



**Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of  
Student Handbook, Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy**

My child and I have been offered the option to receive a paper copy or to electronically access at [www.blumisd.net](http://www.blumisd.net) the Blum ISD Student Handbook, Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy for 2009–2010.

I have chosen to:

- Pick up a paper copy of the Student Handbook, Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) at the Elementary or Secondary offices.
- Accept responsibility for accessing the Student Handbook, Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) by visiting the Web address listed above.

I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year and that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. If I have any questions regarding this handbook, the Code, or the AUP, I should direct those questions to the principal at 254-874-5231

Printed name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

***Please sign and date this page and return it to the student's school within the first week***

***Notice Regarding Directory Information and  
Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information***

State law requires the district to give you the following information:

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows the procedures for requesting the information unless the parent or guardian objects to the release of the directory information about the student. If you do not want Blum ISD to disclose directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, **you must notify the district in writing by September 11, 2009.**

This means that the district must give certain personal information (called “directory information”) about your child to any person who requests it, unless you have told the district in writing not to do so. In addition, you have the right to tell the district that it may, or may not, use certain personal information about your child for specific school-sponsored purposes. The district is providing you this form so you can communicate your wishes about these issues.

For the following school-sponsored purposes: all District publications and announcements, Blum ISD has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student’s name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Photograph
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Most recent educational institution attended
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height, if a member of an athletic team

Directory information identified only for limited school-sponsored purposes remains otherwise confidential and will not be released to the public without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

**Parent: Please circle one of the choices below:**

I, parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (*student’s name*), **(do give) (do not give)** the district permission to use the information in the above list for the specified school-sponsored purposes.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

For all other purposes, Blum ISD has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Most recent educational institution attended
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports

**Parent: Please circle one of the choices below:**

I, parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (*student's name*), **(do give) (do not give)** the district permission to release the information in this list in response to a request unrelated to school-sponsored purposes.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

***Notice of Consent for Corporal Punishment***

Corporal punishment is a discipline management technique used at Blum ISD. If you do not wish corporal punishment administered on your child you must let us know each year.

**Please return this form by September 11, 2009.**

The District **may / may not** use corporal punishment on my child.

(Circle one)

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

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

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

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

**Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education**

Federal law requires that the district release to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, upon request, the name, address, and phone number of secondary school students enrolled in the district, unless the parent or eligible student directs the district not to release information to these types of requestors without prior written consent. [See **Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education** on page 9 for more information.]

**Parent:** Please complete the following only if you do not want your child's information released to a military recruiter or an institution of higher education without your prior consent.

I, parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (*student's name*), request that the district **not** release my child's name, address, and telephone number to a military recruiter or institutions of higher education upon their request without my prior written consent.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **NOTICES TO PARENTS**

### **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

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

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

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex:  
Nick Brown, Superintendent 310 South Avenue F, Blum TX 76627 254-874-5231
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability:  
Robyn Koonsman, Counselor 310 South Avenue F, Blum TX 76627 254-874-5231
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent.
- **Asbestos Management Plan**

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations addressing asbestos, is available in the Superintendent's office. If you have any questions, please contact Superintendent Nick Brown at 254-874-5231.

### **Pest Management Plan**

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Superintendent Nick Brown at 254-874-5231.

### **Additional Notices**

Other important notices in the Student Handbook cover the following topics:

- Student participation in a survey, analysis, or evaluation;
- Requesting the professional qualifications of teachers and staff;
- Requesting a transfer of your child to a safe public school;
- Assistance to students who have learning difficulties;
- Student records;
- Bacterial meningitis;
- Career and technology programs;
- Homeless students; and
- School lunch programs.

Please take some time to review these notices and other important information contained in the Student Handbook.

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## **PREFACE**

To Students and Parents:

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

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

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

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

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

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Blum ISD *Student Code of Conduct*, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found as an attachment to this handbook and available in the principal’s office.

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

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

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

Also, please complete and return to your child’s campus the following required forms included in this handbook or provided in the forms packet accompanying this handbook:

1. Parental Acknowledgment Form;
2. Student Directory Information Form;
3. Release of Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Learning Forms; and

[See **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights** on page 3 and **Directory Information** on page 8 for more information.]

Please note that references to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. A copy of the district’s policy manual is available for review in the school office

<http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/109913/>.

## SECTION I: REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

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

### **STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

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

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

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex:  
Nick Brown, Superintendent 310 South Avenue F, Blum TX 76627 254-874-5231
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability:  
Robyn Koonsman, Counselor 310 South Avenue F, Blum TX 76627 254-874-5231
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent.

***All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent.***

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

#### **Working Together**

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements of the graduation programs with your child, if your child is entering ninth grade.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** on page 20 and **Academic Programs** on page 14.]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office at 254-874-5231 for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 37.]

- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policies at GKG and contact Superintendent Nick Brown at 254-874-5231.
- Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include: Athletic Booster Club, FFA Booster Club.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB, and contact Mark Brandenberger at 254-874-5231.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction. [See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and information in this handbook at **School Health Advisory Council** on page 31.]
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies at BE and BED for more information.]

## **PARENTAL RIGHTS**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

As a parent, you have a right to provide consent before the district can display your child's artwork, special projects, photographs taken by your child, and the like on the district's Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication.

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

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

### **Reviewing Instructional Materials**

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

### **Inspecting Surveys**

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

### **Accessing Student Records**

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

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

[See **Student Records** on page 7.]

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

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

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

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

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

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

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows. [See **Pledges of Allegiance and A Minute of Silence** on page 35 and policy EC(LEGAL).]

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

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

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

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

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

As a parent, you have a right:

- To request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the Superintendent to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the Superintendent for information. [See policy FDB.]  
[See **Bullying** on page 14, and policy FFI(LOCAL).]
- To request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a

victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See policy FDD(LOCAL).]

- To request the transfer of your child to a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. [See policies FDD(LEGAL) and (LOCAL).]

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

As a parent, if your children are multiple birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets, etc.) assigned to the same grade and campus, you may request that they be placed either in the same classroom or in separate classrooms. Your written request must be submitted no later than the 14th day after the enrollment of your children. [See FDB(LEGAL).]

## **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

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

Parents of students with learning difficulties or who may need special education services may request an evaluation for special education at any time. For more information, see **Special Programs** on page 42 and contact Mark Brandenberger or Jeff Sanders at 254-874-5231.

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

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

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

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

The designated persons to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is Mark Brandenberger or Jeff Sanders at 254-874-5231.

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

## **Services for Title I Participants**

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs is Nick Brown and may be contacted at 254-874-5231.

## **Student Records**

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

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

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

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

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

Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. If circumstances prevent inspection during these hours, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records. The address of the superintendent’s office is 310 S. Avenue F Blum, TX 76627

The address of the principals’ offices is: 310 S. Avenue F Blum, TX 76627.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the superintendent. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy. [See FINALITY OF GRADES at FNG(LEGAL), **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 37, and **Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns** on page 16 for an overview of the process.]

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

The district's policy regarding student records found at FL(LEGAL) and FL(LOCAL) is available from the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's Web site at <http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/109913/>.

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

**Please note:**

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

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

**Directory Information**

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

However, release of a student's directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal **BY September 11<sup>th</sup>**. See the "Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information" included in this handbook.

**Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes**

The district often needs to use student information for the following school-sponsored purposes: Participants in officially recognized activities and sports.

For these specific school-sponsored purposes, the district would like to use your child's address, telephone listing, photograph, degrees, honors, and awards received, dates of attendance, grade level, most recent educational institution attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height, if a member of an athletic team. This information will not be released to the public without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

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

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

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

### **Bacterial Meningitis**

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

- What is meningitis?

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

- What are the symptoms?

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

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

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

- How serious is bacterial meningitis?

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

- How is bacterial meningitis spread?

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

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

- How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

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

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

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

You should seek prompt medical attention.

- Where can you get more information?

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

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

Topics in this section of the handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is conveniently organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact Mr. Jeff Sanders or Mr. Mark Brandenberger at (254) 874-5231.

### **ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE**

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

#### **Compulsory Attendance**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Attendance for Credit**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Parent's Note After An Absence**

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

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

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

### **Driver License Attendance Verification**

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

### **Closed Campus**

No student shall be permitted to leave the campus during lunch except as approved by the principal. Students that leave campus during lunch or at any other time without administrative approval shall be subject to consequences.

### ***ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL***

For the safety of our students they should be supervised at all times. Therefore, students are to arrive at school no earlier than 7:30 unless they have detention, practice or a scheduled activity where a teacher or sponsor will be present.

Students should not remain on campus after 3:40 unless they have detention, are involved in a school activity or are under the supervision of a teacher or sponsor.

Students are not to leave campus after they have arrived without permission from the principal. Students who ride a bus may not get in a vehicle with someone else and leave campus at any time.

The normal school day will run from 7:55-3:40.

### ***ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES***

#### **Parent Notification:**

Parents will be notified in writing if a student has been absent for any reason from any class four (4) days during a semester. Attendance will be checked on a weekly basis and letters will be sent for each subsequent absence. The letter will contain possible consequences of continued absenteeism and a report on the student's absences.

#### **Student Absence:**

When a student is to be absent from illness or another authorized reason, the parent/guardian should call Mrs. Davis' office-elementary 254-874-5231 ext. 425 or Mrs. Moseley's office-secondary ext. 702 on the first morning of the absence and **report the** reason. If the absence is expected to be more than three (3) days, the parent/guardian may request that assignments be collected from teachers for pickup so that they can be completed at home. A note should be brought to Mrs. Davis' or Mrs. Moseley's office within the first three (3) days of the student's return to school, even in cases where the parent called to report the absence or the student signed out of school early. Students/Parents need to check with the office within the three (3) days to verify that the absence has been correctly recorded in the attendance section of the computer. Any inconsistencies should be brought to the attention of the campus Principals immediately; Mr. Brandenberger-Elementary or Mr. Sanders-Secondary.

If a student is absent four (4) consecutive days, or five (5) separate occasions within a year for illness, a note from a doctor or health clinic may be required in order to receive attendance credit. A student may not have more than five (5) parent notes per year to excuse absences.

On the sixth (6) absence and thereafter during the year, the student must bring a doctor's note for the absence to be excused. Please notify campus Principals Mr. Brandenberger-Elementary or Mr. Sanders -Secondary if special circumstances need to be taken into consideration.

### **Return to School After Absence:**

When returning to school after an absence a student must bring a note, signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence and the dates of the absence. The students then gets an admit slip to be admitted back into school. Notes signed by the student, even with parent's permission, will not be accepted and the student will receive an unexcused absence. In addition, the student will become ineligible for semester exam exemptions. Forged notes will result in consequences.

Students shall contact all teachers to arrange make-up of assignments and exams missed.

Failure to make-up assigned work within the time allotted by teachers may result in a lower grade for the assignment(s). Normally one day for each day of absence plus one day is allowed to make-up assignments(s). Assignments given prior to the absence are due on the date required, or the date of return, unless the teacher determines additional time should be provided.

### **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

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

### **HONORS CLASSES**

Honors classes may be offered in Geometry and English I, II, III, and IV, Chemistry, Spanish 3, Algebra 2, Pre-Calculus, and Calculus. Grades made in honors classes will be multiplied by 1.10 when averaging grades, to determine class rank and valedictory and salutatory honors. Students wishing to take honors classes must have demonstrated academic initiative in the subject area.

[See **Academic Counseling** on page 20.]

### **AWARDS AND HONORS**

#### **\*Glen Adair Valedictorian Scholarship**

A trust fund was established by Mr. Glen Adair to be awarded annually to the Valedictorian of Blum High School. To be eligible for this scholarship a student must meet all of the criteria for valedictory honors established by the Blum School Board and any stipulations required by the Adair trust.

#### **\*Angie Tubbs Salutatorian Scholarship**

The Wells Fargo Bank, Rio Vista together with the friends and family of Angie Tubbs established this memorial scholarship in 1989. It is awarded to the student who meets the criteria for Salutatorian of Blum High School. This money is to be used for educational expenses.

### **BULLYING**

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

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

### **CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS**

The District offers career and technology programs in Agriculture, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Computer technology. Admission to these programs is based on past course preparation, class space availability, and class in school. The District will take steps to ensure that a lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation in any educational career and technology programs.

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

High school students in the senior class will be ranked at the end of the school year according to their four-year academic averages. Ranking will be made by averaging all grades earned in high school in academic subjects only. Correspondence courses and credit by exam will be included. Student aides and PE grades will not be included.

Students who are ranked in the top ten percent of their graduating class are eligible for a period of two school years following their graduation for automatic admission into Texas general academic universities and colleges. Students and parents should see the counselor for further information about how to apply and the deadline for application.

Grades made in honors classes, advanced classes and academic classes taken at Hill College for dual credit will be multiplied by 1.10 and AP classes will be multiplied by 1.12 when averaging grades to determine class rank and valedictory and salutatory honors.

The honor of valedictorian is usually awarded to the senior with the highest class ranking, and the honor of salutatorian is usually awarded to the senior with the second highest class ranking. In the event of a tie for either honor, co-valedictorians or co-salutatorians will be named. If co-valedictorians are named there will be no salutatorian. The selection will be done at the end of the year and the final six weeks grades will be included.

Eligibility for class ranking for valedictorian, salutatorian, and historian shall require the student shall have attended Blum High School by the completion of the first grading period of their 10<sup>th</sup> grade year and be enrolled in each grading period thereafter. All four years will count in determining the average.

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

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

Students and parents should contact the counselor or Mr. Jeff Sanders for further information about the application process and deadlines.

[For further information, see policies at EIC.]

### **CLASS SCHEDULES**

For High School and Middle School students, please see the Counselor, Robyn Koonsman. For Elementary students, please see Mark Brandenberger.

## **COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES**

Blum ISD will allow High School Juniors and Seniors to earn dual credit for college course work. To be eligible to enroll and be awarded credit toward state graduation requirements, a student must have the approval of the high school principal. The student must meet the admission requirements of the college. The course work for which credit is awarded shall provide greater depth than that which is outlined in the TEKS for that course.

For the District to pay tuition for students to attend Hill College-Hillsboro/Cleburne Campuses' the student must not have failed a class the previous year and have passed all TAKS tests offered their 10<sup>th</sup> Grade year to take college classes their 11<sup>th</sup> Grade year, and passed all TAKS tests offered their 11<sup>th</sup> Grade year to take classes their 12<sup>th</sup> Grade year.

If the student meets these criteria the District will pay tuition for four (4) approved classes at Hill College-Hillsboro/Cleburne Campuses'. However, if the student drops or fails the class Blum ISD will not pay tuition for subsequent classes. Students seeking the Distinguished Achievement Program diploma must make a grade of "B" or high in order for the class to count toward the Distinguished Diploma.

## **COLLEGE DAYS**

A student at Blum High School may take a total of two (2) school days his final year in order to visit a college campus. The student must receive permission from the Principal and give his teachers advanced notice that he will be gone from school. A parent must accompany a student on college visits for it to count as an acceptable visit. The student is responsible for bringing back to school a note signed by an administrator from the college he visited and making up any work missed.

## **COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS**

Good communication between home and school regarding a child's education is more than a "plus": it's essential for the student to make the most of the opportunities provided. School communication starts with information documents such as this handbook, progress reports and report cards, student work for parents to review and sign, and continues into interaction: messages and phone calls from teachers, and school open houses, for instance.

Communication might also include requests for conferences—initiated by the school or the parent—to discuss student progress, to find out more about the curriculum and how the parent can support learning, to head off or resolve problems, etc. A parent who wants to schedule a phone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal should call the school office at (254) 874-5231 for an appointment.

Generally a teacher will be able to meet with parents or return calls during his or her conference period, although other mutually convenient times might be arranged as well.

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the district has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG(LOCAL) in the district's policy manual. A copy of this policy may be obtained in the principal's or superintendent's office <http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/109913/>. In general, the student or parent should submit a written complaint and request a conference with the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

## **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

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

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

## **CONDUCT**

### **Applicability of School Rules**

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

To achieve the best possible learning environment for all students, the *Student Code of Conduct* and other campus rules will apply whenever the interest of the district is involved, whether on or off school grounds, in conjunction with classes and school-sponsored activities.

### **ELEMENTARY/HIGH SCHOOL/MIDDLE SCHOOL**

#### **Level I**

This first category is most important because a teacher's early corrective action will usually avoid the need to progress to more restrictive categories. Student's first signs of misbehavior usually are not of a severe nature, but are signals for special attention. Students are subject to, but not limited to: detention, corporal punishment, parental contact, verbal warning, seating change in the classroom, etc.

1. Pushing or shoving
2. Behavior that exhibits lack of respect for a teacher or another student
3. Disrupting class
4. Failure to follow instructions (ex. failing to return progress reports or report cards)
5. Excessive teasing of another student
6. Public displays of affection
7. Coming to class unprepared
8. Tardiness
9. Repeated gum chewing
10. Profanity
11. Running or scuffling
12. Excessively loud in the hall

13. Dress code violations - If the violation is in question the student may be sent to the office. (ex. to measure hem length) The student may also be sent to the office to obtain appropriate clothing if needed.
14. Cheating or plagiarism

## **Level II**

### **Offenses that result in ISS placement**

Discipline under this section will be determined by the administration in conference with the teacher. The amount of time served will be based on both the severity of the offense and the number of times the student has engaged in such behavior.

1. Fighting
2. Having in their possession or using tobacco
3. Cutting a class or leaving school without permission
4. Being rude and argumentative with a teacher or staff member
5. Insubordination - refusal to follow directions
6. Sexual harassment
7. Profanity or obscene gestures directed toward a teacher or staff member
8. Theft
9. Vandalism
10. Gambling
11. Harassment - verbal abuse, threats, racial slurs, hazing
12. Having a legal knife with a blade over 2 1/2 inches.
13. Repeated violations of Level One behaviors

### **Level III - Offenses that result in Alternative school placement**

### **Level IV - Offenses that result in expulsion**

### ***Level III and IV Offenses are covered in the Student Code of Conduct***

### **Corporal Punishment**

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

### **Disruptions**

As identified by law, disruptions include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.

- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.
- Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district.

### **In School-Suspension (ISS)**

In-school suspension or (ISS) is a disciplinary technique for misconduct. Although different from out-of-school suspension and placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP), ISS removes the student from the regular classroom but the student remains at the main campus.

A student assigned to ISS cannot participate in any school-sponsored activity for the length of the assignment and in the next school sponsored activity. A student also cannot be exempted from taking semester or final exams if assigned to ISS.

### **Public Display of Affection (PDA)**

Appearance of intimacy among students has no place in the school and is not to take place on the school campus. No misunderstanding can result on this point if all students interpret this to mean that students are to keep their hands, arms, and bodies off each other.

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

The District prohibits students from possessing paging devices while on school property or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities on or off school property. District employees shall confiscate any paging device found on school property or found while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities on or off school property.

Students are not permitted to possess such items as pagers, radios, CD players, MP3 devices, tape recorders, camcorders, DVD players, cameras, electronic devices or games, at school unless prior permission has been obtained from the principal.

Without permission, district staff will collect the items and turn them in to the principal. The principal will determine whether to return the item at the end of the day for the student to take home or whether the parent will be contacted to pick up the item.

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess cell phones at school, **out of view and powered off during the instructional day 7:55-3:30**. If a cell phone interrupts classroom instruction the student will lose the privilege of possessing the phone during the instructional day. Violations of this policy will result in the student's cell phone being taken up by any staff member, turned into the Principal's office and the parent will be contacted to pick up the cell phone. A \$15 fee will be charged, each time, in order to have the cell phone returned to the parent. Cell phone use in classrooms, locker rooms, hallways, restrooms, cafeteria, gyms, school buses, or any other school district property **during the instructional** day is prohibited without approval from district administration.

[See policy FNCE.]

## **Social Events**

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

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

## **CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS**

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

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

## **CORRESPONDENCE COURSES**

Some universities allow high school students to take correspondence courses— courses by mail—for credit. Prior to enrollment in a correspondence course, students shall make a written request to the principal or designee for approval to enroll in the course. If approval is not granted prior to enrollment, the student shall not be awarded credit toward graduation. Students in grades 9-12 may earn a maximum of 4 credits toward high school graduation by these means. However, students may be enrolled in only one correspondence course at a time.

[For further information, see policies at EEJC.]

## **COUNSELING**

### **Academic Counseling**

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

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

### **Personal Counseling**

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

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

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

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

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

A student who has received prior instruction in a course or subject but failed the course or subject with a grade of no less than 60 may be permitted by the District to earn credit by passing an examination on the essential knowledge and skills defined for the course or subject.

Prior instruction may include, for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, correspondence courses, or independent study supervised by a teacher.

The counselor or principal would determine if the student could take an exam for this purpose. If approval is granted, the student must score at least 70 on the exam to receive credit for the course or subject.

The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an exam.

A student may not use this exam, however, to regain eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities.

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

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

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course for which the student has had no prior instruction. The dates on which exams are scheduled during the 2008–2009 school year include:

Dates Scheduled:

August 18

September 2<sup>nd</sup>

December 2<sup>nd</sup>

January 13<sup>th</sup>

May 12<sup>th</sup>

June 23<sup>rd</sup>

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

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the principal no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. The district will honor a request by a parent to administer a test on a date other than the published dates. If the district agrees to administer a test other than the one chosen by the district, the parent must purchase a test from a university approved by the State Board of Education. [For further information, see EEJB(LOCAL).]

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

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

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

## **Dating Violence**

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

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

## **Discrimination**

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

## **Harassment**

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office <http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/109913/>.

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

## **Sexual Harassment**

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

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

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

## **Retaliation**

Retaliation of a student occurs when a student receives threats from another student or an employee or when an employee imposes an unjustified punishment or unwarranted grade reduction. Retaliation does not include petty slights and annoyances from other students or negative comments from a teacher that are justified by a student's poor academic performance in the classroom.

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is prohibited. A person who makes a false claim or offers false statements or refuses

to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment is also prohibited.

### **Reporting Procedures**

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

### **Investigation of Report**

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

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

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

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

### ***DISCRIMINATION***

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 22.]

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

#### **School Materials**

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

The school yearbook is available to students.

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

[See **Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes** on page 8.]

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

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

The principals have designated the campus offices as the locations for approved nonschool materials to be placed for voluntary viewing by students. [See policies at FNAA.]

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

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

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

Prior review will not be required for:

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

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

### **DRESS AND GROOMING**

The district's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following:

#### ***Elementary/High School/Middle School***

- Students are not to wear articles of clothing or footwear that can cause damage to the building or furniture.
- Students are not to wear any type of head covering such as hats, caps, bandanas, hoodies or sweatbands.
- Students are not to wear sunglasses in the buildings unless prescribed by a Doctor.
- Any forms of clothing or accessories that promote or advertise alcohol, tobacco, drugs, sex, gangs, hate groups or violence will not be permitted.
- The District prohibits pictures, emblems, or writings on clothing that are lewd, offensive, vulgar, or obscene
- Clothing or accessories, considered in the opinion of the administration, to cause health or safety hazard or disruptions of the educational process are not to be worn
- Students may wear hemmed shorts. However, the length of shorts, skirts, and dresses must be clearly longer than the fingertips when both arms are fully extended at the sides and shoulders relaxed. Slits should also not be shorter than the fingertips. **On the second violation of the short length policy, the student will lose the privilege of wearing shorts to school.**

- Shirts, blouses, etc. are to be long enough so that no skin is showing at the waist at any time. Sleeveless shirts must be hemmed and fit snugly around the arms. The strap must be at least 3 inches wide at the shoulders. Tank tops or low cut garments are not to be worn. Cleavage should not be showing at any time. Undershirts are to be worn in the event that a shirt is too short.
- No clothing should be excessively tight or suggestive. Appropriate undergarments should be worn but should not be seen. Tube tops, sports bras, and boxer shorts are considered undergarments. Pajamas are not to be worn to school.
- Students are to wear appropriate shoes to school. House shoes or slippers are not allowed.
- Students may wear pierced jewelry in the ears only. However, gauging of the earlobe with spacers is not allowed.
- Students may not have visible tattoos. Tattoos must be covered with clothing or band aids.
- Students are not to wear extreme hairstyles (ex. Mohawk, Spikes, etc.) or hair colors. If you are not sure if the style or color is appropriate then ask the principal. No shaving of emblems or designs into the hair is allowed.
- Male students are to be clean shaven and sideburns may not extend below the bottom of the ear. Hair must be out of the student's eyes at all times.
- Pants and shorts are to be worn comfortably at the waist. No "sagging" and no undergarments showing.
- Students are not to wear clothing that is ripped or torn or has holes. Garments or skin showing underneath ripped, torn or clothing with holes is not permitted.

**Styles and fads are constantly changing and cannot possibly be covered by specific rules and regulations. The administration reserves the right to rule on specific items of clothing and general appearance of students. Violations of the dress and grooming code will result in disciplinary action taken toward the student.**

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

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

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

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

- A student must be at school a minimum of four periods in order to participate in any school-related activity on that day or evening. The only exception is for a documented health care appointment.
- Students are to abide by the school dress code when representing Blum ISD at any extracurricular event.

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

[For further information, see policies at FM and FO. For student-organized, student-led groups, see **Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups** on page 40.]

## **LETTER JACKETS**

Students may be awarded only one letter jacket from Blum ISD. This includes all jackets awarded for UIL academic and sports activities. The requirements for earning a letter jacket are as follows:

Team Sports – Football, Volleyball, Basketball, Softball, and Baseball.

An athlete will be awarded a letter jacket for participating in the above listed team sports after meeting one of the following criteria:

1. Athlete participated at the varsity level in the same sport for 2 years, and the athlete must appear in half of the games and complete the season.
2. Athlete was awarded an All-District honor including one of the following: 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-District, 2<sup>nd</sup> Team All-District, Newcomer of the Year, District MVP, District Offensive or Defensive MVP.
3. Athlete participated for 3 years in a particular sport and completed each season.

### **Track**

An athlete will be awarded a letter jacket for participating in track after meeting one of the following criteria:

1. Athlete earned a minimum of 6 points in the Varsity division of the District track meet for each of 2 years.
2. Athlete qualified for the Regional track meet.
3. Athlete participated for 3 years in track and completed each season.

### **Cross Country, Golf, and Tennis**

An athlete will be awarded a letter jacket for participating in the above listed sports after meeting one of the following criteria:

1. Athlete qualified for Regional meet/tournament for 2 years.
2. Athlete participated for 3 years in a particular sport and completed each season.

### **Academics**

The student participated for 2 years in the UIL Academic District meet and placed 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> at the district level.

## **Student Offices and Elections:**

### **Class Officers:**

The election of class officers shall be in class meetings early in the year. Each class from 6th to 12th grades shall elect a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Students seeking these positions shall maintain passing grades in every class and a satisfactory citizenship grade.

### **Mr. and Mrs. BHS:**

To qualify to be placed on the ballot the senior boy or girl must have been a student at BHS for a minimum of two years and have overall grade point average of 80.

Students will then be rated from 1 to 5 on a variety of indicators by their high school teachers. The highest three will have their names placed on the student ballot.

### ***FEES***

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

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.

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

### ***FLEX DAYS***

The 09-10 school year calendar is a FLEX calendar. The FLEX days have been split between semesters. There are five (5) FLEX days after Christmas and five (5) FLEX days at the end of school.

- January 11, 2010 is the day you report after Christmas if you have:

- May 28, 2010 is the last day of school if you have:

1. Met all attendance requirements-No more than five (5) absences in a semester
2. Passed all parts of the TAKS, TAKS benchmarks, at appropriate MOY levels on TPRI, DIBELS, or CIRCLES (PK), developed on EOY TPRI, DIBELS-(K-3), CIRCLES (PK), or met grade equivalency on ITBS-(1 and 2)
3. Passed each class for the semester.

• Students not meeting these requirements are required to attend school January 4-8 for the first semester and May 31-June 4 for the second semester. Students who fail to attend when required will be found in violation with the state compulsory attendance law. All absences during this period will be required to be made up.

**FUND-RAISING**

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the principal and superintendent at least 10 days before the event. [For further information, see policies at FJ and GE.]

**GRADE CLASSIFICATION**

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

Credits Earned	Classification
5	Grade 10 (Sophomore)
10	Grade 11 (Junior)
15	Grade 12 (Senior)

**GRADING GUIDELINES**

In grades 1–12, achievement is reported to parents as:

A- 90-100

B- 80-89

C- 70-79

F- less than 70

PK and K achievement will be measured with a developmental report card.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY/CHEATING/PLAGIARISM**

Academic dishonesty—as in cheating or plagiarism—is not acceptable. Cheating includes the copying of another student's work—such as homework, class work, or test answers—as one's own. Plagiarism is the use of another person's original ideas or writing without giving credit to the true author. A student found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be subject to loss of credit for the work in question, as well as disciplinary penalties.

**GRADUATION**

**Requirements for a Diploma**

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

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

Students who have satisfactorily completed all coursework requirements for graduation but who failed to pass the exit-level tests shall be allowed to participate in commencement activities and ceremonies but will not receive a diploma. Upon the recommendation of the Admission Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee, a student with disabilities may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP).

### **Graduation Programs**

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

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

- Minimum Program 22 credits
- Recommended Program 24 credits
- Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program 24 credits

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

- Minimum Program 22 credits
- Recommended Program 26 credits
- Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program 26 credits

### **Certificates of Coursework Completion**

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

### **Students with Disabilities**

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

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

[See FMH(LEGAL)]

## **Graduation Activities**

Graduation activities will include:

- Baccalaureate
- Masonic Lodge Breakfast
- Graduation ceremony

## **Graduation Speakers**

Graduating students will be given an opportunity to provide opening and closing remarks during the graduation ceremony. Only those students who are the Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and Historian will be eligible to give these remarks; however, if the student was assigned to disciplinary placement at any time during the spring semester, he or she will not be eligible to speak at graduation.

Students eligible to give the opening and closing remarks will be notified by the principal and given an opportunity to volunteer. In the event there are more eligible students volunteering than there are speaking roles at the graduation ceremony, the names of all eligible students who volunteered shall be randomly drawn. The student whose name is drawn first will give the opening remarks and the student whose name is drawn second will give the closing remarks.

In addition to the opening and closing remarks, other students may also have speaking roles at the graduation ceremony.

[For student speakers at other school events, see STUDENT SPEAKERS on page 44.]

[See FNA(LOCAL).]

## **Graduation Expenses**

Because students and parents will incur expenses in order to participate in the traditions of graduation—such as the purchase of invitations, senior ring, cap and gown, and senior picture—both student and parent should monitor progress toward completion of all requirements for graduation. The expenses often are incurred in the junior year or first semester of the senior year. [See **Student Fees** on page 27.]

## **Honor Graduates**

Valedictorian, salutatorian, and historian are considered honor graduates at Blum High School. The valedictorian is usually the student with the highest rank in the graduating class. The salutatorian is usually the student with the second highest rank in the graduating class. The historian is usually the student with third highest rank in the graduating class.

## **State Scholarships and Grants**

Under the Texas Early High School Graduation Scholarship Program, students who complete the Recommended or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement High School Program may earn financial credits in varying amounts to apply toward college tuition. The amounts depend on the number of consecutive months in which the student completed graduation requirements and the number of early college credits earned and may be used at public or private higher education institutions within the state. The counselor can provide additional information about meeting the program's eligibility requirements.

Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the Recommended High School Program or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program may be eligible under the T.E.X.A.S. Grant Program for tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and

technical schools, as well as to private institutions. [For further information, see the principal or counselor and policy EJ(LEGAL).]

### **HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 22.]

### **HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

#### **Physical Activity for Students in Elementary and Middle School**

In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, and FFA, the district will ensure that students in kindergarten through grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week.

Students in middle or junior high school shall engage in at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within a two-week period for at least four semesters.

For additional information on the district's requirements and programs regarding elementary, middle, and junior high school student physical activity requirements, please see the principal.

#### **School Health Advisory Council**

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council held no meetings. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available from the Superintendent. [See also policies at BDF and EHAA.]

#### **Physical Fitness Assessment**

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

#### **Vending Machines**

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

#### **Other Health-Related Matters**

##### **Tobacco Prohibited**

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

##### **Asbestos Management Plan**

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, is available in the Superintendent's office. If you have any questions, please contact Nick Brown at 254-874-5231.

##### **Pest Management Plan**

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to

be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Sherman Haggerton at 254-874-5231.

### **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, Robyn Koonsman at 254-874-5231.

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework shall be used to support, enrich, or reinforce topics covered in class and should satisfy at least one of the following objectives:

1. To provide a drill that helps the student practice the basic skills of a subject.
2. To give students practice and extension of concepts learned in class.
3. To extend learning beyond the material that can be covered in class.
4. To develop effective study methods
5. To allow students to make up work after absences.
6. To provide a means of re-teaching essential knowledge and skills.

The homework grading system(s) shall be explained to students by their individual teachers.

### **IMMUNIZATION**

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

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

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

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

#### **Questioning of Students**

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

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

### **Students Taken Into Custody**

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

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

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

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

### **Notification of Law Violations**

The district is required by state law to notify:

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

[For further information, see policy GRA(LEGAL).]

## **MAKEUP WORK**

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

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

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

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

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

### **DAEP or In-school Suspension Makeup Work**

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

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

Students and their parents are encouraged to discuss options with the teacher or counselor to ensure the student completes all work required for the course or grade level.

## **MEDICINE AT SCHOOL**

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

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

- In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district’s medical advisor; and
- When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district’s form.

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

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

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

### **Psychotropic Drugs**

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

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

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

[See **Requirements for a Diploma** on page 28.]

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

Physical examinations are required for participation in UIL athletics. A student desiring to participate in the UIL athletic program shall submit a statement from a physician licensed to practice in the state indicating that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate in the athletic program. This examination is required for the first year of middle school competition, the first and third year of high school competition. In other years, the student shall complete a medical appraisal form. A student may be required to have a physical examination based on answers to the appraisal form.

All students entering District schools for the first time in any grade shall provide evidence of having received a tuberculosis skin test since the fourth birthday.

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

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. [See **Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags** on page 5.]

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

### **PRAYER**

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

### **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level. Course credit can be earned if a student passes a course with either a grade of 70 or above or the average of the two semesters. If the course is only a semester in length then the student must earn a grade of 70 or above to receive the half-credit.

Individual students' situations will be reviewed and determinations made by school administration.

Example A: A student takes Algebra I and has grades of:

1<sup>st</sup> semester – 60

2<sup>nd</sup> semester – 80

Average is a 70 and the student earns one credit.

Example B: A student takes Algebra I and has grades of:

1<sup>st</sup> semester – 70

2<sup>nd</sup> semester – 60

Average is a 65 and the student receives no credit and has to repeat the failing semester of the course.

In grades 1-8, promotion is based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills: for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in three of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies).

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

- In order to be promoted to grade 4, students must perform satisfactorily on the reading section of the grade 3 assessment in English or Spanish.
- In order to be promoted to grade 6, students enrolled in grade 5 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 5 assessment in English or Spanish.
- In order to be promoted to grade 9, students enrolled in grade 8 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 8 assessment in English.

Parents of a student in grade 3, 5, or 8 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. Such students will have two additional opportunities to take the test. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the

committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policies at EIE.]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will be given a written progress report if their child's performance in any course is near or below 75, or is below the expected level of performance. If the student receives a grade lower than 75 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. [See **Working Together** on page 16 for how to schedule a conference.]

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

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

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and should be returned to the school within 3 days.

## **RETALIATION**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 22.]

## **SAFETY**

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

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

## **Accident Insurance**

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

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

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

### **Fire Drill Bells**

3 bells	leave the building
1 bell	halt; stand at attention
2 bells	return to the classroom

### **Tornado Drill Bells**

1 continuous bell	move quietly but quickly to the designated locations
2 bells	return to the classroom

### **Lock Down Drill**

Announcement over intercom

## **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

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

## **Emergency School-Closing Information**

During inclement weather the following radio and TV stations will provide information on school closings:

KWTX-TV Channel 10-Waco

KXXV-TV Channel 25-Waco

NBC5 KXAS-TV Channel-Dallas/Fort Worth

FOX4 News-TV Channel 4-Dallas/Fort Worth

WFAA News-TV Channel 8-Dallas/Fort Worth

The school will also call using our automated phone system. Please make sure to provide the school with updated phone numbers.

## ***SAT, ACT, AND OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS***

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

## ***SCHOOL FACILITIES***

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

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

The following areas are open to students before school, beginning at 7:30 a.m.

- Cafeteria
- Gymnasium **IF** participating in organized school activities

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

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately.

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

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

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

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

## **Cafeteria Services**

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

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

### **LUNCH PRICE:**

Elementary student	\$1.25
High School Student	\$2.00
Adult	\$2.25

### **BREAKFAST PRICE:**

Students	\$1.25
Adult	\$1.25

## **Library**

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

- as scheduled with the librarian

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

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

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

## **SEARCHES**

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

## **Students' Desks and Lockers**

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

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

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

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

## **Vehicles on Campus**

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

All student vehicles must have parking stickers. To obtain a parking permit a student must have a valid driver license and show proof of insurance. Parking permits may be obtained in the Secondary Principal's office. Seniors who drive to school have the privilege of parking by the rail between the old gym and the school building. A student who is observed by a school official driving in an unsafe manner will lose the privilege of driving on campus for a specified time.

## **Trained Dogs**

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

## **Metal Detectors**

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

## **Drug-Testing**

A drug testing policy has been implemented in an effort to ensure the health and safety of students, deter drug use and offer educational assistance to students who may be identified as having a substance abuse problem.

The drug testing policy will apply to all students in grades 6-12 who participate in any extracurricular activity. An extracurricular activity is an activity sponsored by the UIL, the Board, or an organization sanctioned by Board resolution. Extracurricular activities include, but are not limited to: public performances, contests, demonstrations, displays, and club activities. In addition, an activity is subject to this policy if any one of the following criteria apply: 1) the activity is competitive, 2) the activity is held in conjunction with another activity that is considered extracurricular, 3) the activity is held off-campus, except in a case in which adequate facilities do not exist on campus, 4) the general public is invited, or 5) an admission is charged.

**Students who wish to participate in these activities must consent to testing at the beginning of the school year. Signed permission papers from their parents must be turned in within the first 5 days of school. Students that are present at the beginning of the school year and do not return their permission paper in the required time will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities for the year. Drug testing will run from the beginning of one school year until the beginning of the next school year.**

**Students will be randomly tested throughout the school year.**

Students who move into the District after school begins and wish to participate in extracurricular activities must agree to be tested and placed in the pool for random testing. Students who refuse to be tested at any point will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities.

Blum ISD has entered into agreement with Compliance Consortium Corporation to conduct the testing of the students. A complete "chain of custody" will be implemented and rigidly followed to

protect all students involved. Urine samples will be identified by a unique identifying number to ensure confidentiality for the students.

Students will be required to complete a release for testing; signed by their parent or guardian, which includes information regarding any prescription medication, they are currently taking.

The urine drug screen will test for alcohol, certain illegal drugs and other controlled substances. If a student tests positive, the sample will be confirmed and reviewed by a physician. Notification will then be provided to the principal who will in turn notify the student and the parent or guardian.

Upon such notification the District will, if applicable, notify the student's physician to rule out any factors that may have caused the test to appear positive. **Any student who tests positive will be included in each testing thereafter.**

Upon receipt of notification of a positive test, the principal will contact the student and schedule a mandatory parent-student conference. A plan of action to prevent future drug use will be formulated and agreed upon by both parties. If requested by the parent, the student can be referred to a non-profit counseling service or may obtain private counseling at his/her own expense.

The student who tests positive the **first** time will be suspended from participating in any extracurricular activity for 21 calendar days and required to develop a plan of action as stated above. The suspended student must attend practice during his suspension. If the student does not develop a plan of action, he/she shall be prohibited from participation in extracurricular activities during the current academic year.

The student who tests positive a **second** time will be removed from further participation in extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year.

[For further information, see policy FNF(LEGAL). Also, see **Steroids**, on page 43.]

### ***SPECIAL PROGRAMS***

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

Gifted and Talented	Barbara Hamel
Bilingual Education	Billie Sue Fields
Migrant Education	Marilyn Wilson
Students with Disabilities	Tim Ward/Phillip Hawker

### **Gifted and Talented Nomination and Selection**

Students in grades K-12 may be nominated for the Gifted and Talented Program by school personnel, parents/guardians, community members, peers, or him/herself. Nomination forms will be available in the registrar's office or from the G/T coordinator. These forms should be completed and returned to the campus administrative office by February 1 or the last Friday in January for students to be screened during the annual screening process.

Written parental consent will be obtained before any special testing or individual assessment is conducted.

Final selection of students for services designed for gifted students will be made by a committee of at least three district educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students. Information collected during screening will become part of the student's permanent educational record.

Data used in the screening process will be collected from multiple sources including both qualitative and quantitative data. Data and procedures used to identify students for the G/T program will assure that all populations have access to assessment, and if identified, services offered as part of the program for gifted and students.

Parents and students will be notified in writing of the committee's decision on placement by the end of March. Participation in the program will be voluntary.

### **Learning Disabilities**

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other support services that are available to all students. At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent. If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent of his or her rights if the parent disagrees with the district. Additionally, the notice must inform the parent how to obtain a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*. The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is Elementary Principal, Mark Brandenberger or Secondary Principal, Jeff Sanders 254-874-5231.

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

### **STEROIDS**

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

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

Students participating in UIL athletic competition may be subject to random steroid testing. More information on the UIL testing program may be found on the UIL Web site at [http://www.uil.utexas.edu/athletics/health/steroid\\_information.html](http://www.uil.utexas.edu/athletics/health/steroid_information.html).

### **STUDENT AIDES**

Student must be a junior or senior with preference given to seniors. They must have passed all classes during the previous year and have passed TAKS tests the previous year. The student must not have been in ISS the previous year. They will be given a grade and attendance will be taken. The

grade will not count on the students GPA. The principal and/or the teacher may exclude any student from being an aide in their classroom even if the student meets the above criteria.

If their performance is not satisfactory to both the teacher and to the principal they will not be allowed to continue as an aide. It will be the same as with any class. The student aide's behavior in the class will be held up to the same expectations as the students in the class with respect to tardiness, absences, conduct, dress etc.

### ***STUDENT SPEAKERS***

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce the following school events: Graduation. Students are eligible to introduce these events if they are drawn to speak and eligible for graduation

A student who is eligible and wishes to introduce one of the school events listed above should submit his or her name to the principal during the first week of the fall semester and/or spring semester. The names of all students who volunteered will be randomly drawn and matched to the event for which the student will give the introduction. If the selected student speaker declines or becomes ineligible, then no student introduction will be made at that event. The selection of students to introduce school events will occur at the beginning of each semester.

As determined by the principal, students who have been selected for special honors, such as captain of an athletic team, student council officers, leaders of school-sponsored organizations, homecoming king or queen, or prom king or queen may also address school audiences at designated events.

[See FNA(LOCAL)]

### ***STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE***

The Student Success Initiative was created by the Texas Legislature to ensure that all students receive the instruction and support they need to be successful in reading and mathematics.

Under the Student Success Initiative grade advancement requirements, students are required to meet the passing standard on the Grade 5 and Grade 8 TAKS, TAKS-A, TAKS-M, and TAKS-Alt reading and mathematics tests to be promoted to sixth and ninth grades.

Students have three opportunities to meet the passing standard on each of the tests and will receive additional instruction after each testing opportunity on which they do not meet the standard. A grade placement committee, consisting of the principal, teacher, and parent or guardian, meets when a student has not met the passing standard after two testing opportunities and decides the most effective way to support a student's academic success. A student who does not meet the passing standard after three testing opportunities is automatically retained; however, if the parents appeal the retention, the grade placement committee may choose to promote the student if all members agree that the student is likely to perform on grade level with additional instruction.

### ***SUMMER SCHOOL***

Summer school will be provided for grades K-5, 8. Students will be recommended by their teachers and Reading First personnel based on classroom performance, ITBS, DIBELS and TAKS results.

Fifth and Eighth grade students who do not meet SSI requirements for TAKS by the second administration must attend Summer school. Compulsory school attendance laws will apply during Summer school.

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

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

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

[See policy EKB(LEGAL).]

## **TARDINESS**

### **Secondary Students**

Students are expected to arrive at school on time before the tardy bell rings. Students arriving late will need to report to Mrs. Moseley's office to get a tardy admit slip to class. Students persistently late to school will be given consequences as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> tardy-warning to student-call to parent

2<sup>nd</sup> tardy-parent conference

3<sup>rd</sup> tardy-one day of After School Detention-2:50-3:30

4<sup>th</sup> tardy-one day of In School Suspension

### **Elementary Students**

An Elementary student is tardy to class if they are not in the appropriate classroom at 7:55am. Students arriving after 7:55 must go to Mrs. Davis' office and get a tardy slip. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe corrective action.

## **TELEPHONE USE**

Telephones in the classroom are not for student use. If a student needs to place an emergency phone call, the student needs to request teacher assistance.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

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

## **TRANSFERS**

The Superintendent is authorized to accept or reject any transfer requests, provided that such action is without regard to race, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin, or ancestral language.

A nonresident student must file an application each school year with the Superintendent.

[See **Other Parental Rights**, on page 3, **Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education**, on page 6, for other transfer options, and see policy FDA(LOCAL)]

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

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

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

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

A parent may also designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, you may contact 254-874-5231.

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

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

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

### **Discipline Procedures**

Misconduct will be given consequences as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> offense-verbal warning given to student/contact parent

2<sup>nd</sup> offense-disciplinary action/with parent contact

3<sup>rd</sup> offense-student is off the bus for 5 school days

4<sup>th</sup> offense-student is off the bus for 30 days

5<sup>th</sup> offense-student is off the bus for the remainder of the school year

Students that exhibit behavior that violates Levels 2, 3, or 4 in the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct will be given consequences accordingly.

### **VANDALISM**

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

### **VIDEO CAMERAS**

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

The principal will review the video/audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

### **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

#### **General Visitors**

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

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

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

### **WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL**

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

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

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

### **ZAP PROGRAM**

ZAP (Zeros Aren't Permitted) is a home work intervention program at Blum Elementary to help in the successful completion of homework and classroom assignments. In class, teachers will collect

homework and daily assignments from students as normal, but will have those students not turning in work complete a ZAP form. On the form, the student will list their parent/guardian name and phone number. The person or persons listed will be contacted and informed that their student did not complete assigned work and that the student will be required to go to lunch detention. Also, permission to hold the student after school will be asked for if the student does not finish by the end of the day. If the student finishes by the end of school, the parent/guardian will be notified that the student will not be required to stay after school. In order to ensure that the student does not get further behind, the student shall be given two days to complete the ZAP or they will be sent to ISS.

## **GLOSSARY**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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