modified, the student's ARD committee will determine whether the modified curriculum is sufficiently rigorous to earn the endorsement. The ARD committee must also determine whether the student must perform satisfactorily on any end-of-course assessment to earn an endorsement.

A student who receives special education services and has completed four years of high school but has not met the requirements of his or her IEP may participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a certificate of attendance. The student may then remain enrolled to complete the IEP and earn his or her high school diploma but will only be allowed to participate in one graduation ceremony.
See policy FMH(LEGAL) for more information.

**Graduation Speakers**
Certain graduating students will be given an opportunity to speak at graduation ceremonies.
A student must meet local eligibility criteria, which may include requirements related to student conduct, to have a speaking role. Students eligible for speaking roles will be notified by the principal and given an opportunity to volunteer.

See the Student Code of Conduct and policy FNA(LOCAL) for more information. See **Student Speakers** for student speakers at other school events.

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

**Scholarships and Grants**
Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the foundation

graduation program may be eligible under the TEXAS Grant Program and the Teach for Texas Grant Program for scholarships and grants toward tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions. Certain students who graduate early may also be eligible for the Texas First Scholarship Program.
See **College and University Admissions and Financial Aid (All Grade Levels**.
Contact the school counselor for information about other scholarships and grants available to students.

## Harassment

See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**.

## Hazing (All Grade Levels)

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

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

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

## Health—Physical and Mental Illness (All Grade Levels)

### Health-Related Services

The district is required to provide notice of each health-related service offered at a student's campus. A parent may withhold consent for or decline a health-related service.

### Illness (All Grade Levels)

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she will not be attending that day. State rules require schools to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for certain periods of time.
For example, if a child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications.
Students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea-free without use of diarrhea-suppressing medications for 24 hours.
A parent should contact the school nurse if a student has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.
If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent.
The district is required to report certain contagious (communicable) diseases or illnesses to the

Department of State Health Services (DSHS) or our local/regional health authority. The school nurse can provide information from DSHS on these conditions.
The school nurse is available to answer any questions for parents who are concerned about whether or not their child should stay home.

### Immunization (All Grade Levels)

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized.
For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. You may access the DSHS exemption form (https://dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/exemptions.aspx) online or by writing to this address:
Texas Department of State Health Services
Immunization Section, Mail Code 1946
P.O. Box 149347
Austin, Texas 78714-9347
The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are:

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis
- Polio
- Measles, mumps, and rubella
- Hepatitis B
- Meningococcal
- Hepatitis A

The school nurse can provide information on immunization requirements. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.
If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. registered and licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or a member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a lifelong condition.
For information on immunization against bacterial meningitis and college enrollment and attendance, see **Bacterial Meningitis.**
See the DSHS's Texas School & Child Care Facility Immunization Requirements (https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm) and policy FFAB(LEGAL) for more information.

### Lice (All Grade Levels)

Head lice are very common among children. Although not an illness or a disease, it spreads easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, nap time, and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones.
The district does not require or recommend that students be removed from school because of lice or nits.
If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent to discuss a treatment plan using an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student undergoes one treatment, the parent should contact the school nurse to discuss the treatment used. The nurse can also offer additional

recommendations, including subsequent treatments, how best to get rid of lice, and how to prevent lice from returning.
The district will provide notice to parents of elementary school students in an affected classroom without identifying the student with lice.
More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website Managing Head Lice in School Settings and at Home (https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm).
See policy FFAA for more information.

## Medicine at School (All Grade Levels)

If a student must take medication during school hours, the student's parent must provide the medication. All medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, must be kept in the nurse's office and be administered by the nurse or another authorized district employee. A student may be authorized to possess his or her own medication because of asthma or a severe allergy as described below or as otherwise allowed by law.
The district will not purchase nonprescription medication to give to a student.

In accordance with policy FFAC, authorized employees may administer:

- Prescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Nonprescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request. **Note:** Insect repellant is considered a nonprescription medication.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

Students whose schedules provide for regular time spent outdoors, including for recess and physical education classes, should apply sunscreen before coming to school.
At the elementary level, a student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to the student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and asks for help applying it. A student at this level may apply his or her own sunscreen if the student is able to do so.
At the secondary level, a student may possess and apply sunscreen when necessary. If the student needs assistance with sunscreen application, please address the need with the school nurse.

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

## Asthma and Severe Allergic Reactions

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may possess and use prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her health-care provider and the school nurse the ability to use the prescribed medication, including any device required to administer the medication.
If the student has been prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day, the student and parents should discuss this with the school nurse or principal.
See also **Food Allergies**.

### Unassigned Epinephrine Auto-injectors

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized *school personnel* who have been adequately trained to administer an unassigned

epinephrine auto-injector to a person who is reasonably believed to be experiencing a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).
An "unassigned epinephrine auto-injector" is an epinephrine auto-injector prescribed by an authorized health-care provider in the name of the school issued with a non-patient-specific standing delegation order for the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector.
Epinephrine auto-injectors include brand-name devices such as EpiPens®.
Authorized and trained individuals may administer an epinephrine auto-injector at any time to a person experiencing anaphylaxis on a school campus.
The district will ensure that at each campus a sufficient number of [*school personnel and/or school volunteers*] are trained to administer epinephrine so that at least one trained individual is present on campus during regular school hours and whenever school personnel are physically on site for school-sponsored activities.
Authorized and trained individuals may administer an unassigned epinephrine auto-injector to a person experiencing anaphylaxis *[at an off-campus school event or while in transit to or from a school event]* when an unassigned epinephrine auto-injector is available.
For additional information, see FFAC(LOCAL).

**Unassigned Medication for Respiratory Distress**
In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow a school nurse to administer an unassigned prescription asthma medication on a school campus to a student with diagnosed asthma if the nurse, in his or her professional judgment, reasonably believes the student is experiencing symptoms of asthma that warrant administration of the medication and the district has obtained prior written consent from the student's parent or guardian.

The school nurse may only administer unassigned prescription asthma medication to a student on a school campus. Please be aware that a school nurse will not always be available at a campus to administer this medication.

"Unassigned asthma medication" means a fast-acting bronchodilator delivered by metered dose inhaler with single use spacer or by nebulizer as a rescue medication, prescribed by an authorized health-care provider in the name of the district with a non-patient-specific standing delegation order for the administration of an asthma medication, and issued by an authorized health-care provider.
For additional information, see FFAC(LOCAL).

**Steroids (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**
State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for physician-prescribed medical use only.
Bodybuilding, 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.

**Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels)**
**THRIVE Health and Wellness Center**
The goal of our program is to proactively support student achievement and community success through comprehensive wraparound services. Through on-campus programming and community based partnerships, we will maximize student behavioral, mental, social and emotional support systems coupled with mental health screenings. For more information, call 210-750-8959. The THRIVE Center is located at ZECLA.
The district has implemented programs to address the following mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse concerns:

- Mental health promotion and early intervention;
- Building skills to manage emotions, establish and maintain positive relationships, and engage

in responsible decision-making;
- Substance abuse prevention and intervention;
- Suicide prevention, intervention, and post prevention (interventions after a suicide in a community);
- Grief, trauma, and trauma-informed care;
- Positive behavior interventions and supports;
- Positive youth development; and
- Safe, supportive, and positive school climates.

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

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication that is intended to alter perception, emotion, mood, or behavior.

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. See policy FFEB for more information.

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

## Physical Activity Requirements

### Elementary School

The district will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten–grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week, in accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA.
For additional information on the district's elementary school student physical activity programs and requirements, please see the principal.

### Junior High/Middle School

The district will ensure that students in middle or junior high school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters **OR** at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within each two-week period for at least four semesters, in accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA.
For additional information on the district's junior high and middle school student physical activity programs and requirements, please see the principal.

### Temporary Restriction from Participation in Physical Education

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

**Physical Fitness Assessment (Grades 3–12)**
Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year by contacting the campus nurse.

**Physical Health Screenings/Examinations**
**Athletics Participation (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**
For certain extracurricular activities, a student must submit certification from an authorized health care provider. The certification must state that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate in the relevant program, including:

- A district athletics program.
- District marching band.
- A medical physical examination is required to be submitted annually to the district.

Students should be aware of the rare possibility of sudden cardiac arrest, which in athletes is usually caused by a previously unsuspected heart disease or disorder. A student may request an electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) to screen for such disorders, in addition to his or her required physical examination.
See the UIL's explanation of sudden cardiac arrest (https://www.uiltexas.org/health/info/sudden cardiac-death) for more information.

**Spinal Screening Program**
School-based spinal screening helps identify adolescents with abnormal spinal curvature at an early stage when the curve is mild and may go unnoticed. Early detection is key to controlling spinal deformities. Spinal screening is non-invasive and conducted in accordance with the most recent nationally accepted and peer-reviewed standards.
All students who meet the Texas Department of State Health Services criteria will be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. As appropriate, students will be referred for follow-up with their physician.
For information on spinal screening by an outside professional or exemption from spinal screening based on religious beliefs, contact the superintendent or see policy FFAA(LEGAL).

**Other Examinations and Screenings (All Grade Levels)**
See policy FFAA for more information.

## Special Health Concerns (All Grade Levels)

**Bacterial Meningitis (All Grade Levels)**
Please see the district's website at www.sisdk12.net.for information regarding meningitis.
**Note:** Entering college students must show, with limited exception, evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five-year period prior to enrolling in and taking courses at an institution of higher education. Please see the school nurse for more information, as this may affect a student who wishes to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus.
**See Immunization**.

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

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

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, based on the Texas Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) *Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis* found on the DSHS Allergies and Anaphylaxis website (https://www.dshs.texas.gov/schoolhealth/allergiesandanaphylaxis/)

When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, an individual care plan will be developed to assist the student in safely accessing the school environment. The district's food allergy management plan can be accessed at www.sisdk12.net.

See **Celebrations** and policy FFAF for more information.

**Seizures (All Grade Levels)**
To address the care of a student with a seizure disorder while at school or participating in a school activity, a parent may submit a seizure management and treatment plan to the district before the beginning of the school year, upon enrollment of the student, or as soon as practicable following diagnosis of a seizure disorder.
See **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504** and contact the school nurse for more information.

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

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, electronic cigarette (e-cigarette), or any other electronic vaporizing device while on school property or while attending an off-campus school-related activity. Mandatory DAEP placement will be reviewed.
The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of all tobacco products, e-cigarettes, or any other electronic vaporizing device by students and all others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. See the Student Code of Conduct and policies FNCD and GKA for more information.

## Health-Related Resources, Policies, and Procedures

**Physical and Mental Health Resources (All Grade Levels)**
Parents and students in need of assistance with physical and mental health concerns may contact he following campus and community resources.

**School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)**
During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) held 4 meetings. Additional information regarding the district's SHAC is available from the Director of Health & Wellness at 210-750-8959. The duties of the SHAC range from recommending curriculum to developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing issues such as school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, improving student fitness, mental health concerns, and employee wellness.

**See policies BDF and EHAA. See Human Sexuality Instruction**

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

The district has adopted board policies that promote student physical and mental health. (LOCAL) policies on the topics below can be found in the district's policy manual, available at www.sisdk12.net.

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

In addition, the District Improvement Plan details the district's strategies to improve student performance through evidence-based practices that address physical and mental health. Please contact the Director of Health & Wellness at 210-750-8959 for further information regarding these procedures and access to the District Improvement Plan.

The district has developed administrative procedures as necessary to implement the above policies and plans.

See **Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction**, **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking**, and policies BDF and EHAA for more information.

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

To encourage healthy habits in our students, the district has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement it. For questions about the content or implementation of the district's wellness policy and plan, please contact the Director of Health & Wellness at 210-750-8959 with questions about the content or implementation of the district's wellness policy and plan.

## Homework (All Grade Levels)

Homework assignments may be given in all subject areas.

### Elementary

Children will receive homework assignments. Parents are asked to help their child by providing the time, place, cooperation, and encouragement needed to complete assignments. Children should be reminded to take their books, their work, and their supplies to school each day.

### Study Skills

Specific skills and techniques can make learning easier and more enjoyable. The following are student guidelines for achieving good study habits:

1. Come to class prepared with pencil, paper, and other necessary materials. 2. Be an active participant in class. Listen well and take part in class.
3. Ask questions to clarify problems.
4. Plan your day and schedule time for homework.
5. Use what is learned and apply it to new situations.

**Grading Homework**

1. Homework may be graded in a variety of ways. At times, checking for completion is appropriate. At other times, a complete analysis of procedures, content, and/or correct answers is appropriate.
2. Feedback should be provided within 48 hours of the submission of the assignment or as soon as reasonably possible. Feedback is defined as written comments, peer review, conference, grade, etc.
3. Peer and self-grading are allowable.

## Law Enforcement Agencies (All Grade Levels)

**Questioning of Students**

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

- Verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question the student at school.
- Ordinarily make reasonable efforts to notify the parents, unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- Ordinarily be present for the questioning or interview, 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 law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs for comparison in an investigation.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs to establish a student's identity where the child may have engaged in conduct indicating a need for supervision, such as running away.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services (CPS), Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive from a juvenile court to take a student into custody.

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

The principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will attempt to notify the parent, unless the legally 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 legally authorized person, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

**Notification of Law Violations**

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been taken into custody, arrested, or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.

• All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors that occur in school, on school property, or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property. These personnel will also be notified if the principal has reasonable grounds to believe the student has engaged in certain conduct.
• All appropriate district personnel regarding a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

See policy GRAA(LEGAL) for more information.

## Leaving Campus (All Grade Levels)

Student attendance is crucial. Appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours if possible. Except for extenuating circumstances, students will not regularly be released before the end of the school day.

State rules require parental consent before any student leaves campus for any part of the school day. **For students in elementary and middle school, a parent or authorized adult must come to the office and show identification to sign the student out.** A campus representative will ask the student to report to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, we cannot allow any unescorted adult to go to the classroom or other area to pick up the student. If the student returns to campus the same day, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student back in through the main office upon the student's return. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required. Under no circumstances will a student in elementary or middle school be released unaccompanied.

**Somerset High School and ZECLA operate as closed campuses where students are not allowed to leave the premises upon arrival in the morning.** High school students must be checked out by an authorized parent/guardian. If a parent authorizes the student to leave campus unaccompanied, a note provided by the parent must be submitted to the main office no later than two hours prior to the student needing to leave campus. A phone call from the parent may be accepted with verification, but the school may ultimately require a note for documentation purposes. The student must sign out through the main office and sign in upon his or her return if the student returns the same day.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse or other district personnel determines that the student should go home, the nurse will contact the student's parent and document the parent's request regarding release from school.

If a student is 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor, the student may sign him- or herself out of school. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will be required.

### During Lunch

All campuses have a closed campus lunch policy. Parents must sign out their student(s) in the Attendance Office when taking their student off campus during the scheduled lunch period. **High school students who leave campus during the instructional day without permission/ authorization will lose their parking privileges after the first incident.**

### At Any Other Times During the School Day

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

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

### Lost and Found (All Grade Levels)

A lost and found collection box is located in the campus office. A student who loses an item should check the lost and found box. The district discourages bringing personal items of high monetary value to

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

## Makeup Work

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

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

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

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

A student involved in an extracurricular activity must notify his or her teachers ahead of time about any absences.

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

## DAEP Makeup Work

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

Students assigned to DAEP are required to complete all work assigned to them by their teachers.

**Grades 9–12**

If a high school student is enrolled in a foundation curriculum course at the time of removal to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP), he or she will have an opportunity to complete the course before the beginning of the next school year. The district may provide the opportunity to complete the course through an alternative method, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. See policy FOCA(LEGAL) for more information.

**In-School Suspension (ISS) and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) Makeup Work (All Grade Levels)**
**Alternative Means to Receive Coursework**

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

**Opportunity to Complete Courses**

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

**Nondiscrimination Statement (All Grade Levels)**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, the district does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited

by law in providing education services, activities, and programs, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The district provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.
In accordance with Title IX, the district does not and is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The requirement not to discriminate extends employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the district's Title IX Coordinator (see below), to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.
Other federal laws that prohibit discrimination include Title VI, Section 504, the Age Discrimination Act, the Boy Scouts Act, and Title II.

▪ The district has designated and authorized the following employee, *Tracy Padilla, Deputy Superintendent*, as the Title IX Coordinator to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, or gender-based harassment; 7791 6th Street, Somerset, Texas 78069; 210.750.8969.

▪ ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: *Giny Beltran, Senior Director of Special Programs*; 7791 6th Street, Somerset, Texas 78069; 210.750.8968.

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

**Nontraditional Academic Programs (All Grade Levels)**
See Requirements for a Diploma

## Parent and Family Engagement (All Grade Levels)

State law provides that a parent has the right to direct the moral and religious training of the parent's child, make decisions concerning the child's education, and consent to medical, psychiatric, and psychological treatment of the child without obstruction or interference from a governmental entity of Texas, including a school district.
In addition to referring to the rights of parents, including the right to withhold consent for or exempt the parent's child from certain activities and instruction specified throughout this handbook, parents may access additional information regarding parental rights at the district's website at www.somersetk12.net

**Working Together**

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the school counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options

and opportunities available to your child.

- Reviewing the requirements and options for graduation with your child in middle school and again while your child is enrolled in high school.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling**]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, school counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences**
- Becoming a school volunteer. See **Volunteers** and policy GKG for more information.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees that develop educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. Contact *Dr. Maria Elena Meza, Executive Director of Instructional Services and Leadership*, at 210-750-8969 and see policies BQA and BQB, for more information.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and assisting the district in aligning local community values with health education instruction and other wellness issues. See **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)** and policies BDF, EHAA, FFA for more information.
- Being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contact school officials if you are concerned with your child's emotional or mental well-being.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. Regular board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the SISD Performing Arts Center. An agenda for a regular or special meeting is posted no later than 3 business days before each meeting at the Central Office Building and online at www.somersetk12.net. [See policies BE and BED for more information.)

## Parking and Parking Permits (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student must present a valid driver's license and proof of insurance to be eligible for a parking permit. Students must request a parking permit to park in a school parking lot. So long as space is available, parking permits may be issued throughout the year. Call the Police Department Secretary at 210-750-8969 for more information.

Students will not be permitted to:

- Speed.
- Double-park
- Park across a white or yellow line
- Park in a fire lane
- Sit in parked cars during school hours
- Leave during the instructional day to include lunch times
- Park in non-designated areas

Students may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these rules. The district may tow cars that are parked in violation of these rules.

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

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

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

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

**Prayer (All Grade Levels)**

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

## Private Spaces

In accordance with law, the district shall designate each multiple-occupancy private space in a building the district owns, operates, or controls for use only by individuals of one sex.

Multiple-occupancy private space means a facility designed or designated for simultaneous use by more than one individual and in which an individual may be in a state of undress in the presence of another individual, regardless of whether the facility provides curtains or partial walls for privacy. The term includes a restroom, locker room, changing room, or shower room.

## 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. Students who had excessive absences during the school year and did not meet the state's 90% attendance requirement, will be retained and or expected to repeat the course. In addition, at certain grade levels a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR), if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1 and the date of the first administration of the STAAR.

- For **Kindergarten**, each of the core subject areas, reading/language arts, math, science, and social studies, has requirements based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). A child should demonstrate mastery of kindergarten TEKS in each of the subject areas through his/her anticipation in class activities. If a child demonstrates through his/her participation that he/she does not have the academic readiness to progress in first grade curriculum, consideration should be given to keeping the child in kindergarten for the following year. The teacher, the parent, and any other staff member deemed appropriate by the principal should arrive at the decision jointly.
- In **grades 1-8**, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based upon course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills). This will be for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in three of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The approval of the principal or designee shall be obtained before promotions are authorized.
- A student in **grades 9–12** grade-level advancement for students in grades 9–12 shall be earned by course credits. Mastery of at least 70 percent of the objectives on District approved tests shall be required.
- In order to be promoted to grade 9, students enrolled in grade 8 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the state assessments administered in grade 8.
- 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 assessments in English or Spanish.

If a student in grade 8 is enrolled in a course that earns high school credit and for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment will be administered, the student will not be subject to the promotion requirements described above for the relevant grade 8 assessment. Note: Somerset ISD only offers Algebra EOC in grade 8.

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

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, school counselor, or special education director.

- Parents of a student at any grade level at or above grade level 3 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her state- mandated exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year. Failure of a student to attend these programs may result in violations of required school attendance as well as the student not being promoted to the next grade level.
- A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student at the middle school or junior high level who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment or is determined by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9. The PGP will be designed and implemented by a school 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 school counselor or principal and policy EIF (LEGAL).] For a student receiving special education services, the student's IEP may serve as the student's PGP and would therefore be developed by the student's ARD committee. For information related to the development of personal graduation plans for high school students, see Personal Graduation Plans for Students Under the Foundation Graduation Program.

**High School Grade Levels**

To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level standards.

A student in grades 9–12 will be advanced a grade level based on the number of course credits earned. See **Grade-Level Classification.**

Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments. See **Graduation** and **Standardized Testing**.

**Repeating a High-School Credit Course**

A parent may request in writing that a student repeat a high-school credit course in which the student was enrolled during the previous school year unless the district determines that the student has met all requirements for graduation.

Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request and will invite the parent to participate. Only the student's first passing grade will be included in the calculation of class ranking.

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

Report cards with each student's performance and absences in each class or subject are issued at least once every quarter.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading, parents will receive a progress report if their child's performance in any course/subject is near or below 70 or is below the expected level of performance. If a student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be asked to schedule a conference with the teacher. See **Working Together** for how to schedule a conference.

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal pursuant to the board-adopted policy. Grading guidelines are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. See **Grading Guidelines** and policy EIA(LOCAL) for more information.

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher. If the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG(LOCAL).
The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70.
Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school within 5 days. The district may communicate academic information about a student electronically, including for progress reporting purposes. An electronic signature will be accepted by the district, but parents are entitled to request a handwritten signature of acknowledgment instead.

## Retaliation

See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**.

## Safety (All Grade Levels)

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

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow all behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct or set by district employees.
- Remain alert to any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member, and promptly report any incidents to a district employee. A student may make anonymous reports about safety concerns by www.sisdk12.net. Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

### Accident Insurance

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

### Insurance for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs

The district may purchase accident, liability, or automobile insurance coverage for students and businesses involved in the district's CTE programs.

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

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

### Preparedness Training: CPR and Stop the Bleed

The district will annually offer instruction in CPR at least once to students enrolled in grades 7–12. The instruction can be provided as part of any course and is not required to result in CPR certification.
The district will annually offer students in grades 7–12 instruction on the use of bleeding control stations to respond to traumatic injury. For more information, see:

- Homeland Security's Stop the Bleed (https://www.dhs.gov/stopthebleed)
- Stop the Bleed Texas (https://stopthebleedtexas.org/)

**Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

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

The district may consent to medical treatment, which includes dental treatment, if necessary, for a student if:

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

The emergency care authorization form will be used by the district when a student's parent or authorized designee cannot be contacted. A student may provide consent if authorized by law or court order.

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

**Emergency School Closing Information**

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

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

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will also alert the community in the following ways: television news alert, district website, and the School Messenger system which will provide phone and text messaging options or www.sisdk12.net.

See **Automated Emergency Communications**

**SAT, ACT, and Other Standardized Tests**

See **Standardized Testing**.

## Schedule Changes (Middle/Junior High and High School Grade Levels)

Schedule changes will be granted only under unusual circumstances. No class can be added or dropped after the first week of the semester (high school only). Only changes that present a significant impact on the student's academic or extracurricular program will be granted. All requests for a schedule change must include a parent or guardian's signature before they will be considered. Occasionally, changes are required by the school administration to balance class sizes, etc. These changes are made in the interest of the student body at large and do not require parent permission.

## School Facilities

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

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's asbestos management plan is available in the central

administrative office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact our Operations Division at 210-750-8956.

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

The district participates in the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily in accordance with standards set forth in state and federal law.

Some students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. The district may share information such as a student's name and eligibility status to help enroll eligible children in Medicaid or the state children's health insurance program (CHIP) unless the student's parent requests the student's information not be disclosed.

Participating students will be offered the same meal options as their peers and will not be treated differently from their peers.

Please contact Child Nutrition Services at 210-750-8981 for more information.

See policy CO for more information.

Parents should continually monitor their child's meal account balance. When a student's meal account is exhausted or insufficient, the district will notify the parent. The student may continue to purchase meals according to the grace period set by the school board. The district will present the parent with a schedule of repayment for any outstanding account balance and an application for free or reduced meals.

If the district is unable to work out an agreement with the student's parent on replenishment of the meal account and payment of any outstanding balance, the student will receive a meal. The district will make every effort to avoid bringing attention to the student.

The following information is published as required by the USDA for participation in the National School Lunch Program:

> "In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.
>
> "Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.
>
> "To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by: 1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or 2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or 3. email: Program.Intake@usda.gov "This institution is an equal opportunity provider."
>
> The responsible state agency that administers the program is the Texas Department of Agriculture (https://www.texasagriculture.gov/Home/ContactUs), which can be reached at (800) TELL-TDA (835-5832) or (800) 735-2989 (TTY).
>
> The local agency that administers the program is the district. [See Nondiscrimination Statement

(All Grade Levels) for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator, ADA/Section 504 coordinator, and superintendent for other concerns about discrimination.] [See policy COB for more information.]

## Vending Machines (All Grade Levels)

The district has adopted and implemented the state and federal policies for food service, including guidelines to restrict student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines, see the campus principal. See policy FFA for more information.

## Pest Management Plan (All Grade Levels)

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

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

Parents who have questions or who want to be notified of the times and types of applications prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact 210-750-8969.

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

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

## Library (All Grade Levels)

The library is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure. During class time, all students entering the library must submit a pass from the teacher granting such a visit. The pass must include the student's name and a brief description of the study or reading task.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Student-organized, student-led non-curriculum-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.
Parental consent is required before a student may participate in a student club that is authorized or sponsored by the district. [See Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations (All Grade Levels)]

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

The district periodically takes students on field trips for educational purposes.
A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip.
The district may ask the parent to provide information about a student's medical provider and insurance coverage and may also ask the parent to sign a waiver allowing for emergency medical treatment in the case of a student accident or illness during the field trip.
The district may require a fee for student participation in a field trip that is not required as part of a basic educational program or course to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and meals; however, a student will not be denied participation because of financial need. See **Fees (All Grade Levels)** for more information.

The district is not responsible for refunding fees paid directly to a third-party vendor.

## Searches and Investigations

### Searches in General (All Grade Levels)

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

District officials may conduct investigations in accordance with law and district policy and may question students regarding a student's own conduct or the conduct of others. [For questioning of students by law enforcement officials, see Law Enforcement Agencies (All Grade Levels).]

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

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

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

### District Property (All Grade Levels)

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

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

**Metal Detectors (All Grade Levels)**
To maintain a safe and disciplined learning environment, the district reserves the right to subject students to metal detector searches when entering a district campus and at off-campus, school-sponsored activities.

## Personal Communications and Other Electronic Devices (All Grade Levels)

Use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district. [See policy CQ for more information.]
Any searches of personal electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with law, and the device may be confiscated to perform a lawful search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed.
**[See Electronic Devices and Technology Resources (All Grade Levels) and policy FNF(LEGAL) for more information.]**

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

## Drug Testing (Secondary Grade Levels Only)
The district's policy FNF(LOCAL) addresses board authorization for drug testing of students as described in the policy, but specifics of the drug testing program should be addressed in administrative regulations, such as this handbook or your extracurricular conduct guide.
[See Steroids (Secondary Grade Levels Only)]

## Vehicles on Campus (Secondary Grade Levels Only)
If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the district will contact the student's parents. If the parents also refuse to permit the vehicle to be searched, the district may turn the matter over to law enforcement. The district may contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.
All student vehicles must be registered with the Somerset ISD police and a parking permit must be obtained and displayed at all times. Parking violations, including vehicles on site without a parking permit, will be cited as follows:

- 1st Violation- $25 citation, plus a parent conference
- 2nd Violation- $45 citation, plus a parent conference
- 3rd Violation- $60 citation, plus no option to obtain a parking permit for the remainder of the semester
- 4th Violation- $75 citation, plus no option to obtain a parking permit for the remainder of the year.
- The 4th offense may also result in a "boot" lock to immobilize the vehicle or the vehicle being towed. Towing fees are at the owner's expense.

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

Vehicles parked on district property are under the jurisdiction of the district. School officials may search

any vehicle any time there is reasonable suspicion to do so, with or without the permission of the student. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the student's parents will be contacted. If a search is also refused by the student's parent, the district will turn the matter over to law enforcement. The district may, in certain circumstances, contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.

## Sexual Harassment

See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**.

## Special Programs (All Grade Levels)

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, students who are homeless, students in foster care, bilingual students, migrant students, English learners, students diagnosed with dyslexia, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact 210-750-8969. The Texas State Library and Archives Commission's Talking Book Program https://www.tsi.texas.gov.tbp provides audiobooks free of charge to qualifying Texans, including students with visual, physical, or reading disabilities such as dyslexia.

## Standardized Testing

### Secondary Grade Levels

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

Many colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. These assessments are usually taken at the end of the junior year. Students are encouraged to talk with the school counselor early during their junior year to learn about these assessments and determine the appropriate examination to take. The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and Pre-ACT are the corresponding preparatory and readiness assessments for the SAT and ACT.

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

### TSIA2 -Texas Success Initiative Assessment 2.0 (TSIA2)

Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test called the Texas Success Initiative 2.0 (TSIA2) assessment. The TSI assesses the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that first-year students need to perform effectively as undergraduates in Texas public colleges and universities. This assessment may also be required before a student enrolls in a dual credit course offered through the district. Achieving certain benchmark scores on this assessment may also waive certain end-of-course assessment requirements in limited circumstances.

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

### Grades 3–8

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

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–7
- Reading/Language Arts, annually in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8
- Note: Algebra EOC is administered in grade 8

STAAR Alternate 2 is available for eligible students receiving special education services who meet certain state-established criteria as determined by the student's ARD committee.
STAAR Spanish is available for eligible students in grades 3-5 for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

**Failure to Perform Satisfactorily on STAAR**
Students who fail to meet STAAR and EOC requirements must participate in interventions, as determined by the campus principal.

**Standardized Testing for a Student Enrolled Above Grade Level**
If a student in grades 3–8 is enrolled in a class or course intended for students above his or her current grade level in which the student will be administered a state-mandated assessment, the student will be required to take an applicable state-mandated assessment only for the course in which he or she is enrolled, unless otherwise required to do so by federal law.
A student in grades 3–8 shall be assessed at least once in high school with the ACT or the SAT if the student completes the high school end-of-course assessments in mathematics, reading/language arts, or science prior to high school.

**Standardized Testing for a Student in Special Programs**
Certain students—some with disabilities and some classified as English learners—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, school counselor, or special education director.

**Personal Graduation Plans - Junior High School Students**
For a junior high student who does not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated EOC, a school official will prepare a personal graduation plan (PGP).
School officials will also develop a PGP for a junior high student who is determined by the district to be unlikely to earn a high school diploma within five years of high school enrollment. The plan will, among other items;

- Identify the student's educational goals,
- Address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and
- Outline an intensive instruction program for the student.

See the school counselor and policy EIF(LEGAL) for more information.
For a student receiving special education services, the student's IEP may serve as the student's PGP and would therefore be developed by the student's ARD committee.

See **Personal Graduation Plans** for information related to the development of personal graduation plans for high school students.

**High School Courses End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments**
STAAR end-of-course (EOC) assessments are administered for the following courses:

- Algebra I
- English I and English II
- Biology
- U.S. History

Satisfactory performance on the applicable assessments is required for graduation, unless waived or substituted as allowed by state law and rules.
There are three testing windows during the year in which a student may take an EOC assessment. The windows occur in the fall, spring, and summer months. If a student does not meet satisfactory performance, the student will have opportunities to retake the assessment.

STAAR Alternate 2 is available for eligible students receiving special education services who meet certain criteria established by the state as determined by the student's ARD committee.
An admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee for a student receiving special education services will determine whether successful performance on the EOC assessments will be required for graduation within the parameters identified in state rules and the student's personal graduation plan (PGP).

**Failure to Perform Satisfactorily on an EOC**
If a student does not perform satisfactorily on an EOC, the district will provide accelerated instruction. Failure of a student to attend accelerated instruction may result in violations of required school attendance.

## Student Identification Cards

All Somerset ISD Pre-K to 12th grade students will receive a year specific student identification card (ID). **The ID includes the student's name, campus, academic year, grade, and student ID number.**

**All grades 7-12 students are required to visibly wear their student identification card while on campus, attending any SOMERSET ISD sponsored function, or riding in any SOMERSET ISD vehicle.**
Student ID badges allow campus staff members to quickly identify students, the campus they attend, and individuals who do not belong on campus.
Wearing an ID is essential in maintaining campus safety and is required for the efficiency of the following district services:

- Constant Student Identification
- School Bus Ridership
- Child Nutrition/Lunchline
- Movement Between Buildings
- Late Arrival to School Tracking
- Library Book/Circulation Desk Checkout
- Emergency Response Identification

SOMERSET ISD secondary students are only granted entry to extracurricular after school functions (athletic events, fine arts performances, community nights, etc) on SOMERSET ISD property if they are wearing their student ID badge around their neck; non-compliant students will be denied entry. Students will continue to wear their ID badge while in attendance, non-compliance will result in removal from the event.
In the event that a student misplaces or forgets their ID, they can visit their designated campus location for a replacement. ***T*he cost of a replacement ID is $5.00 to cover the expenses of associated supplies (card, lanyard, *sleeve, and* printing).**
Students not in compliance are subject to appropriate campus intervention in accordance with the SOMERSET ISD Student Code of Conduct.

## Students in Foster Care (All Grade Levels)

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district will provide enrollment and registration assistance, as well as other educational services throughout the student's enrollment, to any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (temporary or permanent custody of the state, sometimes referred to as substitute care).
If you have questions, please contact the district's foster care liaison, *Elida Guerra, Director of Student Services* at 210-750-8969 ext. 6140.

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

## Students Who are Homeless (All Grade Levels)

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

For more information on services for students who are homeless, contact the district's homeless education liaison at (210) 750-8958 est 6115.

## Summer School (All Grade Levels)

The district provides extended year opportunities for students needing additional support through summer school. A variety of programs are available to address students not mastering state assessments, as well as special programs for migrant, BIL/ESL, and Robotics.

## Tardies (All Grade Levels)

A student who is tardy to class may be assigned to detention hall or given another appropriate consequence. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe disciplinary action, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

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

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

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

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

If a student needs a graphing calculator for a course and the district does not provide one, the student may use a calculator application with graphing capabilities on a phone, laptop, tablet, or other computing device.

A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher.

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

For information on library books and other resources students may access voluntarily, see **Library (All Grade Levels)**.

## Transfers (All Grade Levels)

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

The superintendent is authorized to investigate and approve transfers between schools.

See **Safety Transfers/Assignments**, **Bullying**, and **A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services**, for other transfer options.

## Transportation (All Grade Levels)

### School-Sponsored Trips

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

**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 and is a privilege. Students are expected to follow bus/transportation rules. Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct; the privilege to ride in a district vehicle, including a school bus, may be suspended or revoked to ensure bus and student safety. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted at the school.

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

Please contact the Somerset ISD Transportation Department at 210.750.8965 for further details.

A parent may also designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, you may contact the Somerset ISD Transportation Department at 210.750.8965.

- **Students assigned to DAEP are required to utilize district transportation.**
- **Somerset ISD will not provide transportation for expelled students to JJAEP.**

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

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Do not talk to the driver unless it is necessary.
- Use only your assigned bus and bus stop.
- Enter and leave the bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the vehicle or its equipment.
- Not put your head, hands, arms or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the vehicle.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco, alcohol, or controlled substances on any district vehicle.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Do not litter the inside of the bus.
- Be seated, facing forward when the vehicle is moving.
- Talk quietly and make no unnecessary noise.
- Be quiet when the bus is crossing railroad tracks.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Animals are not allowed on the buses.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the vehicle and before crossing in front of the vehicle.

Transportation discipline will be handled as follows:

- 1ST : Written Warning
- 2nd : Written Warning
- 3rd : Lunch detention and/or removal from bus riding privileges for 3 days.
- 4th : Lunch detention and/or removal from bus riding privileges for 3 days.
- 5th: Suspension of riding privileges for up two weeks

Excessive bus disruptions may result in removal from bus riding privileges for the 30 days or more.

In the event a severe violation occurs which the bus driver feels may endanger the safety and/or well-being of other riders, the three documented warnings may be forfeited and the student may be

immediately suspended. See the Student Code of Conduct for provisions regarding transportation to the DAEP.

## Vandalism (All Grade Levels)

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

## Video Cameras (All Grade Levels)

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

The principal will review the video and audio recordings as needed and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

In accordance with state law, a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member (as this term is defined by law), a principal or assistant principal, or the board may make a written request for the district to place video and audio recording equipment in certain self-contained special education classrooms. The district will provide notice before placing a video camera in a classroom or other setting in which a child receives special education services. For more information or to request the installation and operation of this equipment, contact the principal that the district has designated to coordinate the implementation of and compliance with this law.

See policy EHBAF(LOCAL) for more information.

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

## Visitors to the School (All Grade Levels)

### General Visitors

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

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

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

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

### Unauthorized Persons

In accordance with Education Code 37.105, a school administrator or district police officer has the authority to refuse entry to or remove a person from district property. Additional consequences will be enforced, if the person refuses to leave peaceably on request. District police officers will be involved if any of the following occur:

- The person enters school property without properly checking in through the front school office.
- Assisting and or inviting anyone onto school property without authorization is prohibited. Students who violate this will receive a discipline consequence.

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

A verbal warning and persistent inappropriate behavior are not required for a person serving as a referee, judge, or other official of an extracurricular athletic activity or competition sponsored or sanctioned by the school district or UIL to eject a spectator.

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

**See the Student Code of Conduct.**

## Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students

### Business, Civic, and Youth Groups

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

### Career Day

Somerset ISD invites representatives from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present information to interested students.

### Volunteers (All Grade Levels)

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

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the campus principal.

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

## Voter Registration (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student who is eligible to vote in any local, state, or federal election may obtain a voter registration application at the main campus office.

## Withdrawing from School (All Grade Levels)

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

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

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

## Glossary

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

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

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

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

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

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

**CPS** stands for Child Protective Services.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**STAAR Alternate 2** is an alternative state-mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student's ARD committee.
**STAAR Spanish** is an alternative state-mandated assessment administered to eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

**State-mandated assessments** are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Except under limited circumstances, students must pass the STAAR EOC assessments to graduate. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests, if necessary, for graduation.

**Student Code of Conduct** is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board and identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from a classroom, campus, or district vehicle; sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP; and outlines conditions for out-of-school

suspension and for expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**APPENDIX I**

**Somerset ISD**
**2026-2027**
**Student Handbook**
**Student/Parent Acknowledgement Form**

**ALL students must return signed form to their campus by Aug 21, 2026 or within five days of enrollment.**

**We, _____and _____ _____ ____**
**Please print Parent/Guardian name Please print Student name student ID Grade**

understand the rights and responsibilities pertaining to students and parents and agree to support and abide by the rules, guidelines, procedures and policies of the Somerset ISD outlined in the Student Handbook.

We also understand that this handbook supersedes all prior handbooks and other written materials on the same subject

Please indicate how you would like to access the Handbook.

_____I will reference the Handbook on the district website www.sisdk12.net

_____ I wish to receive a hardcopy handbook.

Signatures indicate that you understand the Somerset ISD Student Handbook.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

School Name _____

**Confirmo haber recibido la distribución electrónica del**
**Manual para el estudiante y sus padres/tutores**
**de Somerset ISD y el Código de Conducta Estudiantil**
**2026-2027**

Mi hijo(a) y yo hemos recibido la opción de tener una copia impresa o acceso electrónico en www.sisdk12.net del Manual para el Estudiante y los padres/tutores de Somerset ISD y el Código de Conducta Estudiantil para el año 2026-2027

**He elegido:**

**o Recibir una copia impresa del Manual para el Estudiante y sus padres/tutores al igual que copia del Código de Conducta Estudiantil.**

**o Acepto la responsabilidad de accesar el Manual para el Estudiante y sus padres/tutores al igual que el Código de Conducta Estudiantil visitando la dirección Web indicada arriba.**

Entiendo que el manual contiene información que mi hijo(a) y yo necesitaremos durante el año escolar y que todos los estudiantes son responsables de su conducta y serán sujetos a consecuencias disciplinarias detalladas en el Código de Conducta Estudiantil. Si tengo preguntas acerca de este Manual o el Código de Conducta Estudiantil, las dirigiré al director(a) de la escuela de mi hijo(a).

**Nombre del estudiante: _____ Número de identificación _____**

**Firma del estudiante: _____**

**Firma del padre/madre: _____ Fecha: _____**

**APPENDIX II**

**Parent Information and Release Authorizations**

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Texas Public Information Act Signature Page**

**(**This form must be returned to your child's teacher or the school office within the first 10 days of this school year.)

According to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) a Federal law, and the Texas Public Information Act, certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows the procedures for requesting the information unless the parent or guardian objects to the release of the directory information. If you do not want Somerset Independent School District to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, **you must notify the district in writing by the end of the first 10 days of instruction**. Failure to return this form will result in the release of directory information upon request. A parent is allowed to record their objection to the release of all directory information on one or more specific categories of directory information.

Somerset ISD has designated the following student information as directory information: student name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, and date and place of birth, as well as major field of study; degrees, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; grade level; most recent educational institution attended; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and weight and height of members of athletic teams.

I direct the District not to release to any third party and/or for any non-school-sponsored purposes the following student information I have checked in the list below. Please return this form to your child's teacher or the school office within the first 10 days of this school year. Failure to return this form will result in the release of directory information upon request.

**Please return this form to your child's teacher or the school office within the first 10 days of this school year. Failure to return this form will result in the release of directory information upon request.**

**Please check "Yes" or "No" in each category below:**

**District Publications**

Somerset Independent School District **has** my permission to release directory information for district publications, selected photography companies supporting campus pictures, and positive publicity (name and picture in yearbook, newsletters, awards, honors, PTA, booster clubs, etc.)

o **Yes**
o **No**

**Publications Outside the District**

Somerset Independent School District **has** my permission to release directory information to any publication outside of Somerset ISD.

**Example: If you check the "no" box, any information about your child would not be released to a newspaper or magazine.**

o **Yes**
o **No**

**Private Requestors**

Somerset Independent School District **has** my permission to release directory information to any requestor in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act**. Example: If you check the "no" box, your child's directory information will not be released to vendors or others who may be soliciting products and services.**

o **Yes**
o **No**

**High School Student Only**

Federal law requires districts receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965(20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.) to provide a military recruiter or an institution of higher education, upon request, with the name, address, and telephone number of a secondary student unless the parent has advised the district that they do not want the student's information disclosed without the prior written consent. Somerset Independent School District has my permission to provide directory information to be released to a military recruiter.

o **Yes**
o **No**

**Somerset Independent School District has my permission to provide to an institution of higher education with the name, address, and telephone number of my secondary student.**

**o Yes**
**o No**

Student Name:_____
Student ID _____

School:_____ Grade Level: _____

Parent's Signature:_____Date:_____

(I understand that any checks in the "NO" boxes below will result in the blocking of directory information in the designated categories.)

**Información para padres y autorizaciones de divulgación**

**Página de firmas de la Ley de Privacidad y Derechos Educativos de la Familia (FERPA) y la Ley de Información Pública de Texas**
(Favor de regresar esta forma a la escuela de su hijo / hija durante los primeros 10 días del año escolar.)

La ley estatal y federal requiere que el distrito notifique a los padres que se pueden oponer a la revelación de cierta información de su hijo/hija. Después de leer lo siguiente, por favor marque a través cualquier información en el formulario de abajo que usted no desee revelar y devuelva el formulario con su firma y fecha dentro de 10 días escolares empezando el primer día de instrucción de su hijo/ hija en este año escolar.

El distrito escolar independiente de Somerset ha señalado lo siguiente como información del directorio: nombre, dirección, número de teléfono, fecha y lugar de nacimiento, fotografía del estudiante, participación en actividades y deportes oficialmente reconocidos, peso y estatura de miembros de equipos atléticos, fechas de asistencia a la escuela, nivel o grado, estado de matrícula, reconocimientos y premios recibidos en la escuela, la escuela asistida más recientemente, y la dirección de correo electrónico (E-mail).

Yo dirijo al Distrito escolar de Somerset que no revele a cualquier tercer partido y/o para cualquier propósito no patrocinado por la escuela la siguiente información del estudiante que yo he marcado a través de esta lista. Favor de regresar esta forma a la escuela de su hijo / hija durante los primeros 10 días del año escolar. Falta de regresar esta forma resultará en la revelación de información.

**Favor de Seleccionar "Sí" o "No" en cada categoría abajo:**

**Publicaciones del Distrito**
El Distrito Escolar de Somerset **tiene** mi permiso de revelar información por medios de publicaciones escolares, fotografías escolares por medio de representante compañías, y publicación positiva (nombre y fotografía en el libro escolar anual, cartas de información del distrito, honores y premios recibidos, organización de padres y maestros, participación en actividades y deportes, etc.)
o **Sí**
o **No**

**Publicaciones Fuera del Distrito**
El Distrito Escolar Somerset **tiene** mi permiso de revelar información Directoral para ser publicada fuera del Distrito Escolar de Somerset. **Ejemplo: Si usted indica la opción "No", cualquier información tocante a su hijo / hija no será revelada a la prensa o revistas de publicación.**
o **Sí**
o **No**

**Pedidos Privados**
El Distrito Escolar de Somerset **tiene** mi permiso de revelar información a cualquier pedido de acuerdo con el Acta de Información Pública del Estado de Tejas. **Ejemplo: Si usted selecciona "No", la información directoral de su hijo / hija no será revelada a vendedores u otros que soliciten productos y servicios.**
o **Sí**
o **No**

**Sección Para Estudiantes de Secundaria**
La ley Federal requiere que los Distritos que reciben asistencia bajo el Acta de Educación Primaria y Secundaria de 1965 (20 U.S.C. Sección 6301 et seq.) proveen a los reclutadores militares o instituciones universitarias, si lo piden, el nombre, dirección, y teléfono de estudiantes en la secundaria al menos

que los padres se opongan y notifiquen al Distrito escolar que no quieren que tal información que sea revelada sin consentimiento escrito por medio de padres/tutores. El Distrito escolar de Somerset tiene mi permiso para revelar información directoral a reclutadores militares.

o **Sí**
o **No**

El Distrito Escolar de Somerset tiene mi permiso de proporcionar a las instituciones universitarias el nombre, dirección y teléfono de mi hijo(a) en nivel secundario.

o **Sí**
o **No**

**Nombre del Estudiante:**_____**Número de Identificación:**_____

**Escuela: _____ Grado: _____**

**Firma de Padre / guardián:**_____**Fecha:** ____

**(Yo entiendo que seleccionando la opción "NO" resultará un bloqueo de información en la categoría designada por medio del directorio de información).**

Somerset no discriminara basándose en raza, color, origen nacional, sexo, religión, edad, o incapacidad en el empleo o en la provisión de servicios o actividades.

**APPENDIX III**

**Somerset ISD Computer User Agreement, Webpage, and Interactive Videoconference**

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received and read the District's Student Acceptable Use Policy governing the use of educational technology and electronic communications. I understand that I am obligated to become acquainted with the rules, procedures and policies outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy. I understand that my computer use is not private and that the District will monitor my activity on the electronic computer system.

**I agree to abide by the District's provisions. I understand that a violation of these provisions may result in suspension or revocation of system access.**

Student Name:_____Grade:_____ID Number_____
Student Signature:_____Date: _____

**Parent Permission:**

I understand that this form must be signed and returned to the School Office before my child is allowed access to District networks, computer systems and the Internet. Please read each of the following paragraphs then check the options below, stating that you understand the extensive use of the electronic system as an important tool in the 21st Century classroom.

Somerset ISD allows students to have access to the Internet for educational purposes. If a parent/guardian does not wish his/her student to have access to the Internet, the parent/guardian must notify the principal in writing within 10 days of receipt of the Student Handbook. From time to time the school may wish to publish examples of a student's work or participation in activities on our district webpage. With your permission, your child's picture and/or project may be posted on a page. Full names will not be included.

Videoconferencing is a two-way video and two-way audio technology in which cameras are used to send images and sound from one location to another. These sessions are live and interactive learning experiences, and may be taped for educational purposes. With your permission, your child will be able to participate in an Interactive Video Conference that may be scheduled throughout this school year.

**My child may have his/her picture published on the District Webpage o Yes o No**

**My child may have his/her project published on the District Webpage o Yes o No**

**My child may participate in Interactive Video Conferences o Yes o No**

**My child may have access to third party accounts including e-mail o Yes o No**

I certify that I understand this policy, and that I have read and reviewed it with my child and explained its implications. I understand that I will be held accountable for my child's actions, and that disciplinary and/or legal action will result from violations of this policy. In consideration for the privilege of my child using the District's computer system and in consideration for having access to the public networks, I hereby release the District, its operators and any institution with which they are affiliated from, any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the system, policy and administrative regulations.

Parent or Guardian Signature: _____
Date: _____ Phone Number: _____

**Somerset ISD Acuerdo de Usuario de Computadora, Página Web, y Videoconferencia Interactiva**

Al firmar abajo, reconozco que he recibido y leído la Póliza del Distrito de Uso Aceptable que rige el uso de la tecnología educativa y las comunicaciones electrónicas. Entiendo que estoy obligado a familiarizarme con las reglas, procedimientos y pólizas descritas en el Uso Aceptable. Entiendo que mi uso de la computadora no es privado y que el Distrito supervisará mi actividad en el sistema informático electrónico.

**Me comprometo a cumplir las disposiciones del Distrito. Yo entiendo que una violación de estas disposiciones puede dar lugar a la suspensión o revocación de acceso al sistema.**

**Nombre del Estudiante:_____Grado: _____ID no. _____**
**Firma del Estudiante:_____Fecha: _____**

**Permiso de los Padres:**

Entiendo que este formulario debe ser firmado y devuelto a la oficina de la escuela antes de que a mi niño se le permita el acceso a las redes del distrito, sistemas informáticos y de Internet. Por favor, lea cada uno de los párrafos que siguen a continuación, compruebe las opciones de abajo, que indica que usted entiende el amplio uso del sistema electrónico como una herramienta importante en las aulas del siglo 21.

Somerset ISD permite a los estudiantes tener acceso a Internet con fines educativos. Si un padre/tutor no desea que su estudiante tenga acceso a Internet, el padre/tutor debe notificar al director por escrito dentro de 10 días de haber recibido el Manual del Estudiante. De vez en cuando la escuela podría publicar ejemplos de trabajo de un estudiante o la participación en las actividades en nuestra página web del distrito. Con su permiso, fotos de su hijo(a) y/o proyecto pueden ser publicadas en una página. Los nombres completos no serán incluidos.

La videoconferencia es un video de dos vías y en ambos sentidos la tecnología de audio en el que las cámaras se utilizan para enviar imágenes y sonido de un lugar a otro. Estas sesiones son experiencias de aprendizaje en vivo e interactivas, y pueden ser grabadas para fines educativos. Con su permiso, su hijo podrá participar en una videoconferencia interactiva que se puede programar a lo largo de este año escolar.

**Mi hijo(a) puede tener su foto publicada en la página Web del Distrito Sí No**
**Mi hijo(a) puede tener su proyecto publicado en la página Web del Distrito Si No**
**Mi hijo(a) puede participar en videoconferencias interactivas Sí No**
**Mi hijo(a) puede tener acceso a cuentas fuera del distrito, incluido el correo electrónico Sí No**

Yo certifico que entiendo esta póliza, y que he leído y revisado con mi hijo(a) y le explique sus implicaciones. Yo entiendo que tendrán que rendir cuentas de las acciones de mi hijo, y que la acción disciplinaria y/o jurídica será el resultado de violaciones de esta póliza. En consideración por el privilegio de que mi hijo(a) use el sistema de computadoras del distrito y en la consideración para tener acceso a las redes públicas, yo libero al Distrito, sus operadores y cualquier institución con la que están afiliados a, cualquier y todo reclamo y daños de cualquier naturaleza que pudieran derivarse del uso de mi hijo(a), o la inhabilidad de usar, el sistema, la póliza y los reglamentos administrativos.

**Padre o Tutor: _____ Firma: _____**
**Fecha: _____**

**APPENDIX IV**

## Freedom from Bullying Policy

Note that school board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/178?filter=FFI. Below is the text of Somerset's policy STUDENT WELFARE: FREEDOM FROM BULLYING. FFI (LOCAL), adopted on 10-19-2017 and as of the date that this handbook was finalized for this school year.

**Note:** This policy addresses bullying of District students. For purposes of this policy, the term bullying includes cyber-bullying.

For provisions regarding discrimination and harassment involving District students, see FFH. Note that FFI shall be used in conjunction with FFH for certain prohibited conduct. For reporting requirements related to child abuse and neglect, see FFG.

**Bullying Prohibited**

The District prohibits bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by state law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited.

*Examples:*

Bullying of a student could occur by physical contact or through electronic means and may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

**Retaliation**

The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

*Examples:*

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

**False Claim**

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

**Timely Reporting**

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

**Reporting Procedures**

**Student Report**

To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other District employee. The Superintendent shall develop procedures allowing a student to anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying.

**Employee Report**

Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.

**Report Format**
A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.

**Notice of Report**
When an allegation of bullying is reported, the principal or designee shall notify a parent of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the incident is reported. The principal or designee shall also notify a parent of the student alleged to have engaged in the conduct within a reasonable amount of time after the incident is reported.

**Prohibited Conduct**
The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct.

**Investigation of Report**
The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

**Concluding the Investigation**
Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.
The principal or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Superintendent or designee.

**Notice to Parents**
If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying.

**District Action**
If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. The District may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances.

**Discipline**
A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action.
The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.

**Corrective Action**
Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine whether any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.

**Transfers**
The principal or designee shall refer to FDB for transfer provisions.

**Counseling**
The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options.

**Improper Conduct**
If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action.

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

**Appeal**
A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG (LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

**Records Retention**
Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC (LOCAL).

**Access to Policy and Procedures**
This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's website, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.

## Law Enforcement Duties

Somerset ISD peace officers will carry out Education Code Chapter 37, Subchapter C, relating to law and order.

**Jurisdiction**

The jurisdiction of a peace officer at Somerset ISD includes all territory in the boundaries of the district and all property outside the boundaries of the district that is owned, leased, or rented by or otherwise under the control of the district. Education Code 37.081(a)

**Duties**

Somerset ISD's peace officers shall perform law enforcement duties for the school district that must include protecting the safety and welfare of any person within the jurisdiction of the peace officer and the property of the school district.

The district peace officers are tasked only with duties related to law enforcement intervention and are not tasked with behavioral or administrative duties better addressed by other district employees. Education Code 37.081(d), (d-1), (d-4)

**Prohibited Duties:**

Somerset ISD peace officers are not assigned routine student discipline or school administrative tasks; or contact with students unrelated to the law enforcement duties of the peace officer.

However, this provision does not prohibit a district peace officer from informal contact with a student unrelated to the assigned duties of the officer; or an incident involving student behavior or law enforcement. Education Code 37.081(d-2), (d-3)




SOMERSET INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
2026-2027
Student Handbook

Please call the PEIMS/District Hearing Office if you have any questions.
210-750-8958 ext. 6115
Or contact your campus principal.

Have a successful 2026-2027 School Year!

Attendance Matters!
Go Bulldogs!