

# Sheldon ISD



Every Child, Every Day



## **Elementary Student Handbook**

**2019-2020**

*Every child, every day!*

**Manual del Estudiante  
de Primaria**





## Sheldon Independent School District

### Parent/Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct Notification

Dear Parent:

The Parent/Student Handbook Code of Conduct for Sheldon Independent School District is available at [www.sheldonisd.com](http://www.sheldonisd.com). It is designed to provide for you relevant and important information regarding the education of your child, and to inform you and your child of the type of conduct expected in Sheldon ISD. It is important that you and your child review this information together so that you will clearly understand all of the information contained in the Handbook and the rules of acceptable conduct and the consequences of violation of established rules. With your support and encouragement, I am confident your child will meet all requirements and behavioral expectations of the District.

The acknowledgement of the **Receipt of the Parent/Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct** will be available electronically as part of the online enrollment process. It is **highly recommended that you review this Handbook with your child**. If you have any questions relating to this Handbook, please call or visit with the campus principal.

There is also an explanation of the **Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources** in the Handbook (see Table of Contents). Your acknowledgement of this Handbook also serves as acceptance of the **Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources** (see Table of Contents).

Thank you for assisting us in making this year a productive and rewarding year for your child.

King Davis  
Superintendent of Schools

**SHELDON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK  
COMPLIANCE STATEMENT**

**TITLE VI, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; THE MODIFIED COURT ORDER, CIVIL ACTION  
5281, FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT, EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, TYLER DIVISION**

Reviews of local education agencies pertaining to compliance with Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 and with specific requirements of the Modified Court Order, Civil Action No. 5281, Federal District Court, Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division are conducted periodically by staff representatives of the Texas Education Agency. These reviews cover at least the following policies and practices: (1) acceptance policy on student transfers from other school districts, (2) operation of school bus routes or runs on a non-segregated basis, (3) nondiscrimination in extracurricular activities and the use of school facilities, (4) nondiscriminatory practices in the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning, or dismissing of faculty and staff members who work with children, (5) enrollment and assignment of students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin, (6) nondiscriminatory practices relating to the use of a student's first language; and (7) evidence of published procedures for hearing complaints and grievances.

**In addition to conducting reviews, the Texas Education Agency staff representatives check complaints of discrimination made by a citizen or citizens residing in a school district where it is alleged discriminatory practices have occurred or are occurring. Where a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act is found, the findings are reported to the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education. If there is a direct violation of the Court Order in Civil Action No. 5281 that cannot be cleared through negotiation, the sanctions required by the Court Order are applied.**

**TITLE VII, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11246 AND 11375; TITLE  
IX, 1973 EDUCATION AMENDMENTS; REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AS AMENDED;  
1974 AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGE-HOUR LAW EXPANDING THE AGE  
DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1967; AND VIETNAM ERA VETERANS  
READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1972 AS AMENDED IN 1974.**

It is the policy of Sheldon Independent School District to comply fully with the nondiscrimination provisions of all federal and state laws and regulations by assuring that no person shall be excluded from consideration for recruitment, selection, appointment, training, promotion, retention, or any other personnel action, or be denied any benefits or participation in any programs or activities which it operates on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, handicap, age, or veteran status (except where age, sex, or handicap constitute a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to proper and efficient administration). The Sheldon Independent School District makes positive efforts to employ and advance in employment all protected groups.

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## **PREFACE**

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2019-2020! 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 Sheldon Independent School District 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—PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**—with 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.

**Section II—OTHER IMPORTANT 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 “parent,” unless otherwise noted, is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, any person granted some other type of lawful control of the student, or any other person who has agreed to assume school related responsibility for a student.

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Sheldon I.S. D. Student Code of Conduct, which is a document, adopted by the Board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning.

The Student Handbook is a general reference guide only and is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the Student Code of Conduct. Please be aware that it is not a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules that may be applicable in a given circumstance. That document may be found on the district’s website at [www.sheldonisd.com](http://www.sheldonisd.com) and is available in hard copy upon request.

In case of conflict between board policy (including the Student Code of Conduct) and any provisions of the Student Handbook, the provisions of board policy and the Student Code of Conduct are to be followed.

Please be aware that the Student Handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed board policy changes by attending board meetings and reviewing newsletters and other communications explaining changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions. The district reserves the right to modify provisions of the Student Handbook at any time, whenever it is deemed necessary. Notice of any revision or modification will be given as is reasonably practical under the circumstances.

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

If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact a teacher, the school counselor, or the principal.

Also, please complete and return to your child’s campus the following forms provided in the forms packet distributed at the beginning of the year or upon the student’s enrollment:

1. Acknowledgment Form OR Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of Student Handbook;
2. Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information;



3. Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education, if you choose to restrict the release of information to these entities; and
4. Consent/Opt-Out Form.

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

**NOTE:** References to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. The district's official policy manual is available for review in the district administration office, and an unofficial electronic copy is available at [www.sheldonisd.com](http://www.sheldonisd.com).

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of disability, please contact the office of Student Services at 281-727-2013.

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:

Dr. Denise Mustin Cravens ECA 13210 Tidwell Houston, TX 77044 281-727-2100	Solmaria Benavides Carroll Elementary 10210 C. E. King Pkwy. Houston, TX 77044 281-727-4100	Tacarra Williams Garrett Elementary 12117 Garrett Rd Houston, TX 77044 281-727-4200	Cheri Dixon Monahan Elementary 8901 Deep Valley Dr Houston, TX 77044 281-454-2900
Loreno Carrasco Royalwood Elementary 7715 Royalwood Drive Houston, TX 77049 281-454-2700	Rachelle Ysquiero Sheldon Elementary 17203 Hall Sheppard Houston, TX 77049 281-456-6700	Joel Leal Sheldon ECA 17010 Beaumont Hwy Houston, TX 77049 281-456-6800	

Chris Dickinson  
11433 East Sam Houston Parkway North  
Houston, Tx 77044  
281-727-1100

The following times are the bell schedules for the district elementary schools. Students arriving after the morning bell will be counted tardy. Parents are encouraged to plan to have students arrive early enough so that students may eat breakfast and avoid having to rush to class. Please see Attendance section.

Cravens ECA	7:30 AM -2:50 PM	Sheldon ECA	7:30 AM – 2:50 PM
Carroll Elementary	7:55 AM - 3:25 PM*	Monahan Elementary	7:55 AM – 3:25 PM*
Royalwood Elementary:	7:55 AM – 3:25 PM*	Sheldon Elementary	7:55 AM – 3:25 PM*
Garrett Elementary	7:55 AM – 3:25 PM*		

**Due to a lack of supervision before the times listed above, parents will be liable for the student's safety until the school doors open.**

**\*Please do not drop off elementary students before 7:25a.m.**

## **SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS**

This section of the Sheldon ISD Student Handbook includes information related to certain rights of parents as specified in state or federal law.

### **CONSENT, OPT-OUT, AND REFUSAL RIGHTS**

#### **Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation**

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

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

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

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

Teachers may display students' work, which may include personally identifiable student information, in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement.

However, the district will seek parental consent before displaying students' artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, original videos or voice recordings, and other original works on the district's website, a website affiliated or sponsored by the district, such as a campus or classroom website, and in district publications, which may include printed materials, videos, or other methods of mass communication.

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

State law 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.
- When it relates to the promotion of student safety as provided by law for a student receiving special education services in certain settings.

The district will seek parental consent through a written request before making any other video or voice recording of your child not otherwise allowed by law.

[See **Video Cameras** on page 59 for more information, including a parent's right to request video and audio equipment be placed in certain special education settings.]

#### **Limiting Electronic Communications with Students by District Employees**

Teachers and other approved employees are permitted by the district to use electronic communication with students within the scope of the individual's professional responsibilities as described district guidelines. For example, a teacher may set up a social networking page for his or her class that has information related to class work, homework, and tests. As a parent, you are welcome to join or become a member of such a page.

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

If you prefer that your child not receive any one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee or if you have questions related to the use of electronic media by district employees, please contact the campus principal.

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

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, permits the district to disclose appropriately designated “directory information” from a student’s education records without written consent. “Directory information” is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. Examples include a student’s photograph for publication in the school yearbook; a student’s name and grade level for purposes of communicating class and teacher assignment; the name, weight, and height of an athlete for publication in a school athletic program; a list of student birthdays for generating school wide or classroom recognition; a student’s name and photograph posted on a district-approved and -managed social media platform; and the names and grade levels of students submitted by the district to a local newspaper or other community publication to recognize the A/B honor roll for a specific grading period. This “directory information” will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of a student’s directory information. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of your child’s first day of instruction for this school year [See the “Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information” included in the forms packet.]

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

As allowed by state law, the district has identified two directory information lists—one for school-sponsored purposes and the second for all other requests. For all district publications and announcements, the district has designated the following as directory information: name, address, telephone number, photograph, participation officially recognized activities, weight and height of members of athletic teams, grade level, enrollment status, honors and awards received in school and most previous school attended. If you do not object to the use of your child’s information for these limited school-sponsored purposes, the school will not need to ask your permission each time the district wishes to use the information for the school-sponsored purposes listed above.

Also review the information at **Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records** on page 11.

### **Participation in Third-Party Surveys**

#### **Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey, Analysis, or Evaluation**

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

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, selling, or otherwise disclosing that information. Note this does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.
- 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 spinal screenings, or any physical examination or screening permitted or required under state law. [See policies EF and FFAA.]

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

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

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).]

**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 50 and policy EC(LEGAL).]

**Religious or Moral Beliefs**

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 state law.

## **Tutoring or Test Preparation**

Based on informal observations, evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests, or results from diagnostic assessments, a teacher may determine that a student is in need of additional targeted assistance in order for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills. The school will always attempt to provide tutoring and strategies for test-taking in ways that prevent removal from other instruction as much as possible. In accordance with state law and policy EC, the school will not remove a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the school days on which the class is offered, unless the student's parent consents to this removal.

The school may also offer tutorial services, which students whose grades are below 70 will be required to attend.

[Also refer to policies EC and EHBC, and contact your student's teacher with questions about any tutoring programs provided by the school.]

## **RIGHT OF ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS, CURRICULUM MATERIALS, AND DISTRICT RECORDS/POLICIES**

### **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.

You are also entitled to request that the school allow your child to take home any instructional materials used by the student. If the school determines that sufficient availability exists to grant the request, the student must return the materials at the beginning of the next school day if requested to do so by the student's teacher.

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

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

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

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

You may request information regarding any state or district policy related to your child's participation in assessments required by federal law, state law, or the district.

### **Student Records**

#### **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 school counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns,
- Records relating to assistance provided for learning difficulties, including information collected regarding any intervention strategies used with your child, as the term intervention strategy is defined by law,
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child, and
- Teaching materials and tests used in your child’s classroom.

**Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records**

A federal law, known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. For purposes of student records, an “eligible” student is one who is 18 or older or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education. These rights, as discussed in this section as well as at **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 8, are:

- The right to inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.
- The right to request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA.
- The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student’s records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

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

Both FERPA and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights of privacy. Before disclosing any personally identifiable information from a student’s records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information.

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

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

Inspection and release of student records is primarily restricted to an eligible student or a student's 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, is emancipated by a court, or enrolls in a postsecondary institution, 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.

FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records, without written consent of the parent or eligible student, in the following circumstances:

- When district school officials have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student's records. School officials would include board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or district medical staff); a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third-party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, school resource officer, or volunteer); a 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 to the school and the student; or investigating or evaluating programs.
- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, TEA, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.
- To individuals or entities granted access to response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, school district/system, or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or which the student has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses information it has designated as directory information [see **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 8 for opportunities to prohibit this disclosure].

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

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.



A parent or eligible student who wishes to inspect the student's records should submit a written request to the records custodian identifying the records he or she wishes to inspect. Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

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

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction or amendment if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the appropriate records custodian. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information 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 or on an examination 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 51, and **Complaints and Concerns** on page 25 for an overview of the process.]

The district's policy regarding student records found at policy FL(LOCAL) is available from the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's website at [www.sheldonisd.com](http://www.sheldonisd.com).

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.

### **Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications**

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 and whether the teacher is currently teaching in the field of discipline of his or her certification.

## **STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

### **Children of Military Families**

Children of military families will be provided flexibility regarding certain district requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements.
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement.
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.

- Graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment of at least four months will be excused by the district. The district will permit no more than five excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment.

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

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

### **Multiple Birth Siblings**

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 policy FDB(LEGAL).]

### **Safety Transfers/Assignments**

As a parent, you may:

- Request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the district to have been a victim of bullying, which includes cyberbullying as the term is defined by Education Code 37.0832. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the principal for information.
- Consult with district administrators if your child has been determined by the district to have engaged in bullying and the board decides to transfer your child to another classroom or campus. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus.

[See **Bullying** on page 22, policy FDB, and policy FFI.]

- 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 FDE.]
- Request the transfer of your child to another district campus if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether the assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. If the victim does not wish to transfer, the district will transfer the assailant in accordance with policy FDE.

### **Service/Assistance Animal Use by Students**

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

### **Students in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)**

A student who is currently in the conservatorship (custody) of the state and who enrolls in the district after the beginning of the school year will be allowed credit-by-examination opportunities outside the district's established testing windows, and the district will grant proportionate course credit by semester (partial credit) when a student only passes one semester of a two-semester course.

A student who is currently in the conservatorship (custody) of the state and who is moved outside of the district's or school's attendance boundaries, or who is initially placed in the conservatorship of the state

and who is moved outside the district's or school's boundaries, is entitled to continue in enrollment at the school he or she was attending prior to the placement or move until the student reaches the highest grade level at the particular school. In addition, if a student in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request to receive a diploma from the previous district if he or she meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

[See also **Students in Foster Care** on page 56 for more information.]

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

Children who are homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain district provisions, including:

- Proof of residency requirements;
- Immunization requirements;
- Educational program placement, if the student is unable to provide previous academic records, or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness;
- Credit-by-examination opportunities;
- The award of partial credit (awarding credit proportionately when a student passes only one semester of a two-semester course);
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities; and
- Graduation requirements.

If a student in grade 11 or 12 is homeless and transfers to another school district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request to receive a diploma from the previous district if he or she meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

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

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

[See also **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration** on page 27 and **Homeless Students** on page 56 for more information.]

### **Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services**

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

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individuals listed below to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine whether the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

### **Special Education Referrals**

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special education services or to a district administrative employee of the school district, the district must

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Contact Person for Special Education Referrals**

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services is Susan Pansmith at 281-727-2000.

### **Section 504 Referrals**

Each school district must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's Section 504 program. Districts must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

### **Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals**

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is Susan Pansmith at 281-727-2000.

[See also **Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504** on page17.]

The following websites provide information to those who are seeking information and resources specific to students with disabilities and their families:

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

- [Texas Project First](#)

### **Notification to Parent of Intervention Strategies for Learning Difficulties Provided to Student in General Education**

The district will annually notify parents that it provides assistance to students, other than those already enrolled in a special education program, who need assistance for learning difficulties, including intervention strategies

### **Students Who Receive Special Education Services with Other School-Aged Children in the Home**

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, 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. However, the district is not required to provide transportation to the other children in the household. The parent or guardian should speak with the principal of the school regarding transportation needs prior to requesting a transfer for any other children in the home. [See policy FDB(LOCAL).]

### **Students Who Receive Special Education Services with Other School-Aged Children in the Home**

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, 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. However, the district is not required to provide transportation to the other children in the household. The parent or guardian should speak with the principal of the school regarding transportation needs prior to requesting a transfer for any other children in the home. [See policy FDB(LOCAL).]

### **Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English**

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English. If the student qualifies for these extra services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

### **Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504**

A student determined to have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law, and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services, may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine if the child is in need of services and supports under Section 504 to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as this is defined in federal law.

[See also **Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services** on page 15 for more information.]

[See policy FB.]

## **SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT 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 organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue.

## **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 the required presence of school-aged children in school, e.g., compulsory attendance, the other with how a student’s attendance affects the award of a student’s final grade or course credit—are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below.

### **Compulsory Attendance Between Ages 6 and 19**

State law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 19 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

State law requires 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 a diagnostic reading instrument.

A student will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program, which may occur before or after school or during the summer, if the student does not meet the passing standards on the state assessment for his or her grade level and/or applicable subject area.

### **Prekindergarten and Kindergarten**

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

### **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance**

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the student makes up all work. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders, if the student comes to school or returns to school on the same day as the appointment. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student’s arrival or return to campus; and
- For students in the conservatorship (custody) of the state,
  - An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
  - Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student’s participation in the activity outside of school hours.

As listed in Section I at **Children of Military Families**, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments. See page 13 for that section.

## **Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance**

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; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

### **Students with Disabilities**

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

### **Between Ages 6 and 19**

When a student between ages 6 and 19 incurs unexcused absences for three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period, the school will send a notice to the student’s parent, as required by law, to remind the parent that it is the parent’s duty to monitor the student’s attendance and to require the student to come to school. The notice will also inform the parent that the district will initiate truancy prevention measures and request a conference between school administrators and the parent. These measures will include a behavior improvement plan, school-based community service, or referrals to either in-school or out-of-school counseling or other social services. Any other measures considered appropriate by the district will also be initiated.

If you have questions about your student and the effect of his or her absences from school, please contact a campus administrator.

A court of law may also impose penalties against a student’s parent 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 without excuse from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year.

If a student ages 12 through 18 incurs unexcused absences on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, the district, in most circumstances, will refer the student to truancy court.

[See policy FEA(LEGAL).]

### **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (Kindergarten through Grade 12)**

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

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

All absences, whether excused or unexcused, must be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

- If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed above at **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance** will be considered extenuating circumstances for purposes of attendance for credit or the award of a final grade.
- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district.
- In reaching a decision about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will 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.

### **Official Attendance-Taking Time**

The district must submit attendance of its students to Texas Education Agency (TEA) reflecting attendance at a specific time each day.

Official attendance is taken every day at 10:00 a.m. which is during the second instructional hour as required by state rule.

A student absent for any portion of the day, including at the official attendance-taking time, should follow the procedures below.

### **Documentation after an Absence**

When a student must be absent from school, the student—upon arrival or return 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 or is an emancipated minor under state law. The campus will document in its attendance records for the student whether the absence is considered by the district to be excused or unexcused. Please note that, unless the absence is for a statutorily allowed reason under compulsory attendance laws, the district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence.

### **Doctor's Note after an Absence for Illness**

Within three days of returning to school, a student absent for more than three 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. Otherwise, the student's absence may be considered unexcused and, if so, would be considered to be in violation of compulsory attendance laws.

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the



student's absence from school in order to determine whether the absence or absences will be excused or unexcused.

[See policy FEC(LOCAL).]

## **ACCOUNTABILITY UNDER STATE AND FEDERAL LAW (All Grade Levels)**

Sheldon ISD and each of its campuses are held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of the accountability requirements is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, which include:

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

This Information can be found on the district's website at [www.sheldonisd.com](http://www.sheldonisd.com). Hard copies of any reports are available upon request to the district's administration office.

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

Please notify the front office of any change of residence, mailing address or telephone numbers after enrollment. Current proof of residence must accompany change of address notification.

## **ARRIVAL PROCEDURES AND TARDIES**

### **Upon Arrival to School**

When the school doors open each morning, students are to follow the campus procedures to their appointed destination. All rules and consequences are in effect at this time.

### **Late Arrival to School/ Early Release of Students**

Students who arrive after the start of the school day (tardy) or depart prior to the end of the school day (early dismissal) will be counted as tardy for local attendance purposes. The parent of students who accumulate a combination of 10 tardies and/or early dismissals during the school year may be subject to compulsory attendance laws. When it becomes necessary for a student to leave school before regular dismissal, the student must be checked out through the school office by a parent or guardian. Proof of identification will need to be established before we can release the student, so please bring a driver's license or another form of photo identification. Even if the student has a note from home, he or she must be cleared through the office.

### **Students will not be released from any campus during the last 20 minutes of the school day.**

On elementary campuses, a student who is not in the classroom at the tardy bell is counted tardy. Consequences for tardies include, but are not limited to: warnings, letter or phone call to parent, conference, and detention, including lunch, before/after school, and Saturday detentions, in-school suspension, complaint filed with juvenile court authority. Each campus may determine appropriate hierarchy policy for tardies to school and to class.

## **BICYCLES**

Bicycles must be walked on and off the school grounds. Bicycle serial numbers should be recorded in a safe place at home. Bicycles must be parked correctly and left only in specified parking areas. Each student must provide his/her own chain and lock for the bicycle. **THE SHELDON SCHOOL DISTRICT IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR DAMAGE OR THEFT OF BICYCLES.**

Students are allowed to ride bicycles to school (except for early childhood academy and Garrett Elementary students). Children who ride bicycles must obey bicycle safety rules

## **BULLYING**

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

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

Bullying includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined by state law as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

The district is required to adopt policies and procedures regarding:

- Bullying that occurs on or is delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property;
- Bullying that occurs on a publicly or privately owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of students to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity; and
- Cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity if the cyberbullying interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school-related activity.

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

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed bullying of another student, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct. The district will also provide notice to the parent of the alleged victim and the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in bullying. A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by going to [www.sheldonid.com](http://www.sheldonid.com) and completing the bullying /harassment report form located under the student tab.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action and may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to these individuals, as well as to any students who have been identified as witnesses to the bullying.

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

Upon the recommendation of the administration, the board may, in response to an identified case of bullying, decide to transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's parent, the student may also be transferred to another campus in the district. The parent of a student who has been determined by the district to be a victim of bullying may request that the student be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district. [See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 14.]

## **CELEBRATIONS**

Although a parent or grandparent is not prohibited from providing food for a school-designated function or for children in the child's or grandchild's classroom for his or her birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss this with the child's teacher prior to bringing any food in this circumstance. Occasionally, the school or a class may host certain functions or celebrations tied to the curriculum that will involve food. The school or teacher will notify students and parents of any known food allergies when soliciting potential volunteers for bringing food products.

Also see **Food Allergies** on page 39.

## **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE, SEX TRAFFICKING, AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN**

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, sex trafficking, and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at [www.sheldonisd.com](http://www.sheldonisd.com)

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

As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child.

Possible physical, behavioral, and emotional warning signs of sexual abuse include:

- Difficulty sitting or walking;
- Pain in the genital areas;
- Claims of stomachaches and headaches;
- Verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children;
- Fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender;
- Sexually suggestive behavior;
- Withdrawal;
- Depression;

- Sleeping and eating disorders; and
- Problems in school.

Be aware that children and adolescents who have experienced dating violence may show similar physical, behavioral, and emotional warning signs. [See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (All Grade Levels)** on page 28].

### **Warning Signs of Sex Trafficking**

Sex trafficking of any sort is prohibited by the Penal Code. Sex trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, into sexual abuse, assault, indecency, prostitution, or pornography. Traffickers are often trusted members of a child's community, such as friends, romantic partners, family members, mentors, and coaches, although traffickers frequently make contact with victims online.

Possible warning signs of sexual trafficking in children include:

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

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

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

A child who has experienced sexual abuse, trafficking, or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that disclosures of sexual abuse and sex trafficking may be more indirect than disclosures of physical abuse and neglect, and it is important to be calm and comforting if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

Parents, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse, sex trafficking, or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. [To find out what services may be available in your county, see [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County.](#)]

Reports of abuse, trafficking, or neglect may be made to:

The CPS division of the DFPS (1-800-252-5400 or on the web at [Texas Abuse Hotline Website](#)).

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

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

- [Child Welfare Information Gateway Factsheet](#)
- [KidsHealth, For Parents, Child Abuse](#)
- [Texas Association Against Sexual Assault, Resources](#)
- [Office of the Texas Governor’s Child Sex Trafficking Team](#)
- [Human Trafficking of School-aged Children](#)

## **COMMUNICATIONS—AUTOMATED**

### **Emergency**

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. An emergency purpose may include early dismissal or delayed opening because of severe weather or another emergency, or if the campus must restrict access due to a security threat. It is crucial to notify your child’s school when a phone number previously provided to the district has changed.

[See **Safety** on page 52 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.]

### **Non-Emergency**

Your child’s school will request that you provide contact information, such as your phone number and e-mail address, in order for the school to communicate items specific to your child, your child’s school, or the district. If you consent to receive such information through a landline or wireless phone, please ensure that you notify the school’s administration office immediately upon a change in your phone number. The district or school may generate automated or pre-recorded messages, text messages, or real-time phone or e-mail communications that are closely related the school’s mission, so prompt notification of any change in contact information will be crucial to maintain timely communication with you. Standard messaging rates of your phone carrier may apply. If you have specific requests or needs related to how the district contacts you, please contact your child’s principal. [See **Safety** on page 50 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.]

## **COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS**

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed simply—by a phone call or a conference with the teacher. 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 the complaint forms may be obtained in the principal’s or Director of Student Services’ office or at [www.sheldonisd.com](http://www.sheldonisd.com).

Should a parent or student feel a need to file a formal complaint, the parent or student should file a district complaint form within the timelines established in policy FNG(LOCAL). In general, the student or parent should submit the written complaint form to the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the Director of Student Services. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

## **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 as well as on district vehicles—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.

Consequences for violations of the Student Code of Conduct include, but are not limited to Parent contact/conferences, detention, including before/after school, lunch detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP), Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP), citations, and various other discipline management techniques utilized by the campus.

### **Campus Behavior Coordinator**

By law, each campus has a campus behavior coordinator to apply discipline management techniques and administer consequences for certain student misconduct, as well as provide a point of contact for student misconduct. The contact information for each campus behavior coordinator is available on the district's website [www.sheldonisd.com](http://www.sheldonisd.com) and is listed below:

- Sheldon Early Childhood Academy – Mindi Becker
- Cravens Early Childhood Academy – Kathy Spell
- Sheldon Elementary – Jana Davidson
- Sheldon Lake Elementary – Maria Lavios
- Monahan Elementary – Kelly Hollier
- Garrett Elementary – Johnathan Kegler
- Royalwood Elementary – Kendra McClellan
- Carroll Elementary – Jacqueline Herrera

### **Deliveries**

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

### **Disruptions of School Operations**

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

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

- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 300 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.

### **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.

Please contact the campus principal if you are interested in serving as a chaperone for any school social events.

### **CONFERENCES**

Students and parents may expect teachers to request a conference: (1) if the student is not maintaining passing grades or achieving the expected level of performance (2) if the student presents another problem to the teacher, or (3) in any other case the teacher considers necessary.

### **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.

### **COUNSELING**

#### **Academic Counseling**

The school counselor is available to students and parents to talk about the importance of postsecondary education and how best to plan for postsecondary education, including appropriate courses to consider and financial aid availability and requirements.

#### **Personal Counseling**

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, emotional or mental health issues, or substance abuse. A student who wishes to meet with the school counselor should contact the front office.. As a parent, if you are concerned about your child's mental or emotional health, please speak with the school counselor for a list of resources that may be of assistance.

If your child has experienced trauma, contact the school counselor for more information.

See **Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention** on page 56, **Suicide Awareness and Mental Health Support** on page 56, and **Child Sexual Abuse, Sex Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children and Dating Violence** on page 23

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

A student who has previously taken a course or subject—but did not receive credit or a final grade for it—may, in circumstances determined by the principal or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit by passing an examination approved by the district’s board of trustees on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject. Prior instruction may include, for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a nonaccredited school. The opportunity to take an examination to earn credit for a course or to be awarded a final grade in a subject after the student has had prior instruction is sometimes referred to as “credit recovery.”

If the student is granted approval to take an examination for this purpose, the student must score at least 70 on the examination 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 examination.

[For further information, see the school counselor and policy EHDB(LOCAL).]

### **CREDIT BY EXAMINATION FOR ADVANCEMENT/ACCELERATION—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course/Subject**

A student will be permitted to take an examination to earn credit for an academic course or subject area for which the student has had no prior instruction, i.e., for advancement, or to accelerate to the next grade level. The examinations offered by the district are approved by the district’s board of trustees,+

The dates on which examinations are scheduled during the 2019–20 school year will be published in appropriate district publications and on the district’s website. The only exceptions to the published dates will be for any exams administered by another entity besides the district or if a request is made outside of these time frames by a student experiencing homelessness or by a student involved in the foster care system. When another entity administers an examination, a student and the district must comply with the testing schedule of the other entity. During each testing window provided by the district, a student may attempt a specific examination only once.

A student in elementary school will be eligible to accelerate to the next grade level if the student scores at least 80 on each exam in the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, a district administrator recommends that the student be accelerated, and the student’s parent gives written approval of the grade advancement.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the school counselor no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. [For further information, see policy EHDC.]

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

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from 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, sex gender, national origin, disability, age or any other basis prohibited by law. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office or at the district web site, [www.sheldonisd.com](http://www.sheldonisd.com). [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. Dating violence also occurs when a person commits these acts against a person in a marriage or dating relationship with the individual who is or was once in a marriage or dating relationship with the person committing the offense. 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, the student's family members, or members of the student's household; destroying property belonging to the student; threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship; threats to harm a student's current dating partner; 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, sex, gender, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law, that negatively affects the student.

### **Harassment**

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects 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 or at [www.sheldonisd.com](http://www.sheldonisd.com).

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 and Gender-Based Harassment**

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

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but 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.

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, such as comforting a child with a hug or taking the child's hand. However, romantic and other inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Gender-based harassment includes harassment based on a student's gender, expression by the student of stereotypical characteristics associated with the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender.

Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include, but not be limited to, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

### **Retaliation**

Retaliation against a person, who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is prohibited. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment is also 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 student might occur 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.

### **Reporting Procedures**

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

Upon receiving a report of prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by that policy. If not, the district will refer to policy FFI to determine if the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying, as defined by law and that policy. If the alleged prohibited conduct, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct and would also be considered bullying as defined by law and policy FFI, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

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

### **Investigation of Report**

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.

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

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

If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary action, and, in some cases, corrective action, will be taken to address the conduct. The district may take

disciplinary and corrective action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint was not unlawful.

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

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

## **DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE, PUBLISHED MATERIALS, OR OTHER DOCUMENTS**

All aspects of school-sponsored newspapers and/or yearbooks are completely under the supervision of the teacher and campus principal. Written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials may not be sold, circulated, or distributed on any school campus by a student or a non-student without the approval of the principal and in accordance with campus regulations.

### **Nonschool Materials from students**

Students must obtain prior approval from the Principal before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing more than 10 copies of written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any nonschool material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. The decision regarding approval will be made within two school days.

The Principal designates a location for approved nonschool materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection by students. [See policy FNAA.]

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

### **Nonschool Materials from others**

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

The principal designates a location for approved nonschool materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection.

Prior review will not be required for:

- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.

- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours in accordance with policy GKD(LOCAL) or a 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

## **DISMISSAL**

Students will be dismissed from Cravens Academy and Sheldon Academy at 2:50 PM and from Elementary Schools at 3:25 PM. Any change in your child's method of transportation at dismissal will require written authorization from parent or guardian. Students will not be released through the office after 2:20 PM at Cravens Academy and Sheldon Academy or after 3:05 PM at the elementary schools. We cannot guarantee changes to a student's dismissal routine after 2:00 PM at the early childhood academies or after 2:30 PM at the elementary schools. Bus changes require prior approval from administration.

## **DRESS AND GROOMING**

The district's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, instill discipline, prevent disruption, minimize safety hazards and to teach respect for authority. **The administration of each school shall have the discretion to determine if a student's attire, hair, and/or grooming is acceptable and within appropriate health and safety standards.**

The district prohibits any clothing or grooming that, in the principal's or assistant principal's judgment may reasonably be expected to cause disruption of or interference with normal school operations. The policy governing campus dress and grooming shall be enforced uniformly and fairly by the faculty and the administration. It shall be the responsibility of the professional staff to determine the appropriateness of proper dress for all school occasions. Parents will be notified of inappropriate dress. All dress code regulations will be enforced. Each campus will determine appropriate disciplinary actions for students who do not abide by the district's dress code policy. There will be no absences due to dress code violations. Consequences can include, but are not limited to, verbal warnings, after-school detention and Saturday detention.

General Requirements for All Students:

1. Students may not wear a military uniform to school unless it is in conjunction with a school approved activity.
2. Students may not wear suggestive or inappropriately-located decorative patches, insignia, or clothing with improper advertising, pictures, slogans, or statements.
3. The American Flag is not to be worn as an article of clothing. A depiction of the American flag on or attached to clothing in a respectful manner is acceptable.
4. Hats or head coverings may not be worn in the school buildings.
5. Appropriate footwear is required.
6. Any garment or design of a garment which is too short or too revealing may not be worn to school. Appropriate undergarments must be worn.
7. Any attire that is distracting or disturbing will not be permitted on school property.

8. No underwear-styled garments will be worn as an outer garment.
9. Shorts/skirts/dresses are acceptable as long as they are fingertip length or longer when standing. Bike shorts of any style or length, worn either as an outer or visible under garment, are prohibited.
10. Pants that hang on the hipbone, result in a bare midriff, or are too revealing are not acceptable. The waistband or other material belonging to the undergarments must not be visible. No holes or tears above mid-thigh are acceptable unless worn over leggings or tights.
11. Any low-cut, see-through, or backless garment may not be worn to school. Straps on outer garments must be sufficiently wide to cover undergarments.
12. Hair must be clean, well groomed, and of a natural hair color (black, brown, brunette, blonde, natural red). Any hair style that is distracting or disturbing will not be permitted on school property.
13. (High School Only) Facial hair must be neatly groomed and styled in a way that is not distracting and may not reach a length greater than 1 inch.
14. No paraphernalia that indicates or promotes gang membership may be worn or displayed (this may include but is not limited to bandannas, chains, jewelry, hip cloths, baggy pants, tee shirts, gang writing, and color codes).
15. Piercings:
  - Earrings -On boys are not allowed.
  - No other body piercings are allowed (i.e. eyebrow, nose, tongue rings, etc).
16. Tattoos, icons and any other markings on the body that cannot be removed shall be covered at all times in an unobtrusive manner that is not disruptive to the instructional process. A student who has such markings on his or her body and who wishes to participate in extracurricular activities shall ensure that the markings are covered by the standard uniform for the activity or in another appropriate manner. The principal, in cooperation with the sponsor, coach, or other person in charge of an extracurricular activity shall regulate and enforce these guidelines.
17. Students may not wear orthodontic appliances (i.e., grilles) unless prescribed by a medical doctor/dentist.
18. Backpacks must be clear or mesh unless it is in conjunction with a school approved activity (i.e., cheerleading, pantherettes, athletics).
19. Student IDs must be worn at all times.

\*\*Exceptions to the Sheldon ISD dress code due to medical reasons must be approved by the grade level principal.

If the principal determines that a student's grooming or clothing violates the school's dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school. If not corrected, the student may be assigned to in-school suspension for the remainder of the day, until the problem is corrected, or until a parent or designee brings an acceptable change of clothing to the school. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct..

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES**

### **Possession and Use of Personal Electronic Devices**

Except as described below, students are not permitted to possess or use personal electronic devices such as MP3 players, video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, e-readers, or other electronic devices at school, unless prior permission has been obtained. Without such permission, teachers will

collect the items and turn them in to the principal's office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal electronic device may be searched by authorized personnel. Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The district will not be responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic device.

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

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

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

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

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as "sexting," will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child 'Before Text' Sexting Prevention Course, a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology.

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

## **ENGLISH LEARNERS**

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

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

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR Spanish, as mentioned on page 53, may be administered to an English learner, for a student up to grade 5, a Spanish version of STAAR. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English

Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to English learners who qualify for services.

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

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

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

Participation in some of these activities may result in events that occur off-campus. When the district arranges transportation for these events, students are required to use the transportation provided by the district to and from the events. Exceptions to this may only be made with the approval of the activity's coach or sponsor. [Also see **Transportation** on page 57.]

### **Standards of Behavior**

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

## **FEES**

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 health and accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit or has not been

awarded a final grade because of absences and whose parent chooses the program in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.

## **FUND-RAISING**

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

## **GANG-FREE ZONES**

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a location in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

## **GRADING: PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

**Please be aware that, effective in the school years set out below, a student's satisfactory performance on state exams, called the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) will be required for promotion.**

This requirement will be effective for the following students: Fifth grade and eighth grade.

Grading Scale	A:	90-100
	B:	80-89
	C:	75-79
	D:	70-74
	F:	Below 70

### **Requirements for Honor Roll for Grades 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>**

**All "A" Honor Roll:** Students earn an A in every subject and have an E or S in conduct.

**"A" and "B" Honor Roll:** Students earn any combination of "A" and "B" and an E or S in conduct. Students must have at least one A to qualify.

### **Progress Reports**

After the third and sixth week in a nine-week period, a progress report for students in grades 1-5 is sent to inform parents of the student's progress. **PARENTS ARE URGED TO CONTACT THE TEACHER FOR A CONFERENCE IF ANY GRADE IS FAILING. The progress report MUST be signed and returned to school.** Please note, the first nine weeks, only one progress report will be sent.

### **Report Cards**

IF YOUR CHILD RECEIVES A GRADE BELOW 70 IN ANY SUBJECT ON THE REPORT CARD, YOU SHOULD CONTACT THE SCHOOL FOR A PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE, ACCORDING TO STATE LAW. The decision for promotion or retention is determined by district policy. **All report cards must be signed and returned to the school.** The procedures and expectations for special education students may vary from this policy as determined by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal committee.

### **State Exams**



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

To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards. Students are required to have an overall average of 70 or above for all subjects areas and a grade of 70 or above in Language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies in order to be promoted. In addition, students at certain grade levels will be required to pass the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). In addition, students in grades 5 and 8 must have successful performance on the reading and math assessments in order to be promoted. Parents of students in grades 1-8 who do not perform satisfactorily on their exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year. These students will also have two additional opportunities to take the test. If the 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 policy EIE.] *Pending state approval*

## HAZING

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

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

Hazing will not be tolerated by the district. If an incident of hazing occurs, disciplinary consequences will be handled in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. It is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report this to the principal or superintendent.

See **Bullying** on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.** and policies FFI and FNCC.

## **HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

### **Student Illness**

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she won't be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools are required to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods of time as identified in state rules. For example, if your child has a fever over 100 degrees fahrenheit, he or she must stay out of school until fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. In addition, students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea free without diarrhea-suppressing medications for at least 24 hours. A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, he or she must receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. If the nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent.

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

Contact the school nurse if you have questions or if you are concerned about whether or not your child should stay home.

### **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](#), [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), and the [Department of State Health Services](#).

\* NOTE: DSHS requires at least one meningococcal vaccination on or after the student's 11th birthday, unless the student received the vaccine at age 10. Also note that entering college students must show, with limited exception, evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five-year period prior to enrolling in and taking courses at an institution of higher education. Please see the school nurse for more information, as this may affect a student who wishes to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus.

[See **Immunizations** on page 42, for more information]

### **Food Allergies**

The district requests to be notified when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially those allergies that could result in dangerous or possibly life-threatening reactions either by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact with the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic, as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse or campus principal if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, based on the Texas Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) "Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis." The district's management plan addresses employee training, dealing with common food allergens, and specific strategies for dealing with students diagnosed with severe food allergies. When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, individual care plans will be developed to assist the student in safely accessing the

school environment. The district's food allergy management plan can be accessed at [www.sheldonisd.com](http://www.sheldonisd.com)

The complete text of the "[Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis](#)" can be found on the DSHS website at [Allergies and Anaphylaxis](#).

See policy FFAF and **Celebrations** on page 22.

### **Head Lice**

Head lice, although not an illness or a disease, is very common among children and is spread very easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, or nap time and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones. If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent to determine whether the student will need to be picked up from school and to discuss a plan for treatment with an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student has undergone one treatment, the parent should check in with the school nurse to discuss the treatment used. The nurse can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments and how best to get rid of lice and prevent their return.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website [Managing Head Lice](#).

### **Physical Activity**

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

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 Based Health Clinic**

Sheldon ISD has entered into a partnership with the Harris County Hospital District to provide a School Based Clinic to serve children school aged and younger. The clinic is open and is next to the Sheldon Elementary campus at 17203 ½ Hall Sheppard Road. Call your school nurse for more information or call the clinic at 713-497-0991.

### **Temporary Restriction from Participation in Physical Education**

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

### **Accidents or Illness**

A correct phone number should be listed on each student's registration form to be used in case of an accident or emergency. The school should be notified if there is a change in this phone number. In the event of no home phone or work phone, arrangements should be made with a friend or neighbor for use of their phone in case of an accident or an emergency. A student who becomes ill or has an accident at school will be sent to the school nurse

Sheldon I.S.D. does not assume responsibility for accidents occurring at school.

\*\*\*Cravens Academy and Sheldon Academy students are asked to keep a change of clothes in their backpack or in a labeled Ziploc bag to be kept in the nurse's office. All students must be potty trained unless medical documentation is provided.

### **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)**

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council held four meetings. Additional information regarding the district's SHAC is available from the principal.

The duties of the SHAC include:

- Making recommendations regarding physical and mental health curriculum.
- Developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing issues such as school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, improving student fitness, mental health concerns, substance abuse prevention, and employee wellness.
- Making recommendations for increasing parents' awareness of warning signs of suicide and mental health risks and community mental health and suicide prevention services

See policies at BDF and EHAA.

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

For more information, see "A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504" on page 41.

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

Sheldon ISD is committed to encouraging healthy students and therefore has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement the policy. You are encouraged to contact James Webster at 281-727-2013 with questions about the content or implementation of the district's wellness policy and plan.

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

#### **Health Instruction:**

As part of the health curriculum, students may receive age/grade appropriate instruction related to human sexuality, growth and development. The School Health Advisory Council is involved with the selection of course material for instruction. As a parent, you are entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, you may remove your child from any part of this instruction with no academic, disciplinary, or other penalties. You may also choose to become more involved with the development of curriculum used for this purpose by becoming a member of the district's SHAC. Please see the campus principal for additional information.

### **Notice of Asbestos Management Plan**

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's Asbestos Management Plan is available in the superintendent's office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact Kathleen Shimp, the district's designated asbestos coordinator, at 281-727-1400

### **Pest Management Plan**

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

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area. Parents who have questions or who want to be notified of the times and types of applications prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Eugene Wagnone, the district's IPM coordinator, at 281-727-1400.

### **Physical Fitness Assessment**

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to their child's principal to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

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

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

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

### **Vending Machines**

The district has adopted and implemented the state and federal policies and guidelines for food service, including the guidelines to restrict student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines, see the Coordinator of Child Nutrition. [See policies at CO and FFA.]

## **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 Affidavit [Request Exemption from Immunization](#). The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

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

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. registered and licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization

required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or a member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a lifelong condition.

As noted at **Bacterial Meningitis**, entering college students must also, with limited exception, furnish evidence of having received a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five years prior to enrolling in and attending classes at an institution of higher education. A student wanting to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus may be subject to this requirement.

[For further information, see policy FFAB(LEGAL) and the DSHS website: [Texas School & Child Care Facility Immunization Requirements.](#)]

## **ITEMS AND CONDUCT NOT PERMITTED**

**Opinion Books, Slam Books, Sign-In Sheets, purses, Etc.:** Students are not to sign or pass around school any opinion book or sign-in sheet which may hurt the feelings of others or disrupt the educational process. Students doing so will be subject to disciplinary actions.

**Electronic Devices:** MP3 players, video games, Lasers, pagers, radios, cellular telephones, CD players/cassette players, cassettes, CD's, cameras, etc. are not permitted on campus except in connection with specific assignments involving them. Teachers are to take up such items and parents may claim them from the principal's office. These items are prohibited.

**First Offense:** Items will be confiscated and turned into the office. Parents will be able to pick up the device at the end of the school day and a written warning will be issued and documented.

**Second Offense:** Items will be confiscated and turned into the office. Parents will be able to pick up the device after 15 school days and a \$15.00 fee will be charged. (In accordance with FNCE (LOCAL).

The District will not be responsible for replacing or providing reimbursement for confiscated items held longer than 30 days that may have been misplaced or lost. (See FNCE) School administrators will not investigate loss or damage of students' CD players, MP3 players, and other prohibited items.

**Fire Alarms and Extinguishers:** Fire alarms are installed throughout the buildings. These are for emergency use only. Anyone caught tampering with these alarms will be disciplined and the proper authorities will be notified. Also, fire extinguishers are available for emergencies. Students are not to play with these extinguishers.

**Gifts:** Students are not allowed to receive gifts such as balloons, flowers, and other items during school.

**Hoverboards, skateboards, scooters, skates:** hoverboards, skateboards, scooters, skates and skate shoes are not to be brought to school or used on school premises.

**Backpacks:** Only mesh or clear backpacks will be allowed.

**Gum Chewing:** There is no gum chewing.

**Non-Instructional Materials:** Non-instructional materials (e.g. toys, balls, nail polish, etc.) should not be brought to school without prior permission.

**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 in the coming years—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.

## **LATE WORK POLICY**

The Sheldon Independent School District affirms its stand on academic emphasis in its grading policy. Emphasis on the student's commitment of time and effort on the assignment will be considered in administering this policy. Any assignment not submitted upon the due date, as determined by the teacher, will be considered "late work". In elementary school an assignment turned in one day late will not receive a grade higher than a 90. An assignment turned in two days late will not receive a grade higher than an 80. After the third day, the student will be assigned detention and will be required to complete the work. The student will not receive a grade higher than a 70 on the assignment.

## **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 law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs for comparison in an investigation.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs to establish a student's identity, where the child may have engaged in conduct indicating a need for supervision, such as running away.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services (CPS), Texas Department of Family and Protective Services(DFPS), a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive from a juvenile court to take a student into custody.



Before a student is released to a 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 taken into custody, arrested, or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who is thought to have committed certain offenses or who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.
- All appropriate district personnel in regards to a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

[See policies FL(LEGAL) ]

### **LEAVING CAMPUS**

Please remember that student attendance is crucial to learning. We ask that appointments be scheduled outside of school hours as much as reasonably possible. Also note that picking up a student early on a regular basis results in missed opportunities for learning. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the school day.

State rules require that parental consent be obtained before any student is allowed to leave campus for any part of the school day. The district has put the following procedures in place in order to document parental consent:

- For students in elementary, a parent or otherwise authorized adult must come to the office and sign the student out. Please be prepared to show identification. Once an identity is verified, a campus representative will then call for the student or collect the student and bring him or her to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, we cannot allow you to go to the classroom or other area unescorted to pick up the student. If the student returns to campus the same day, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student back in through the main office upon the student's return. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required.
- If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse or other district personnel determines that the student should go home, the nurse will contact the student's parent and document the parent's wishes regarding release from school. Unless directed by the parent to release the student unaccompanied, the parent or other authorized adult must follow the sign-out procedures as listed above. If a student is allowed to leave campus by himself or herself, as permitted by the student's parent, or if the student is age 18 or is an emancipated minor, the nurse will document the time of day the student was released. Under no circumstances will a student in elementary be released unaccompanied by a parent or adult authorized by the parent.

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

Students are not authorized to leave campus during regular school hours for any other reason, except with the permission of the principal. Students who leave campus in violation of these rules will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

A “lost and found” collection box is located in the campus office. If your child has lost an item, please encourage him or her to check the lost and found box. The district discourages students from bringing to school personal items of high monetary value, as the district is not responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of each semester.

### **MAKEUP WORK**

#### **Makeup Work Because of Absence**

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. 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 is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time, including absences for extracurricular activities, so that the teacher and student may plan any work that can be completed before or shortly after the absence. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school and that, even though absences may be excused or unexcused, all absences account for the 90 percent threshold in regards to the state laws surrounding “attendance for credit or final grade.” [See also **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade** on page 19.]

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

A student will be permitted to make up tests and 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.

#### **In-school Suspension (ISS) Makeup Work**

##### **Completion of Course Work**

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

##### **Completion of Courses**

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, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FO(LEGAL).]

## MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

Medication that must be administered to a student during school hours must be provided by the student's parent. All medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, must be kept in the nurse's office and administered by the nurse or another authorized district employee, unless the student is authorized to possess his or her own medication because of asthma or a severe allergy as described below or as otherwise allowed by law.

The district will not purchase nonprescription medication to give to a student. 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. Note: Insect repellent is considered a non prescription medication.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.
- 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.
    - in the original container,
    - properly labeled and current,
    - written in English,
    - issued by a physician licensed to practice in the U.S.,
    - issued by a U.S. pharmacy,
    - Approved by the Food and Drug Administration

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

For students at the elementary level, the student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to a student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and requests assistance with the application of the sunscreen. Nothing prohibits a student at this level from applying his or her own sunscreen if the student is capable of doing so.

For students at the secondary level, a student may possess and apply sunscreen when necessary. If the student will need assistance with this application, please address the need for assistance with the school nurse.

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

In accordance with the Board of Nurse Examiners, nurses have the right to refuse to administer over the counter or prescription medication to a student even though written parental permission has been granted based on their professional judgment for the protection and health of the child.

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 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.

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 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.]

## **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Sheldon ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law, in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

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

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment or gender-based harassment: James Webster, Director of Student Services 11411 C. E. King Parkway Houston, Tx 77044 281-727-2013.
- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Susan Pansmith, Executive Director of Special Education 11411 C. E. King Parkway Houston, Tx 77044 281-727-2000.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See: James Webster, Director of Student Services 11411 C. E. King Parkway Houston, Tx 77044 281-727-2013.

[See policies FB(LOCAL) and FFH(LOCAL).]

## **PARENTAL AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

### **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 once your child begins enrolling in courses that earn high school credit.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school.
- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policies at GKG and contact your child's school]. Participating in campus parent organizations.
- 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 Dr. Brenda Dearmon at 281-727-2000.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction and other wellness issues.
- Being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child's emotional or mental well-being
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies at BE and BED for more information.]

### **PARTIES**

Students may participate in certain class parties that have been approved. In terms of school related activities, "party" means time taken from the instructional day in which refreshments are served, and gifts, cards, or other treats are given to the students. Each school may plan three (3) parties during the school year. These are held the LAST HOUR OF THE SCHOOL DAY on December 21<sup>st</sup>, February 14<sup>th</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup>. Students are allowed to have birthday treats at school. These treats will be distributed by the teacher in the classroom at the end of the school day and may not be distributed in the cafeteria or before lunch in the classroom. Due to health codes, all food at the three planned parties must be store bought. All visitors/ volunteers attending parties must abide by the student guidelines.

Child Nutrition Program policy prohibits an elementary school campus from serving or providing access for students to Foods of Minimal Nutrition Value (FMNV) at any time anywhere on school premises during the school day. Such foods and beverages may not be sold or given away on school premises by the school, school or non-school organizations, teachers, parents, or any other person or group during the school day. FMNV restricted foods include carbonated beverages, chewing gum, and certain candies.

## **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.

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. In addition, state law requires that each campus provide for the observance of one minute of silence at the beginning of the first class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2011. [See policy EC(LEGAL) for more information.]

## **PRAAYER**

Each student has a right to pray individually, voluntarily, and silently or to 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, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

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

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.

If a student in grade 5 or 8 is enrolled in a course that earns high school credit and for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment will be administered, the student will not be subject to the promotion requirements described above for the relevant grade 5 or 8 assessment. The student will instead take the corresponding EOC assessment.

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

A student in grade 5 or 8 will have two additional opportunities to take a failed assessment. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and

the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous and the student must complete additional special instruction before beginning the next grade level. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policy EIE.]

Certain students—some with disabilities and some classified as English learners—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. An admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee meeting will be convened if a student receiving special education services in grade 5 or 8 fails to meet satisfactory performance after the first STAAR administrations in reading or math. For more information, see the principal, school counselor, or special education director.

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

## **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 3 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/subject area is near or below 70, or is below the expected level of performance. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. [See **Working Together** on page 47 for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal or pursuant to the board-adopted policy and are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment 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) and **Grading Guidelines** on page 36.]

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

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

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school within 5 days. The district may use an electronic program to communicate academic information about your child, including for report card and progress reporting purposes. An electronic signature of the parent will be accepted by the district, but you are entitled to request the option to provide a handwritten signature of acknowledgment instead

## **SAFETY**

Student safety on campus, at school-related events, and on district vehicles 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 is expected to:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others 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, campus behavior coordinator, 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. A student may make anonymous reports about safety concerns by Anonymous Alerts.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.

Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students **Accident Insurance**

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

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

Occasionally, students, teachers, and other district employees will participate in preparedness drills of emergency procedures. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

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

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

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school may have to rely on previously provided 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**

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that school is dismissed early or opening is delayed because of severe weather or another emergency, or if the campus must restrict access due to a security threat.

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number previously provided to the district has changed.

In the event of severe weather conditions, the following radio and television stations will relay information about the schools in Sheldon Independent School District:

CHANNEL 13

CHANNEL 11

CHANNEL 2

KIAH 39



The district phone dialer will also be used to notify parents/guardians of school closings. Please keep telephone numbers updated so that the message will reach you. If severe weather conditions arise during the school day, please discuss with your child how he/she will get home. **IF YOUR CHILD RIDES THE SCHOOL BUS NORMALLY, HE/SHE WILL BE SENT HOME ON THE SCHOOL BUS UNLESS THE SCHOOL IS NOTIFIED OTHERWISE.**

## **SCHOOL FACILITIES**

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 in the coming years - littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to make restitution for damages they cause and shall be subject to disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **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 School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily in accordance with standards set forth in state and federal law.

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

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

See Child Nutrition at 13011 Garrett Rd, Houston, Texas 77044 to apply for free or reduced-price meal services.

Parents are strongly encouraged to continually monitor their child's meal account balance. When a student's meal account is depleted, the district will notify the parent. The student will be allowed to continue purchasing meals according to the grace period set by the school board, and the district will present the parent with a schedule of repayment for any outstanding account balance and an application for free or reduced meals. If the district is unable to work out an agreement with the student's parent on replenishment of the student's meal account and payment of any outstanding balance, the student will receive a meal. The district will make every effort to avoid bringing attention to the student.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

A list of required school supplies for each grade will be furnished to you for each school year. Please replace the supplies that your child needs throughout the year. We ask that all students' supplies be labeled with his/her name.

## **SCHOOL-SPONSORED FIELD TRIPS**

The district periodically takes students on field trips for educational purposes.

A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip.

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

The district may require a fee for student participation in a field trip to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and

## **SEARCHES**

### **District Property**

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

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

### **Searches in General**

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, district officials may occasionally conduct searches.

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

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

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

### **Metal Detectors**

To maintain a safe and disciplined learning environment, the district reserves the right to subject students to metal detector searches when entering a district campus and at off-campus, school-sponsored activities.

### **Trained Dogs**

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

## **Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices**

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

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

[See policy FNF(LEGAL) and Electronic Devices and Technology Resources on page 50 for more information.]S

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, students who are homeless, students in foster care, bilingual students, migrant students, English learners, students diagnosed with dyslexia, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the district office at 281-727-2000.

A student who has or is at risk for dyslexia or a related reading difficulty is eligible to participate in the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's [Talking Book Program](#), which provides audiobooks free of charge to qualifying Texans with visual, physical, or reading disabilities

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

Grades 3–8

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

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8
- Reading, annually in grades 3–8
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

Successful performance on the reading and math assessments in grades 5 and 8 is required by law in order for the student to be promoted to the next grade level, unless the student is enrolled in a reading or math course intended for students above the student's current grade level. Exceptions may apply for students enrolled in a special education program if the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee concludes the student has made sufficient progress in the student's individual education plan (IEP). [See **Promotion and Retention** on page 50 for additional information.]

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

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

## **STUDENT I.D. BADGES**

Students will be issued identification badges each school year. Students are required to wear their I.D. badges at school every day. They will use these badges for lunch and library. Please make sure the information on your child's I.D. badge is correct. If badges are lost, damaged, or defaced, students will be charged a \$3.00 replacement fee. Failure to wear their I.D. badge may result in a student's loss of privilege at school.

## **STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE**

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

Please contact James R. Webster, Director of Student Services, who has been designated as the district's liaison for children in the conservatorship of the state, at 281-727-2013 with any questions.

[See also **Students in the Conservatorship of the State** on page 14 for more information.]

## **STUDENTS WHO ARE HOMELESS**

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

Please contact James Webster who has been designated as the district's foster care liaison, at 281-727-2013 with any questions.

[See **Students in the Conservatorship of the State** on page 14 **Error! Bookmark not defined.** for more information.]

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS**

If you are worried that your child may be using or is in danger of experimenting, using, or abusing illegal drugs or other prohibited substances, please contact the school counselor. The school counselor can provide you with a list of community resources that may be of assistance to you. The TDSHS maintains information regarding children's mental health and substance intervention services on its website: [Mental Health and Substance Abuse](#).

## **SUICIDE AWARENESS AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT**

The district is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its students. If you are concerned about your child, please access [Texas Suicide Prevention](#) or contact the school counselor for more information related to suicide prevention available in your area.

You may also contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255

## **TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT, AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

Textbooks and other district-approved instructional materials are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Any books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. Electronic textbooks and technological equipment may also be provided to students, depending on the course and course objectives. A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to

the teacher. Any student failing to return an item in acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day.

## **TRANSFERS**

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

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 14, **Bullying** on page 22, and **Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or 504 Services** on page 15, for other transfer options.]

## **TRANSPORTATION**

School bus transportation is a privilege offered by Sheldon ISD to all students who are eligible for this service. A parent may designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved stop or an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off -location you may contact the transportation department at 281-727-1400.

**The privilege of bus transportation is conditional upon the student observing safe and appropriate behavior while waiting for the bus, riding the bus, and departing the bus. Just as in the classroom, students must be courteous with the driver and other students and cooperate with the driver's instructions in the interest of safety.**

**The school district staff and bus drivers share your concern about the safety of your child. You can assist in providing a safe bus ride by reviewing the following items with your child.**

### **Meeting the Bus**

- Students must be on time and visible at the bus stop. It is recommended that students be at their bus stop **five minutes before pick-up time**. Once a bus departs a stop or school, it **will not stop for late students** or stop at unauthorized locations to receive or discharge students.
- Students must not stand on the traveled portion of the roadway while waiting for the bus.
- Students must not approach a moving bus until it stops. Once the bus has stopped, the student may walk toward the bus to board.
- Students must enter the bus carefully in an orderly manner as instructed.
- Once on the bus, students must go directly to their seat and be seated properly so the bus may continue the route.

### **Bus Safety Rules**

- Observe the same conduct level as is expected in the classroom.
- Profanity and obscene gestures are not allowed.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- Do not litter or damage the bus in any way.
- The driver is authorized to assign seats.
- All items prohibited at school are also prohibited on the bus.
- Remain seated while the bus is moving with all body parts inside the windows.
- Fighting, horseplay, and throwing objects are prohibited.

- No live/dead animals or flammable materials are allowed.
- Large, bulky items that cannot fit under the seat or in the lap of the student are not allowed on the bus. Arrangements must be made for the parent to transport these items.
- No skateboards, balls, roller blades, or balloons may be brought on the bus.

### **Departing the Bus**

- When getting off of the bus, students should move quickly but safely away from the unloading area.
- The emergency door at the rear of the bus is to be used in emergency situations only. It is not to be used for boarding or departing the bus.

**Students are allowed to board and depart the bus at designated stops ONLY!**

### **Pre-K and Kindergarten Students**

Pre-K and Kindergarten students will only be released from the bus if a parent/guardian or other designated person is present **at the bus stop** to receive the child. Approved persons must be prepared to show photo ID upon request to verify identity prior to receiving a student. If no approved adult is present, the child will be returned to the campus for the parent to pick-up. Once a student has been returned to the campus twice, the process to suspend bus riding privileges will begin.

**1<sup>st</sup> time child is returned** A Bus Return Warning letter will be issued

**2<sup>nd</sup> time child is returned** The student may be removed from transportation for up to (3) days

**3<sup>rd</sup> time child is returned** The student may also be removed from the bus for five (5) days

**4<sup>th</sup> time child is returned** The student may be removed from the bus for ten (10) days

### **Bus Safety Consequences**

Disruption of Transportation – In accordance with Texas Education Code §37.126, a student may be issued a citation for Disruption of Transportation by a law enforcement officer for behavior which disrupts, prevents, or interferes with the transportation of students to or from school or a school related event. This citation may be in addition to other disciplinary action taken by the Transportation Department or campus as indicated below.

**When a student fails to observe the bus safety rules, the bus driver will complete a bus safety report which will be sent to the Transportation supervisor. The Assistant Principal or the Transportation supervisor will then conference with the student and assign disciplinary action based upon the incident.**

**1<sup>st</sup> Report** Student will be given a warning by the transportation supervisor

**2<sup>nd</sup> Report** Student may be removed from transportation for up to three (3) days

**3<sup>rd</sup> Report** Student will be removed from transportation for ten (10) school days

**4<sup>th</sup> Report** Student will be removed from transportation for a length of time up to the remainder of the semester

**5<sup>th</sup> Report** Student will be removed from transportation for the remainder of the school year.

**Severe Clause: If a bus safety incident is deemed severe enough, the progressive discipline steps may be by-passed and the student may be removed from transportation for the remainder of the school year.**

**Any student being removed from transportation for the remainder of the fall semester will return to transportation with the understanding that the next report received may result in removal from transportation for the remainder of the school year.**

**Any student that loses bus riding privileges is still required to attend school. If a student is absent on a day when he or she is suspended from the bus, the dates of suspension will be adjusted so that the student will complete the full length of the suspension. Any student missing school due to bus suspension will be considered truant.**

## **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 and audio recording equipment is used to monitor student behavior, including on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used.

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

In accordance with state law, a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member (as this term is defined by law), a principal or assistant principal, or the board may make a written request for the district to place video and audio recording equipment in certain self-contained special education classrooms. The district will provide notice to before placing a video camera in a classroom or other setting in which your child receives special education services. For more information or to request the installation and operation of this equipment, speak with the principal or The Executive Director of Special Programs, who the district has designated to coordinate the implementation of and compliance with this law.

[See EHBAF(LOCAL).]

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

Parents and others are encouraged to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school, all visitors must first report to the campus office, sign in, present proof of identification (Driver's license or other government issued ID), and receive a visitor's pass. **The district utilizes the Raptor system to conduct a background check on each individual.** The system will assist in keeping your child as safe as possible while at school. All visitors to classrooms must be appropriately dressed and wear a visitor's badge while in the school building.

**In order to foster independence and develop social skills, parents will not walk students to class after the first 3 days of school.** Parents may eat lunch with their child but are asked to refrain from eating lunch with them daily. Parents may only bring food for their own child. Parents of students at the ECA's are asked to refrain from eating with their students the first three weeks of school.

In order to avoid unnecessary classroom interruptions, parents must make prior arrangements with the school administrator when desiring to observe their child's classroom. No visitors are allowed during standardized testing or during formal classroom observations being conducted by the campus administrator. The campus administrator may deny a parent access to their child's classroom if the visit results in or would likely cause a substantial disruption to the educational process or would jeopardize

student confidentiality. In order to minimize unnecessary classroom interruptions, the number and length of visits may be limited at the discretion of the campus administrator.

Parents are to wait outside the building for the pick-up at dismissal times in order to ensure student safety and avoid disruption of instruction.

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

## **UNAUTHORIZED PERSON**

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

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

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

[See also Student Code of Conduct

## **VOLUNTEERS (All Grade Levels)**

We appreciate so much the efforts of parent and grandparent volunteers that are willing to serve our district and students. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the campus principal for more information and to complete an application

## **VISITORS PARTICIPATING IN SPECIAL PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS**

### **Business, Civic, and Youth Groups**

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

## **WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL**

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

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

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



## **GLOSSARY**

**Accelerated instruction** 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 and/or as a result of a student not meeting the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment.

**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 and his or her parents are members of the committee.

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

**CPS** stands for Child Protective Services.

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

**DFPS** is the Texas Department of Family Protective Services.

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

**EOC assessments** are end-of-course tests, which are state-mandated, and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments are required for graduation. These exams will be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and United States History.

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

**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 district wide tests; whether successful completion of state-mandated assessments is required for graduation, etc.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Student Code of Conduct** is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board and identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from the classroom campus, or district vehicle. 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. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

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

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

## APPENDIX I

### FREEDOM FROM BULLYING POLICY

Note that school board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/601?filter=FFI> Below is the text of Sheldon I.S.D.'s policy FFI(LOCAL) as of the date that this Handbook was finalized for this school year.

STUDENT WELFARE: FREEDOM FROM BULLYING

FFI(LOCAL)

Adopted on 2/27/2012

#### **Bullying Prohibited**

The District prohibits bullying as defined by this policy. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited.

#### **Definition**

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the District and that:

Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or

Is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

This conduct is considered bullying if it:

Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and

Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

#### **Examples**

Bullying of a student may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

#### **Retaliation**

The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

#### **Examples**

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

#### **False claim**

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Timely Reporting**

Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

### **STUDENT REPORT**

To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, principal, or other District employee.

### **EMPLOYEE REPORT**

Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.

#### **Report format**

A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.

#### **Prohibited conduct**

The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct.

#### **Investigation of report**

The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

## **CONCLUDING THE INVESTIGATION**

Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The principal or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Superintendent or designee.

### **Notice to parents**

If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying.

## **DISTRICT ACTION**

### **Bullying**

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

### **Discipline**

A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action.

The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.

## **CORRECTIVE ACTION**

Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine if any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.

## **TRANSFERS**

The principal or designee shall refer to FDB for transfer provisions.

### **Counseling**

The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options.

### **Improper conduct**

If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

## **APPEAL**

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG(LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

## **RECORDS RETENTION**

Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC(LOCAL).

## **ACCESS TO POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's Web site, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.





## SHELDON ISD DISTRICT

# PARENT and FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

2019-2020

Sheldon ISD believes that parents/guardians are partners with teachers and other staff in the education of their children and that *parent and family engagement* and empowerment are essential at all levels throughout the school district.

Sheldon ISD believes that student academic achievement requires that parents have an understanding of curriculum, academic achievement standards, assessments, district/school policies and procedures, and of how to monitor their children's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.

**District Administration shall work in collaboration with parents and guardians and shall actively support the schools and parents in enhancing parent and family engagement by:**

- respecting parents as partners in the education of their children;
- valuing diversity and the need for equity in each school;
- promoting parent engagement in district leadership and decision-making;
- fostering a welcoming and responsive environment for parents;
- ensuring accountability of the staff at all levels throughout the district in working with parents as partners;
- valuing the need for partnerships within public and private entities in the Sheldon community;
- ensuring flexibility and accessibility within Central Administration operations and flexibility within district-wide processes and procedures; and
- establishing and promoting communication as a source of trust and understanding between the district and parents. (Communication will be provided in both English and Spanish. Every campus and district-wide letter issued to parents will be in both languages, including critical information on the district website and social media)

**Principals, teachers and all school staff shall work in collaboration with parents and guardians by:**

- respecting parents as partners in the education of their children and honoring their role as first and life-long teachers;
- valuing diversity and equity in each child's learning;
- setting high expectations for excellent customer (student/parent) service;
- expecting high student academic achievement for all students;
- promoting parent engagement in site-based leadership and decision making;
- valuing partnerships within the public and private entities within the Sheldon community;
- ensuring flexibility and accessibility within school-wide operations and flexibility within school processes and procedures; and

- establishing and promoting communication as a source of trust and understanding between the school and parents.

**Parents/Guardians are asked and encouraged to be involved in their children’s learning and education by:**

- taking the initiative to seek the best educational opportunities for their children;
- understanding and respecting the mission and values of the school;
- respecting teachers and supporting school staff as partners in the education of their children;
- demonstrating respect for the school as a whole, including the faculty and staff;
- developing jointly with the teacher, a school-parent compact for their child that outlines how the parents, the school and the student will share the responsibility for improved academic achievement;
- identifying and addressing barriers to *parent and family engagement*;
- understanding school procedures and opportunities to contribute or receive support;
- participating in the development of the school parent and family engagement plan and the review and evaluation of the plan;
- utilizing two-way lines of communication between parents, school staff, and the district on the instruction, achievement and conduct of their children that builds trust
- participating in training opportunities that will include but are not limited to: strategies/reinforcing learning at home, discipline, and understanding cultural differences.
- valuing diversity and the need for equity in each child’s learning;
- participating in site-based leadership and decision making;
- volunteering in their children’s schools; and
- supporting and engaging in developing partnerships within the Sheldon community.

**PART I. DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT-WIDE PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS**

1. The Sheldon Independent School District will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district-wide *parent and family engagement* plan under section 1112 of the ESEA as well as to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

*The District-Wide Instructional Improvement Council (DWIIC), made up of district stakeholders to be appointed according to procedures approved by the Superintendent, shall be established to make recommendations regarding strategies to implement and ensure success of this policy. The council shall draft regulations to address the requirements of Section 1118 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which shall be reviewed annually and revised as needed. The DWIIC will meet a minimum of four (4) times each year. The council will consist of a representative of the following:*

- *Professional staff from each campus*
- *Parent(s) from each campus*
- *Business Partner*
- *Community*



*(For additional information regarding the guidelines for the development and responsibilities of the DWIIC, see policies at BQA and BQB.)*

2. The Sheldon Independent School District will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective *parent and family engagement* activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:

*The district will provide qualified staff to facilitate parent workshops/training opportunities. The district will ensure that all oral/written communications will reflect the needs of the population (English/Spanish)*

3. The Sheldon Independent School District will coordinate and integrate *parent and family engagement* strategies provided by the district under the following additional programs such as; Head Start, Young Learners, Parents As Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and State-operated preschool programs, by:

- *Conducting a yearly consultation to share Parent Training Opportunities*
- *Collaborate with the Directors of childcare centers with the Sheldon community*

4. The Sheldon Independent School District will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this *parent and family engagement* policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in *parent and family engagement* activities. The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its *parent and family engagement* policy and activities to design strategies for more effective *parent and family engagement*, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parent and family engagement policies.

- A. *The DWIIC will review the following data points throughout the year as part of the evaluation process that will drive the planning process:*
  - *Results from the parent, student, and teacher Surveys (conducted yearly)*
  - *Elements of Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR)*
  - *Data generated from District Curriculum Assessments (DCAs)*
  - *Data used to develop the District Comprehensive-Needs Assessment*
- B. *The DWIIC will be facilitated by the Chief of Academic Officer who will involve the necessary departments to achieve the desired goals and expectations.*
- C. *The district will issue a parent survey in the spring to receive input from stakeholders, parents, and the community.*

5. The Sheldon Independent School District will build the schools' and parent's capacity for strong *parent and family engagement*, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and family members and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

- A. *The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools,*

*provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in the bullet points below--*

- *the State's Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards*
- *the State's assessment data as it relates to STAAR – State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness and EOC – End of Course exams*
- *the local district academic assessments including alternate assessments*
- *how to monitor their child's progress*
- *how to work with educators*

*Each school within the district will be required to provide an annual meeting with parents to discuss the Title I, Part A requirements, school report card, Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR), Title budgets, and expectations for achieving desired goals. The district will present in an open forum, the District Report Cards, Texas Academic Performance Report, and other pertinent data required by law.*

*The district will host an annual parent/community meeting to share information regarding Title Programs and how funds will be used to support district goals. Private Non-Profit entities will be invited to attend as well.*

*B. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, as appropriate, to foster parent and family engagement, by implementing the following:*

**1. Parent Training:**

*These are opportunities to help parents and family members develop skills to use at home that support their children's academic efforts and social development. They provide parents with techniques and strategies, which they may utilize to improve their children's academic success and to assist their children in learning at home. Some of these activities may include:*

- \*Family Math Night \*Science Fair*
- \*Read Aloud \*Storytelling Events*
- \*Literacy Training \*Parent Resources*
- \*Using Technology*

**2. Parent Support:**

- **Home Support**

*When students receive additional assistance at home, it serves a number of purposes: to practice, extend, and enrich classroom learning, to develop responsibility and work habits, and to provide parents an opportunity to interact with their children and their education. Parents and family members can support the school and the child's success by helping in the following ways:*

- 1. Help your child get organized.*
- 2. Agree upon a regular study time and stick to it.*
- 3. See that your child has a regular, suitable study place, with good light, plenty of room, and no distractions (TV, phone, family noise, etc.).*
- 4. Ask your child what they did at school today. Show interest in what he or she does at school.*
- 5. Contact the teacher to discuss student progress. Our goal is to help your child reach grade level standards and beyond.*

▪ ***Citizenship and Student Behavior***

*Students are to display good citizenship in the cafeteria, on the playground/all school grounds and beyond, on the bus, and in the classroom. Staff and parents should work together to help children understand the meaning and importance of good citizenship and how to make the right choices.*

*Specific rights, rules and responsibilities regarding student behavior are detailed in the Student/Parent Handbook. Each student is provided with a copy of this handbook at the beginning of the school year.*

*C. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, in how to implement and coordinate parent programs, and how to build ties between parents and schools, by:*

- *Providing Professional Development*
- *District Parent and Family Engagement Workshop/Trainings on each campus*

*D. The school district will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent- programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and to the extent*

*practicable, in a language the parents can understand:*

*The staff of Sheldon ISD, with the support of Title 1, seeks to involve parents in an effective home-school partnership in order to provide the best possible education for our students.*

**Regular Communication with Parents:**

*In order to build consistent, effective and timely communication between the home and school, we will provide regular communication which will include the following:*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>*School Newsletters</i>                  | <i>*Annual School Calendars</i>              |
| <i>*Parent – Teacher Compact</i>            | <i>*Report Cards</i>                         |
| <i>*District Website</i>                    | <i>*Special Event / Reminder Notices</i>     |
| <i>*Parent-Teacher Conferences</i>          | <i>*Conduct Folders</i>                      |
| <i>*School Assemblies (Parents Invited)</i> | <i>*School messenger phone system (IRIS)</i> |

*All written communication will be provided in English and Spanish to reflect the needs of the population. The district also provides a Language Translation System allowing simultaneous interpretation during parent trainings and workshops.*

**PART II. DISCRETIONARY DISTRICT -WIDE PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS**

**1. Parent Visitations**

*A wonderful way for parents to show their child they are interested in his/her life at school is to visit the classroom. The school welcomes any parent who wishes to help through the school Volunteer Program.*

**2. Parent and Family Members Participation**

*Parent and Family Engagement at the school and district level is encouraged through the following committees:*

- o Parent Volunteer Program/PTO (Parent-Teacher Organization) – Plans student activities and raises funds to support the needs of the campus.*
- o Campus Site-Based Team/District-Wide Instructional Improvement Council determines school improvement goals and prioritizes budget expenditures for some categorical programs. They will also determine how the 1% reserved Title I funds will be spent to support parent and family engagement.*

**Other opportunities for participation include:**

- *PALS Volunteer Program at the high school (The purpose of the program is to teach the juniors and seniors leadership skills and how to mentor their peers and younger students.)*
- *School Site Activities PTO/PTA Book Fairs*
- *Field Trips*
- *Field Day*

### **PART III. ADOPTION**

This District-wide Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by meetings conducted on November 28, 2018 and January 17, 2019, with the District Parent Advisory Committee.

This policy was presented & accepted by the Sheldon Independent School District and approved by the District-Wide Instructional Improvement Council on March 7, 2019.

The school district will post this document on the district's website, include a copy in the Parent/Student Handbook, and a copy in the foyer of the Donald Ney Administration Building in English and Spanish making it available to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children for the 2019-2020 school year.

Please note: Individual Campus Parent and Family Engagement Policies have been developed and are available on their perspective webpage.

District Authorized Official:

Paula Patterson, Chief Academic Officer

District-Wide Instructional Improvement Council Chairperson

### **SECTION III: PARENT CONSENT FORMS**

#### **SHELDON ISD NOTICE REGARDING DIRECTORY INFORMATION PARENT'S RESPONSE REGARDING RELEASE OF STUDENT 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 Sheldon ISD to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing within ten school days of your child's first day of instruction for this school year.

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.

Directory information includes:

1. name
2. address
3. telephone number
4. photograph
5. participation officially recognized activities
6. weight and height of members of athletic teams
7. grade level
8. enrollment status
9. honors and awards received in school
10. most recent previous school attended

**SHELDON ISD DIRECTORY INFORMATION SIGNATURE FORM**

Except as noted below (under EXCEPTIONS), I direct the District not to release to any third party the following information without my prior written consent. I have marked through the items I do not want released.

- 1. Name
- 2. Address
- 3. Telephone listing
- 4. Honors/awards
- 5. Photograph
- 6. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- 7. Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- 7. Grade level
- 9. Enrollment Status
- 10. Most recent school attended

**EXCEPTIONS**

For limited school-sponsored purposes (student recognition activities, yearbook or student newspaper, printed programs for extracurricular activities, news releases to local media), the District has my permission to release the following information. I have marked through the items I do not want released.

- 1. Name
- 2. Address
- 3. Telephone listing
- 4. Honors/awards
- 5. Photograph
- 6. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- 7. Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- 8. Grade level
- 9. Enrollment Status
- 10. Most recent school attended

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

Signature of parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**PARENT AND STUDENT CONSENT CHECKLIST**

**2019-20**

*This form may be submitted electronically on Family Access or hard copy turned in to your child's campus.  
One form must be submitted for each child.*

Check One	<u>Parent Consent Checklist</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<p><b><u>RELEASE OF STUDENT INFORMATION:</u></b> I give the district permission to release my child's name, address and telephone number to a military recruiter or institutions of higher education upon request without my prior written consent.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<p><b><u>ACCEPTABLE USE:</u></b> I give my child permission to use computing devices, electronic communications system/ Internet access, and district approved web communication tools. I have read and understand the <b>Acceptable Use</b> guidelines. I have discussed the rules and consequences with my child as well as consent to the monitoring of my child's use of digital devices and accounts. I agree to abide by all <b>Acceptable</b> guidelines and consent to monitoring of my electronic devices and my district e-mail account. I understand there may be consequences for violating the rules stated in the <b>Acceptable Use</b> guidelines, including termination of my privileges. This selection will remain in effect for a calendar year from the date of the parent's signature.</p> <p><b><u>Note:</u></b> If you select "NO", your student will not be allowed to access computing devices, electronic communications system/ Internet access, and district approved web communication tools. <u>Parents who choose "NO" will need to submit a written request to the school's principal within the first ten days of instruction.</u></p>
<u>Student Consent Checklist</u>	
<p><b>Sheldon ISD Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct for 2019-2020:</b> 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 Board adopted 2019-2020. Student Code of Conduct. I understand that I may access the Parent Student Handbook online at <a href="http://www.sheldonisd.com">www.sheldonisd.com</a>.</p>	
<p><b><u>Student's Printed Name and Signature</u></b></p>	<p><b>Printed Name:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Signature</b> _____</p> <p><b>ID #</b> _____</p>

**Parent/ Guardian's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

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



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