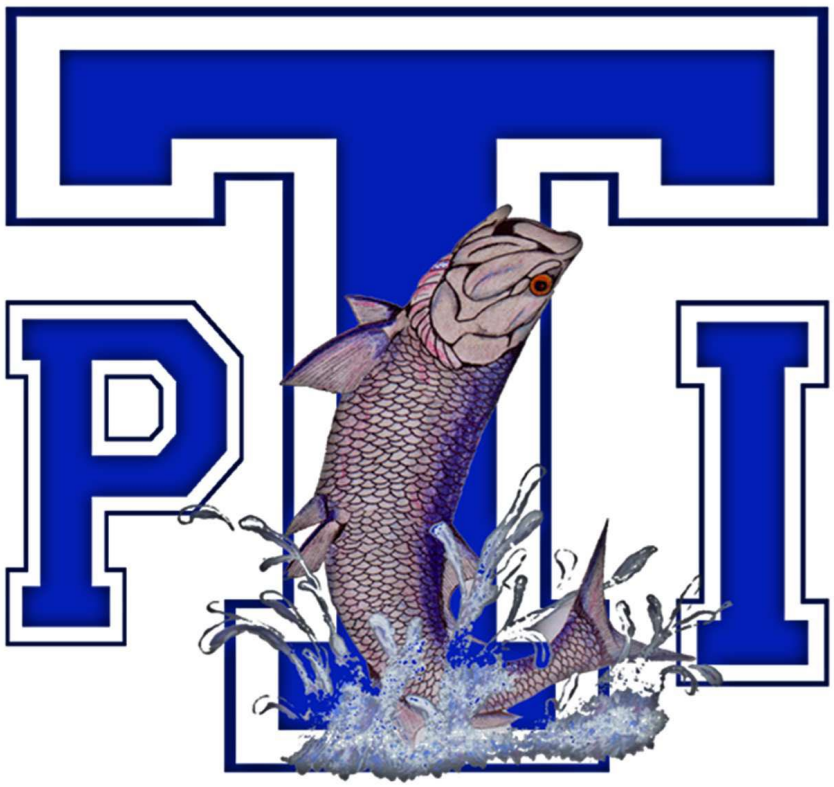


Point Isabel Independent School District Student Handbook 2026-2027

POINT ISABEL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

ACADEMIC CALENDAR



July 2026

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

4: Independence Day

August 2026

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

5-11: Professional Development Days
12-14: Work Days
17: First Day of School

September 2026

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

7: Labor Day
18: Non-Instructional Day

October 2026

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

12: Weather Day
30: Non-Instructional Day

November 2026

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

23-27: Thanksgiving Break
30: State Assessment

December 2026

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

1-11: State Assessments
18-Jan. 1: Winter Break

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Monday, August, 17, 2026

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

Thursday, May 20, 2027

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Labor Day -	*September 7, 2026*
Thanksgiving -	*November 23-27, 2026*
Winter Break -	*Dec 21- Jan 4, 2027*
Spring Break -	*March 15-19, 2027*
Easter Break -	*March 26-29, 2027*

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026
OCTOBER 30, 2026
FEBRUARY 12, 2027
APRIL 2, 2027

SCHOOL HOURS

Derry Elem.: *7:35 AM - 3:10 PM*
Garriga Elem.: *7:50 AM-3:25 PM*
Port Isabel JH: *8:05 AM-3:40 PM*
Port Isabel ECHS: *8:10 AM-4:15 PM*

Instructional School Day

Elementary & JH = *455 Minutes*
High School = *485 Minutes*

Semesters	# Student Days	# Teacher Days
1st Semester	81	91
2nd Semester	88	96
TOTAL	169	187

LEGEND

- Holiday
- Proposed Weather Day
- State Assessments
- Professional Development
- Work Days
- Non-Instructional Days
- Early Release

January 2026

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

4: Work Day

February 2027

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

12: Non-Instructional Day
15: Weather Day

March 2027

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

15-19: Spring Break
26 & 29: Easter Break

April 2027

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

2: Non-Instructional Day
5-30: State Assessments

May 2027

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

20: Last Day of School
21,26,27: Work Days
24-25: Professional Development
31: Memorial Day

June 2027

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

14-25: State Assessments

Calendar

POINT ISABEL ISD **Student Handbook**

2026-2027 School Year

If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of disability, please contact the district at ***the Special Education Department, 956-943-0018 or Nancy.waterhouse@pi-isd.net*.**

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District Information

Official Name: Point Isabel Independent School District

Vision: The vision of Point Isabel ISD is to empower all students to achieve academic excellence, honor tradition, and embrace innovation while inspiring students to become productive citizens in a diverse global society.

Mascot: Tarpon

Colors: Royal Blue, Silver, and White

Communities Served: Port Isabel, South Padre Island, Laguna Heights, Laguna Vista, Port of Brownsville

Board of Trustees:

Texas law grants the board of trustees the power to govern and overs the management of the district's schools. The board of trustees is elected by the citizens of the district to represent the community's commitment to a strong educational program for the district's children. Board members are elected annually and serve 3-year terms. Board members serve without compensation, must be qualified voters, and must reside in the district.

Current Board of Trustees

- Andrew LeBlanc, Board President
- Cecilia Castillo, Vice-President
- Heather Scott, Secretary
- Cynthia Cantu, Assistant Secretary
- Emily Galvan, Board Member
- Roger Salinas, Board Member
- John Sandoval, Board Member

The board usually meets every third Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. In the event that large attendance is anticipated, the board may meet at a large location within the district boundaries. All meetings are open to the public. In certain circumstances, Texas law permits the board to go into closed session from which the public and others are excluded.

Board Meeting Schedule

July 21, 2026

August 18, 2026

September 15, 2026

October 20, 2026

November 17, 2026

December 15, 2026

January 19, 2027

February 16, 2027

March 23, 2027*

April 20, 2027

May 18, 2027

June 13, 2027

*Regular School Board Meeting is off Schedule

Administration

Theresa Capistran, Superintendent of Schools
Christy Gonzalez, Chief Financial Officer
Reina Salinas, Director of Curriculum
Noemi Guzman, Director of Assessment & Curriculum
Kirstie Ramirez, Director of Federal Programs & Safety
Nancy Waterhouse, Director of Special Education
Griselda Villarreal-Martinez, Director of PEIMS & Curriculum
Fernando Villarreal, Director of Facilities and Operations
Luis Herrera, Director of Technology
Angela Olivares, Director of Food Services
Juliette Gonzalez, Communications Specialist
Hector Martinez, PIISD Police Chief
Debra Quist, Port Isabel Early College High School Principal
Rocio Ramos, Port Isabel Junior High School Principal
Valerie LeBlanc, Garriga Elementary Principal
Valarie Brown, Derry Elementary Principal
Stephanie Zavaletta, District Counselor
Cherie Camacho Charge Nurse
Tony Villarreal, Athletic Director/Head Football Coach
Alejandro Cavazos, Head Band Director

District Directory

From time to time, parents and students may have questions or concerns. If those questions or concerns cannot be answered by the campus principal, the parent is welcome to contact the appropriate department and/or campus listed below.

Point Isabel ISD Central Office	956-943-0005
Port Isabel Early College High School	956-943-0030
Port Isabel Junior High School	956-943-0060
Garriga Elementary School	956-943-0080
Derry Elementary School	956-943-0070
College & Career Readiness Department	956-943-0030
Special Education Department	956-943-0663
Child Nutrition Department	956-943-0079
Maintenance & Transportation	956-943-0025

Campus Times*:*

- Port Isabel Early College High School
  - Doors Open: 7:30 a.m.
  - Instructional Time: 8:10 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.
- Port Isabel Junior High School
  - Doors Open: 7:15 a.m.
  - Instructional Time: 8:05 a.m. to 3:40 p.m.
- Garriga Elementary School
  - Doors Open: 7:30 a.m.
  - Instructional Time: 7:50 a.m. to 3:25 p.m.
- Derry Elementary School
  - Doors Open: 7:15 a.m.
  - Instructional Time: 7:35 a.m. to 3:10 p.m.

2026-2027 School Year

August 17, 2026 – First Day of School

May 20, 2027 – Last Day of School

Preface Parents and Students:

Welcome to the new school year!

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

The 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 statement of all policies, procedures, or rules in any given circumstance.

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

Therefore, parents and students should become familiar with the ***Point Isabel ISD's*** Student Code of Conduct. To review the Code of Conduct, visit the district's website at ***www.pi-isd.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 communications explaining changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions. The district reserves the right to modify the Student Handbook at any time. Notice of revisions will be provided as is reasonably practical.

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

A hard copy of either the Student Code of Conduct or Student Handbook can be requested at ***the front office of each campus***.

Note: References to board policy codes are included for ease of reference. The electronic copy of the district's official policy manual is available at ***www.pi-isd.net***.

For questions about the material in this handbook, please contact:

Kirstie Ramirez

Director of Federal Programs & Safety

www.pi-isd.net

956-943-0015

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

- ***Choose ONE:*** Acknowledgment Form ***OR*** Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of Student Handbook

- Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information
- Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education (if you choose to restrict the release of information to these entities)
- Consent/Opt-Out Form for participation in third-party surveys

Accessibility

If you have difficulty accessing this handbook because of a disability, please contact:

Nancy Waterhouse

Director of Special Education

956-943-0663

nancy.waterhouse@pi-isd.net

Section One: Parental Rights

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

Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights

Consent to Conduct a Psychological or Psychiatric Evaluation

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

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

Consent to Provide a Mental Health Care Service

For information on early mental health intervention and suicide prevention programs, contact the District Counselor, Stephanie Zavaletta at 956-943-0070 or szavaletta@pi-isd.net. The district has established procedures for recommending to a parent an intervention for a student with early warning signs of mental health concerns, grief, trauma, trauma-informed care, substance abuse, or suicide risk.

The District Counselor 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 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(s):

- Building skills to manage emotions, establish and maintain positive relationships, and engage in responsible decision-making

- Grief, trauma, and trauma-informed care
- Positive behavior interventions and supports
- Positive youth development
- Safe, supportive, and positive school climates

The District Counselor can be reached at:

Stephanie Zavaletta

szavaletta@pi-isd.net

956-943-0070

The District Counselor can provide further information about 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.

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
- Other original works

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

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

State law permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission when the recording is to be used for:

- School safety
- Classroom instruction or a cocurricular or extracurricular activity
- Media coverage of the school
- 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.

Limiting Electronic Communications between Students and District Employees

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

For example, applications such as REMIND and CLASS DOJO.

The employee is required to send a copy of the text message received by a parent to the employee's district email address.

An employee who does not want to receive text messages from their student's parents will notify the parent and 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 schoolwide or classroom recognition)
- A student's name and photograph (posted on a district-approved and-managed social media platform)
- The names and grade levels of students submitted by the district to a local newspaper or other community publication (to recognize the A/B honor roll for a specific grading period)

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

However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of this information. Any objection must be made in writing to the principal within 10 school days of the student's first day of instruction for this school year.

The district requests that families living in a shelter for survivors of family violence or trafficking notify district personnel that the student currently resides in such a shelter.

Families may want to opt out of the release of directory information so that the district does not release any information that might reveal the location of such a shelter.

As allowed by state law, the district has identified two directory information lists — one for school-sponsored purposes and a second for all other requests. For district publications and announcements, the district has designated the following as directory information shall include student name; address; telephone listing; email; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; ;degrees; honor, and awards received; dates of attendance; grade level; most recent educational institutional attended; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and enrollment status **[See FL Local]**. If a parent does not object to the use of their child's information for these school-sponsored purposes, the school will not ask permission each time the district wants to use the information for these purposes.

For all other purposes, the district has identified the following as directory information which should include student name, awards received and grade level **[See FL Local]**. If a parent does not object to the use of the student's information for these purposes, the school must release this information when requested.

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
- Athletic programs

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 their student's information, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires the district to comply with requests from military recruiters or institutions of higher education to provide the following information about students:

- Name
- Address
- 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.]

Opting Out of Advanced Mathematics in Grades 6-8

The district will automatically enroll a student in grade 6 in an advanced mathematics course if the student performed in the top 60 percent on the grade 5 mathematics STAAR or in the top 40 percent on a local measure that demonstrates proficiency in the student's grade 5 mathematics course work.

Enrollment in an advanced mathematics course in grade 6 will enable students to enroll in Algebra I in grade 8 and advanced mathematics in grades 9-12.

The student's parent may opt the student out of automatic enrollment in an advanced mathematics course.

Participation in Third-Party Surveys

Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey

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
- 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 EF Legal].**

"Opting Out" of Surveys and Activities

- As a parent, you also have a right to receive notice and "opt" your child out of participating in: any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from your child for the purpose of marketing or selling that information.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law [See EF and FFAA].

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

Student Records

A student's school records are confidential and protected from unauthorized inspection or use. Academic records are maintained indefinitely by the District.

Accessing Student Records

If the student is under the age of 18, a parent or guardian is entitled to access all written records of the District concerning the parent's child, including attendance records, test scores, grades, disciplinary records, counseling records, psychological records, applications for admissions, health and immunization information, teacher and school counselor evaluations and records of behavioral patterns **[Education Code 26.004]**.

A parent may review their child's records, including:

- 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
- Records relating to school library materials the child obtains from a school library [See **Error! Reference source not found.** for more information.]
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to the child
- Teaching materials and tests used in the child's classroom

Right to Amend Records

The parent of a student may ask the District to amend the student's record if the parent believes it contains information that is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's right of privacy or other rights.

Parental Consent

The District shall not release any information that can be used on its own or with other information to identify contact, or locate a student without the parent's permission. The

District may not release information from these records without parental consent except as provided in FERPA **[34. C.F.R. 300.622]**.

Written Consent

The parent shall provide a signed and dated written consent before the District discloses personally identifiable information from a student's education records to any individual agency or organization other than the parent, the student, or those listed above. Such consent shall specify records to be released, the reason for such release, and to whom the records are to be released **[334.C.F.R. 99.30]**.

A Student with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances

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 10 district business days. If it is allowed, the service/ assistance animal is only to be handled by its owner. All others must only observe.

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

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).

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 before 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 for 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)
- Coordinate contact between the student and a liaison officer for students formerly in the conservatorship of the state.

If you have questions, please contact the district's foster care liaison:

Kirstie Ramirez

Director of Federal Programs & Safety

Kirstie.ramirez@pi-isd.net

956-943-0015

A Student Who Is Homeless

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

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,
- 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.

For more information on services for students who are homeless, contact the district's homeless education liaison:

Kirstie Ramirez

Director of Federal Programs & Safety

Kirstie.ramirez@pi-isd.net

956-943-0015

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

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

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

This system 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* (https://fw.escapps.net/Display_Portal/publications). 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 about special education is available from the school district in a companion document titled *Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process* (https://fw.escapps.net/Display_Portal/publications).

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:

Nancy Waterhouse, Director of Special Education

Nancy.waterhouse@pi-isd.net

956-943-0018

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

Nancy Waterhouse. Director of Special Education

Nancy.waterhouse@pi-isd.net

956-943-0018

Contact Person for MTSS Referrals

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties and the district multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) is:

Nancy Waterhouse

Director of Special Education

Nancy.waterhouse@pi-isd.net

956-943-0018

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
- A review procedure

Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals

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

Nancy Waterhouse

Director of Special Education

Nancy.waterhouse@pi-isd.net

956-943-0018

[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.escapps.net/Display_Portal?destination=/)
- Partner Resource Network (http://prntexas.org/)
- SPEDTEX: Special Education Information Center (https://www.spedtex.org/)
- Texas First Project (http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/)
- TEA Special Education Parent and Family Resources (https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/special-education/parent-and-family-resources)

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 Speaks a Primary Language Other than English

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if their 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.

A parent may contact the campus principal for more information if they have questions.

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.

Section Two: Academics, School Activities, School Requirements

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 the principal at the campus your student attends.

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

Compulsory Attendance

Kindergarten

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

Voluntary Enrollment 19 and Over

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after their 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.]

Credit

In order to receive credit or a final grade for a class, a student is required to attend class 90% of the days class is offered regardless of whether the student's absences are **excused** or **unexcused [See FEC Legal]**.

In order to maintain credit, a student may not exceed the number of absences listed below:

Derry Elementary, Garriga Elementary, and Port Isabel Junior High School

8 days for the 1st semester

9 days for the 2nd semester

Port Isabel Early College High School

8 days per class period for the 1st semester

9 days per class period for the 2nd semester

Excused Absences

A student must submit, within 3 days of returning to school, a written note stating the reason for the student's absence. The student shall only be allowed 5-non-consecutive written excused absences per academic calendar year. Additional absences after 5 shall be unexcused unless excused by the attendance committee **[See FEC Local]**.

Parent Notification of Excessive Absences

A student and the student's parent or guardian shall be given written notice of a student's attendance **in any class** has dropped below 90% of the days the class is offered **[See FEC Local]**.

Principal's Plan

A student who is in attendance for less than 90% of the days a class is offered may be given credit or final grade if the student completes a plan approved by the campus principal that provides for the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class **[See FEC Local].**

Methods for Regaining Credit

The student may earn credit for the class or a final grade by completing a plan approved by the campus principal, which must provide for the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class as determined by the campus principal. If the student fails to successfully complete the plan, then the student, parent or guardian may request award of credit or a final grade by submitting a written petition to the attendance committee.

Campus Attendance Committee

The attendance committee shall review the student's entire attendance record and the reasons for absences and shall determine whether to award credit or a final grade. Students who have lost credit or have not received a final grade because of excessive absences may regain credit or be awarded a final grade by fulfilling the requirements established by the attendance committee **[See FEC Local].**

Appeal Process

A parent or student may appeal the decision of the attendance committee in accordance with FNG Local.

Withdrawal for Nonattendance

The District may initiate withdrawal of a student under the age of 19 for nonattendance under the following conditions **[See FEA Local]:**

1. The student has been absent 10 consecutive school days; and

2. Repeated efforts by the attendance officer and/or principal to locate the student have been unsuccessful.

Compulsory Attendance — Exemptions

All Grade Levels

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

- Religious holy days
- Required court appearances
- Appearing at a governmental office to obtain U.S. citizenship
- Taking part in a US naturalization oath ceremony
- Serving as an election clerk
- Health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences related to autism services and mental health appointments
- Absences resulting from a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that make a student's attendance infeasible, with certification by a physician on the district's form
- Absences for attendance in a released time course in religious instruction
- For students in the conservatorship of the state:
    - An activity required under a court-ordered service plan
    - 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 **Error! Reference source not found.**]

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 Wi-Fi or internet, for telehealth appointments because use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and may be monitored by the district. For more information, see **Error! Reference source not found.**.

Secondary Grade Levels

The district will allow a student who is 15 years of age or older during his or her enrollment in high school, to be absent for one day to obtain a learner license and one day to obtain a driver's license **[See FEA Local]**. The student will be required to provide documentation of the visit to the driver's license office for each absence and must make up any work missed.

The district will allow junior and senior students to be absent for up to two days per year to visit a college or university **[See FEA Local].** The student will be required to provide

documentation of the visit to the college or university for each absence and must make 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 **[See FEA Local].** The student will be required to provide documentation of the visit for each absence and must make up any work missed.

The district will allow a student to be absent for up to two days during the student's junior year and two days during the student's senior year for a career investigation day to visit a professional at that individual's workplace to determine the student's interest in pursuing a career in the professional's field **[See FEA Local].** The student will be required to provide documentation of the visit for each absence and must make up any work missed.

The district will allow a student to be absent for up to two days per school year to serve as an early voting clerk **[See FEA Local].** The student will be required to provide documentation of the visit for each absence and must make up any work missed.

Delayed Start of School Day

If the Superintendent delays the start of school for reasons related to health of safety (for example, because of flooding or bad weather), campuses will choose an alternative attendance taking time for that day. The campus must maintain documentation of the alternative time, the attendance recorded at that time, and the official reason for the delayed attendance taking (refer to PEIMS Student Attendance Accounting Handbook). The campus must contact PEIMS District Office to set up an alternative attendance taking time for that day.

Early Dismissal or Release in Custody of Adults

Early dismissal will be granted for the same reasons allowed for excused absences. Parents are encouraged to schedule appointments with doctors or dentists as early or as late in the school day or at times other than during school hours. Student pickups must be done prior to 2:00 p.m. However, when emergency demands, the parent must make prior advance notification with the campus principal. Students must be checked out through the front office. Students returning to school the next day must return with a doctor's excuse.

Compulsory Attendance — Failure to Comply

Truancy - All Grade Levels

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school, from any class, from any required special programs, such as additional special instruction, termed "accelerated instruction: by the state, or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

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

Notice to Parents – Warning of Absences

- The student's parent will receive an a daily phone call from School Messenger when a student is absent from a class period or a day without proper excuse.
- The student's parent will receive an attendance notice letter when a student is truant without proper excuse in the school year for full or part days.
- A parent conference will be held to implement Truancy Prevention Measures: Student Attendance Plan, counseling, behavior improvement plan, and attendance contract.
- A court warning notice letter will be given to the student's parent after the student has been absent for the minimum number of days set by the Attendance Committee.
- Remind the parent, as per state law, it is their duty to monitor the student's attendance and require the student to attend school.
- Request a conference between school administrators and the parent.
- As per state law, if parent fails to comply, they are subject to legal prosecution.

The truancy prevention facilitator for the district can be reached at 956-943-0000.

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

Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (All Grade Levels)

Principal's Plan

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student must attend the class at least 90 percent of the days it is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days may receive credit or a final grade if approved by the attendance committee.

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

- Whether the student has mastered the essential knowledge and skills and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- Whether the student has completed makeup work satisfactorily.
- Whether the student or the student's parent had any control over the absences.
- Any information presented by the student or parent to the committee about the absences.

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

Official Attendance-Taking Time (All Grade Levels)

The district will take official attendance every day at ***the designated time selected by each campus*.**

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

Documentation After an Absence (All Grade Levels)

A parent must provide an explanation for any absence upon the student's arrival or return to school. The student must submit a note signed by the parent. The campus may accept a phone call from the parent but reserves the right to require a written note.

The campus will document in its attendance records whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

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

Doctor's Note After an Absence for Illness (All Grade Levels)

Within ***three (3)*** days of returning to school, a student who is absent for more than ***three (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.

If the student develops 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.

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 (https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/driver/forms/VOE.pdf) is available online.

More information is available 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.]

TEA maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at TEA Performance Reporting Division (https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting).

Bullying (All Grade Levels)

Point Isabel ISD is a bully free zone. Bullying of any type will not be tolerated. Bullying should always be reported to a counselor or administrator, including anonymous reporting. If a student with special needs reports an incident involving bullying which causes a denial of a free appropriate public education (FAPE), an ARD committee meeting will be held to create a bullying prevention plan.

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. 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.

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

The District has established a plan for addressing child abuse, neglect, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children. The plan is available in the District Improvement Plan at www.pi-isd.net . Abuse includes physical abuse, including sexual abuse, and mental and emotional abuse. Trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking.

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). See below for information about how to report and respond to allegations of child abuse or neglect.

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

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 at the beginning of each 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 updating the student's profile in Skyward.

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.

Automated Nonemergency 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.

School Messenger is an automated system where parents are notified by phone, e-mail, or both when their child is marked absent. The key to the success of School Messenger relies heavily on the school having the students' correct telephone numbers. Consequently, parents must notify schools when there is a change in telephone numbers as well as home addresses.

When parents receive a call regarding their child's absence, parents should first speak to their child to confirm his/her absence. If there is a question, contact the school and request to speak to the Attendance Clerk. Attendance is important.

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, campus administrator, or principal.

For those complaints and concerns that cannot be resolved informally, the board has adopted a student and parent grievance policy at FNG(LOCAL). This policy describing the grievance process in detail is available in the district's online policy manual at ***www.pi-isd.net***. A parent may file a grievance by submitting the district grievance form to the campus principal. The district's grievance forms are available on the district's website at ***www.pi-isd.net*** and at the principal's or superintendent's office.

In general, the Level I written grievance form should be completed and submitted to the campus principal in a timely manner.

If the concern is not resolved, a parent or student may appeal the Level I and follow the grievance process for Level II. The Level II written grievance form should be submitted to the superintendent's designee at 101 Port Road at the Point Isabel ISD Administration Building.

If the concern is still unresolved, the district provides a process for parents and students to appeal to the board of trustees.

Hearings at each level will be conducted in accordance with the timelines established by law described in the district's policy at FNG(LOCAL).

Damages to School Property (All Grade Levels)

Any deliberate damage to school property by students is not tolerated. The parents of students causing damages will be responsible for the cost of the repairs.

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

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.

Students must obtain prior approval from the campus principal before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing copies of written or printed materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school.

Dress Code (All Grade Levels)

The district's dress code teaches grooming and hygiene, prevents disruption, and minimizes safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the District's Standardized Dress Guidelines:

- Elementary Schools Standardized Dress Guidelines
- Junior High School Standardized Dress Guidelines
- High School Standardized Dress Guidelines

If the principal 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.

Electronic Devices (Including Cell Phones) & Technology Resources

Possession and Use of Personal Communications Devices, Including Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices (All Grade Levels)

In accordance with state law, the District prohibits the use of a personal communication device (such as cell phones, earbuds, tablets, smartglasses, and smartwatches) while on school property during the school day. For more information about permitted use in certain circumstances and disciplinary measures that apply to this prohibition, see the Student Code of Conduct and policy FNCE(Local).

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.

School property means anywhere on a school campus or in a district facility where instruction is provided. School Property includes:

- Classrooms
- Hallways
- Gyms
- Cafeterias
- Band Halls
- Playgrounds
- Restrooms
- Athletic Fields
- All Outdoor Event Areas
- School Parking Lots

All personal devices **must** be turned off during the instructional day and placed in the **District-approved area** (student's backpack).

If a student is in possession of a personal communications device during the school day, the student will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Possession is defined as a device being **directly held by the student**, **kept in the student's pockets, or placed in any location other than the District-approved area, while still under the student's control.**

The parent may pick up the confiscated communications device from the principal's office **after school** per the guidelines listed below:

Disciplinary Consequences 6th – 12th Grades

- First Offense – **the day after** personal communications device confiscated.
- Second Offense - **two days after** personal communications device confiscated.
- Third Offense - **three days after** personal communications device confiscated. **PLUS**, one day of ISS.

- Fourth Offense - **three days after** personal communications device confiscated. **PLUS**, student loses privilege to bring personal communications device to campus for the remaining of the semester, **PLUS** three days of ISS.

Disciplinary Consequences 1st – 5th Grades

- First Offense - the **same day** personal communications device confiscated.
- Second Offense - the **one day after** personal communications device confiscated.
- Third Offense - the **two days after** personal communications device confiscated.
- Fourth Offense - the **three days after** personal communications device confiscated. **PLUS**, student loses privilege of bringing cellular device to campus for the remaining of the semester.

Confiscated communications devices that are not retrieved by the parent will be stored in accordance with administrative regulations. [See FNCE Local for more information.]

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal communications device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See **Error! Reference source not found.** and policy FNF for more information.]

The district is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen communications devices.

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" Bullying and Sexting Course (https://txssc.txstate.edu/tools/courses/before-you-text/), a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of sexting.

In accordance with state law, the district prohibits the installation or use of TikTok (or any successor application or service) on a district device, along with any other social media application or service determined by the governor.

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.

Safe Use of Technology

The district is committed to ensuring that students use technology safely and will follow all federal and state requirements to protect students from excessive data collection or materials that are considered harmful to minors. The district considers parents as partners in cybersecurity and online safety.

In accordance with state and federal law, the district will:

- Install a filter that blocks and prohibits pornographic or obscene materials or applications, including from unsolicited pop-ups, installations, and downloads, before transferring an electronic device to a student to be used for an educational purpose
- Block or filter students' internet access to pictures that are obscene, contain child pornography, or have been determined to be harmful to minors in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)
- Require direct and informed parental consent for a student's use of software, other than software excluded from the consent requirement by law [See **Error! Reference source not found.** and **Error! Reference source not found.**]
- Require direct and informed parental consent for a student's use of software that conducts mental health assessments or other assessments unrelated to education curricula that are intended to collect information about students [See Consent to Conduct a Psychological or Psychiatric Evaluation]

If you want to know more about partnering with the district regarding cybersecurity and online safety, or if you have complaints or concern about student use of electronic devices, please contact ***Luis Herrera, Director of Technology, at lherrera@pi-isd.net or at 945-943-0601***.

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.

Parental Consent

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 from the campus the student attends.

Fire Drills

The Texas Fire Marshall requires that educational occupancies conduct fire drills. Fire drills are held regularly to develop safety practices, which will help students to move quickly and orderly to assigned safety areas during an emergency. Student cooperation is expected and required.

Food

Outside food and beverages, including energy drinks, are not permitted on campus. All campuses are closed, and students are provided with free breakfast and lunch daily.

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. Permission of the principal, Superintendent or other designee, must be obtained before students can post, distribute, and/or sell any items on school property. All fund-raisers will be conducted under the supervision of the project sponsor. Students are prohibited from participating in any fund-raising activity that disrupts their instructional program. [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.

Health Preventive Screenings

The District has an affirmative duty to obtain a parent's consent for the student to participate in the preventive health screening services offered at school.

The district provides:

- Vision and Hearing Screenings in accordance with Texas Department of State Health Rules
- Spinal Screenings in accordance with Texas Department of State Health Rules (written notices will be sent home prior to spinal screenings being conducted)
- Type 2 Diabetes Risk Screening (blood pressure and height/weight screenings) in accordance with Texas Legislature Rules for Schools.

Parents will be notified If the screening results warrant further evaluation. Screening is not intended to replace regular health care and checkups by a physician or health providers. Parents who object to spinal screenings for religious reasons must submit an affidavit to the principal on or before the day of admission stating the objections to screening. Schools are required to have screening documentation on record to comply with the mandate.

Acanthosis Nigricans Screening (a skin condition that signals high insulin levels in the body) is required for grades 3, 5 and 7. Acanthosis Nigricans is important because these markings can help identify students who run the risk of developing diabetes in the future. In addition, Senate Bill 31 requires the Texas Education Agency in collaboration with the Texas Department of Health to provide information regarding bacterial meningitis and its vaccine to students and parents each year. For further information on vaccines and health screenings, please contact Health Services Department at ccamacho@pi-isd.net or at 956-943-0086.

Health-Related Services

A parent or legal guardian must provide consent to the Health Services Department to provide routine and simple health-related services during school hours for their student.

These health-related services may include, but are not limited to:

- Assessment and treatment of minor cuts, abrasions, breaks in skin, and skin irritation
- Application of ice packs for muscular aches, pains, or injuries
- Systems assessment for related complaints (gastrointestinal, neurological, respiratory, musculoskeletal, circulatory, ear, nose, throat, skin, dental, and hair)
- Screening of vital signs such as temperature, pulse, oximetry, and blood pressure for related complaints

A parent may withhold consent for or decline a health-related service. Consent forms can be obtained at the campus or contacting the Health Services Department at ccamacho@pi-isd.net or at 956-943-0086.

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://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunization-unit/texas-school-child-care-facility-immunization/texas-immunization-exemptions) 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
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- 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.

[See the DSHS's School and Childcare Vaccine Requirements (https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunizations/school) and policy FFAB(LEGAL) for more information.]

Lice (All Grade Levels)

Head lice is very common among children. Although not an illness or a disease, head lice spread 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 is available on the DSHS website Managing Head Lice in School Settings and at Home (https://www.dshs.texas.gov/texas-school-health/skilled-procedures-texas-school-health/managing-head-lice-school) and the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention's website About Head Lice (https://www.cdc.gov/lice/about/head-lice.html).

[See policy FFAA for more information.]

Medicine at School (All Grade Levels)

All medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, will not be used on or administered to students without parent or legal guardian signature and a U.S. physician medical order, when indicated. All over the counter medication must be furnished by parent or legal guardian in the original package. All prescription medication must be in original container, labeled with professional pharmacy packaging and student's legal name.

All prescription medication kept in the nurse's office for longer than 15 days will require a physician's medical order in addition to the original packaging prescription. All over the counter medication administered for three (3) consecutive days will require a physician's medical order.

All extra-curricular activities that require students to stay overnight will require all prescription medication to be in their original container, labeled with professional pharmacy packaging and the student's legal name. Any over the counter medication must be in its original container and include a physician's medical order if the overnight stay is longer than three (3) consecutive days.

In accordance with policy FFAC, authorized employees may administer:

- Prescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the PIISD Health Services Consent Form.
- 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 PIISD Health Services Consent Form.
- Nonprescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the PIISD Health Services Consent Form. **Note:** Insect repellant is considered 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.

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 they have the PIISD Health Services Consent Form signed by a parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to their 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 **Error! Reference source not found.**]

Unassigned Epinephrine Delivery Systems

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 delivery system to a person who is reasonably believed to be experiencing a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

An "unassigned epinephrine delivery system" is an epinephrine delivery system, including an auto-injector or nasal spray, 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 delivery system.

Epinephrine delivery systems include brand-name devices such as EpiPens® and Neffy®.

Authorized and trained individuals may administer an epinephrine delivery system at any time to a person experiencing anaphylaxis on a school campus.

The district will ensure that at each campus a sufficient number of authorized individuals are trained to administer epinephrine so that at least one trained individual is present on campus during regular on-campus school hours and when school personnel are physically on site for school-sponsored activities.

For additional information, see FFAC(LOCAL).

Unassigned Opioid Antagonists

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized and trained ***[FFAC Local]*** school personnel at each campus that serves students in grades 6-12 to administer an opioid antagonist, such as Narcan or Naloxone, to an individual who is reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose.

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.

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

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 and prohibits sex discrimination in its educational programs or activities. The requirement not to discriminate extends to employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the district's Title IX Coordinator (see below), to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, 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's nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures are in the FFH series of policies in the district's policy manual, available at ***www.pi-isd.net*****.**

The district has designated and authorized the following employee as the Title IX Coordinator to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, or sex-based harassment:

Kirstie Ramirez

Director of Federal Programs & Safety

Kirstie.ramirez@pi-isd.net

956-943-0015

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 in the FFH series of policies.

The following district representatives have been designated to address concerns or inquiries about other kinds of discrimination:

- For concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability, see the ADA/Section 504 Coordinator:

  Nancy Waterhouse

  Director of Special Education

  Nancy.waterhouse@pi-isd.net

  956-943-0018

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

Parent and Family Engagement (All Grade Levels)

Parental Rights and Options

- To request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teachers and paraprofessionals who may provide services to your child.
- To review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum and to examine tests administered to your child.
- To inspect a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to your child.

Education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership between home and school. PIISD asks parents and guardians to encourage their children to place a high priority on their education and to commit themselves to making the most of the educational opportunities the schools provide. Parent involvement can include staying informed about school activities and issues, becoming a school volunteer, participating in campus organizations for parents, and monitoring student progress. All parents are urged to schedule parent-teacher conferences during the school year. Parents are especially encouraged to attend their respective campus parent meetings, Meet the Teacher, and Fall/Spring Open House.

Working Together

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child every day to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the District.
- Discussing with the school counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements and options entering ninth grade, and again for graduation while your child is enrolled in high school.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed.
- 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 or for the teacher's direct class line. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during their conference period or before or after school.

- Offering to serve as a parent representative on the campus-level or district-level planning committees assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and assisting the district in aligning local community values with health education instruction, human sexuality instruction, instruction on prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking, and other wellness issues. [See **Error! Reference source not found.** and policies BDF, EHAA, FFA for more information.]

Parking and Parking Permits (High School 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.

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

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.

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

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. [See **Error! Reference source not found.**]

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.]

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 website www.pi-isd.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. The District Improvement Plan can be found on the district's website www.pi-isd.net

For more information about the District Improvement Plan, please contact:

Kirstie Ramirez, Director of Federal/State Programs

Kirstie.ramirez@pi-isd.net

956-943-0015

Safety Drills (All Grade Levels)

Student safety on campus, at school-related events, and in district vehicles is a high priority of the district. The District will conduct several types of Safety Drills throughout the school year. Safety drills are structured practice activities designed to prepare students, teachers, and staff for potential emergencies. They help ensure that everyone knows how to respond quickly and safely in different situations. Student cooperation is essential to making these drills effective and maintaining a safe school environment. A student is expected to:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow all practice drill standards.

- Follow instructions from teachers and other district employees regarding safety drills/concerns.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Take practice drills seriously and provide positive feedback and adjustments made for future drills for improvement.

Preparedness Training: CPR and Stop the Bleed

The district will offer instruction in CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED) at least once to students enrolled in in grades 7-12. The instruction can be provided as part of any course and is not required to result in CPR or AED 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 Stop the Bleed Texas (https://stopthebleedtexas.org/).

[See Parent Contact Information and Automated Emergency Communications]

School Facilities

Asbestos Management Plan (All Grade Levels)

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's asbestos management plan is available in the central administrative office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact the district's designated asbestos coordinator:

Fernando Villarreal

Director of Maintenance and Facilities

Fernando.villarreal@pi-isd.net

956-943-0025

The responsible state agency that administers the program is the Texas Department of Agriculture (https://www.texasagriculture.gov/Home/Contact-Us), 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.]

Pest Management Plan (All Grade Levels)

Pesticides are applied periodically at each campus. Parents who have questions should contact the Office of Maintenance and Facilities and speak with the person in charge of the District's pesticide program.

Fernando Villarreal

Director of Maintenance and Facilities

Fernando.villarreal@pi-isd.net

956-943-0025

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.

Parents who want to volunteer for a school field trip, will need to bring a valid ID. All volunteers will be checked through the Visitor Management System for a background screening before the school sponsored field trip.

Tardies (All Grade Levels)

A student who arrives to class after the class bell is assigned a tardy in Skyward. A student may be assigned to lunch detention, ISS, or another appropriate consequence as stated in the Student Code of Conduct.

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 their child to ride with or be released after the event to the parent or another adult designated by the parent if written consent was provided to the coach/sponsor with allotted time.

Buses and Other School Vehicles

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students. This service is provided at no cost to students.

Bus routes and stops will be designated annually. Any changes will be posted at the school and on the district's website, social media, and through School Messenger. For the safety

of the driver and all passengers, students must board district vehicles only at authorized stops and drivers must unload passengers only at authorized stops.

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses and other district vehicles are clean and safe. When riding in district vehicles, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

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

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

[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.

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:

- Request entry to the school at the primary entrance unless otherwise directed by a district employee
- Report to the main office
- Be prepared to show identification
- Exit the school at the primary entrance and leave all exterior doors closed, latched, and locked unless actively monitored by a district employee
- Comply with all applicable district policies and procedures

If requested by a district employee, a visitor must provide identification such as a driver's license, other picture identification issued by a government entity, or employee or student identification issued by the district. A person who refuses to provide identification and who reasonably appears to have no legitimate reason to be on district property may be ejected from district property.

Visitor Management System

Individuals attending parent-teacher conferences during instructional time must present a valid photo ID issued by a U. S. government entity. The ID will be verified through Visitor Management System for background screening before access to classrooms is granted. Individuals presenting a photo ID issued by a non-U.S. government entity will be permitted to enter only the front conference area. All visitors are expected to avoid interfering with instruction or disrupting 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.

Volunteers (All Grade Levels)

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

The District requires for volunteers to be screened through the Visitor Management System prior to attending any school sponsored field trip or entering the school building during instructional time.