



***STUDENT AND PARENT  
HANDBOOK***

***2019-2020***

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# PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year! 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 Comal ISD Student and Parent 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, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Comal ISD *Student Code of Conduct*, which is a document that is intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found in **Appendix B**.

The *Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)* defines how students may access technology within the district to promote digital citizenships. The **AUP** can be found in **Appendix D**.

The Student and Parent 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.

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

Also, please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. The district reserves the right to modify provisions of the Student and Parent 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 and Parent Handbook may refer to rights established through law or district policy, the Student and Parent 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.

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

[See **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights** and **Directory Information** for more information.]

Please note that references to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. A copy of the district's policy manual is available for review online at [www.comalisd.org](http://www.comalisd.org).

## **SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

This section of the Comal ISD Student and Parent Handbook includes information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

### ***PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT***

#### **Working Together**

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education succeeds best when there is 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.
- Updating all information about your child, including but not limited to, medical records, emergency contact information, custody papers, and any other information pertaining to your child.
- 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 school 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. [See **Academic Counseling** and **Academic Programs**.]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, school counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences**.]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policies at GKG and contact Human Resources, 830-221-2115.]
- 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 the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Academic Services.

- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction. [See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and **School Health Advisory Council**.]
- Being aware of the school’s ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations.

The reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, requires districts/campuses using Title I funds to develop jointly with parents a written parent involvement policy. Please refer to **Appendix A** to review the Comal ISD Parent Involvement Policy.

### **Family Engagement Associate**

The Family Engagement Associate works with parents of students participating in Title I programs. Title I campuses have a Parent Resource Center staffed by a part-time Family Engagement Associate to assist parents with resources.

## ***PARENTAL RIGHTS***

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.

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

### **Inspecting Surveys**

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

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

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

### **Requesting an Evaluation for Special Education or Section 504**

Parents have the right to request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 at any time. To request an evaluation parents shall contact campus personnel.

#### **Aiding 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 and open enrollment charter schools 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 and charter schools to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individual(s) 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 if 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 an administrative employee of the school district or open enrollment charter school, the district or charter school must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district or charter school must give

the parent a prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If the school district or charter school agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

Please note that a request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Districts and charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.

If the district or charter school 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 to evaluate the student. 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 a district or charter school 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 30th 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 or charter school must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

Additional information regarding special education is available from the district or charter school 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:

Contact Person:

Phone Number:

**Section 504 Referrals:**

Each school district or charter school must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's or charter school's Section 504 program. Districts and charter schools 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:

Contact Person:

Phone Number:

### **Additional Information:**

The following websites provide information and resources for 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

### **Reviewing Instructional Materials**

As a parent, you have a right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials (either on-line or print versions) used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered to your child. Requests to review instructional materials should be made to the campus principal. [Also see **Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction** for additional information.]

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

Teachers may display students' work in classroom 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 your child, and other original works on the district's website, on any campus or classroom website, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication.

### **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, and

- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.

[See **Student Records.**]

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

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

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

### **Granting Permission to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction**

As a parent, if your child is under the age of 14, you must grant permission for your child to receive instruction in the district's parenting and paternity awareness program or your child will not be allowed to participate in the instruction. This program, developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE), is incorporated into the district's health education classes.

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

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

### **Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction**

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality.

State law requires that any instruction related to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome must:

- Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;
- Devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;
- Emphasize that abstinence is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- Direct adolescents to a standard of behavior in which abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; and
- If included in the content of the curriculum, teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates.



In accordance with state law, below is a summary of the district’s curriculum regarding human sexuality instruction:

*Scott & White Wellness and Sexual Health Program* is an abstinence-based program that empowers teens with information necessary to develop healthy habits and relationships. In grades 6<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup>, students receive age-appropriate lessons with components for parents, healthcare providers, legal advisors, and the community. The curriculum related to each of the grade levels includes the following:

- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Provides an introduction to healthy relationships, puberty, teen pregnancy and STDs. Students also learn refusal skills and goal setting.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Curriculum is more detailed yet age-appropriate with a specific lesson in legal matters.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Detailed information is given on contraception and parental responsibilities, emphasizing that abstinence is the preferred choice of behavior.
- 9<sup>th</sup> Grade: The lessons build upon knowledge learned in middle school and continue to emphasize building healthy relationships, avoiding risky behaviors, setting goals and decision making.

For additional information regarding the Scott and White Sexual Wellness and Health Program, please visit the following website:

<http://www.sw.org/wellness-sexual-health/wellness-sexual-health>

5<sup>th</sup> grade students are presented factual information at an age appropriate level about human growth and maturation during puberty. No sexual content is included.

As a parent, you are entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, you may remove your child from any part of the human sexuality instruction with no academic, disciplinary, or other penalties. You may also choose to become more involved with the selection of curriculum used for this purpose by becoming a member of the district’s SHAC.

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

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

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

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

## **Requesting Limited or No Contact with a Student through Electronic Media**

Teachers and other approved employees are permitted by the district to communicate with students through the use of electronic media within the scope of the individual's professional responsibilities. 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.

An employee described above may also contact a student individually through electronic media to communicate about items such as homework or upcoming tests.

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.

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

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

## **School Safety Transfers**

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 as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. Contact the Superintendent's office for information.  
[See **Bullying**, 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 (LOCAL).]
- Request the transfer of your child to another campus if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. [See policy FDE.]

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

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

## **Parents of Students with Disabilities**

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that any other student residing in the

household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus. [See policy FDB (LEGAL).]

### **Placement of Video Surveillance in a Special Education Setting**

In order to promote the safety of students receiving special education services in certain self-contained classrooms and other special education settings, CISD will place video surveillance with audio capability in one of the above settings upon written request of a Parent, Board of Trustees, or Staff Member.

### **Request for Video Surveillance in a Special Education Setting**

If a Parent, Trustee, or Staff member makes a request for the placement of video surveillance in a special education setting as described above, the Parent, Trustee, or Staff Member will be required to complete and submit the Request for the Placement of a video surveillance Equipment in a Special Education Self-Contained Setting Form to the designated campus administrator. A Parent, as that term is defined in these procedures, may request video surveillance be placed in a self-contained classroom in which his or her child with a disability is in regular attendance. A Staff Member, as that term is defined in these procedures, may request video surveillance be placed in a self-contained classroom where he or she provides services to students with disabilities. A Trustee, as that term is defined in these procedures, may request video surveillance be placed in a self-contained classroom if he/she receives a report from a parent or staff member of an incident as described above. A request for video surveillance is applicable only to the school year in which it is requested. The video surveillance equipment will be operated during the school year as long as the self-contained classroom meets the requirements of T.E.C. 29.022. If a student for whom the video surveillance equipment was requested by a Parent is no longer in regular attendance in the classroom, video recording will be stopped, unless there has been a separate request for another student who remains in the classroom. If the Staff Member who requested video surveillance no longer provides services in the classroom, video recording will be stopped unless a separate request for video surveillance monitoring is in effect. Video surveillance monitoring may not be requested during extended school year services.

### **Notification of Parent of Receipt of Request**

The campus designated administrator will notify the parent in writing that the request has been received. The notice shall include:

- Date the request was received by the campus designated administrator;
- Whether the classroom for which the request was made is one in which video surveillance monitoring can be placed;
- Notice that the surveillance equipment will include visual and audio recordings;
- Notice that the video cameras will be in operation at all times during the instructional day when students are being instructed in the self-contained classroom or other special education setting
- That the parent will be notified when the video surveillance has been installed and operational

## **Request for the Use of a Service Animal**

“Service animal” means any dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. [See policy FBA (LEGAL).]

A parent of a student who uses a service animal because of the student’s disability must submit a request in writing to the principal at least ten district business days before bringing the service animal on campus.

## **Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education**

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact campus principal or counselor to learn about the district’s overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention (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.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 45 school days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the evaluation to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with prior written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights, if they disagree with the district. The district is required to give parents the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*. Additional information regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is available from the school district in a companion document, *A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

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

- Texas Project First, at <http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/>

## **Child Find Services**

The goal of Comal ISD's Child Find services is to locate, identify, and evaluate all children with disabilities who are in need of Special Education Services and Related Services ages 3-21 who reside within the Comal ISD boundaries. If you suspect that your child may not be developing the same as his or her peers, or if your child has been previously diagnosed with a disability, you may call the Comal ISD Child Find contact at 830-221-2042.

*Referrals can be made by:*

- Parents or Guardians
- Early Childhood Intervention Agency
- Adult Student (18-21 years or age)
- Campus Staff

## **Parents of 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, has limited proficiencies of English, and is experiencing difficulty performing grade level class work in English. If the student qualifies for these extra services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will meet to determine additional services to support the needs of the student. These services include accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

## **Accommodations for 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, 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 60<sup>th</sup> day before deployment or no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> day after the parent's return from deployment.

Additional information may be found at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=7995>.

## **Student Records**

Both federal 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. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older OR who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

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

- The parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student’s education records.

Federal law requires that, as soon as a student becomes 18, is emancipated by a court, or enrolls in a post-secondary 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.

- District school officials who have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records. School officials would include trustees and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals, teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff, a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or volunteer), a parent or student serving on a school committee, or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties. “Legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records includes working with the student, considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student’s case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official’s professional responsibility; or investigating or evaluating programs.
- Various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers.
- Individuals granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.

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

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

Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records. The address of the superintendent’s office is 1404 I-35 North, New Braunfels, Texas 78130.

The addresses of the principals’ offices can be found on our website at [www.comalisd.org](http://www.comalisd.org).

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student’s records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights. A request to correct a student’s record should be submitted to the principal. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected, and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the

records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG (LOCAL). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy. [See FINALITY OF GRADES at FNG (LEGAL), **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** and **Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns** for an overview of the process.]

The district's policy regarding student records found at FL (LEGAL) and FL (LOCAL) is available on the district's website at [www.comalisd.org](http://www.comalisd.org).

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

**Please note:**

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

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

**Directory Information**

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

However, release of a student's directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal 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.

**Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes**

The district often needs to use the student information for the following school-sponsored purposes:

**Publicity in local newspapers, on the radio, on the district's, and/or on the local TV and cable access channels when students earn academic and extracurricular-related awards, honor rolls, yearbook publication, printed student directories; etc.**

For these specific school sponsored purposes, the District has designated the following categories of information as directory information: student name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, as well as major field of study;

degrees, honors, and awards received, dates of attendance, grade level, most recent educational institution attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of members of athletic teams. A parent shall be permitted to object to the release of one or more categories of directory information regarding this information and will not be released to the public without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

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

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

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



## **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 below to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. If you are unable to find information on a particular topic, please contact the campus principal.

### ***ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE***

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led instruction 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 educational materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to monitor his or her child’s attendance, ensuring that the child arrives at school on time and attends for the entire day.

There are two (2) State of Texas (State) laws dealing with attendance that are of special interest to both students and parents. The first law addresses Compulsory Attendance and the second law addresses Attendance for Course Credit (the 90% Rule).

Comal ISD (District) also has attendance obligatory guidelines and procedures.

#### **Compulsory Attendance – State Definition**

State law requires that a student whose age falls between 6 years old and 18 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year must attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction programs, extended year programs, or tutorial sessions unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

#### **19 years old or older:**

- A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls in school after their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday is required to attend school each day until the end of the school year.
- The District may revoke the student’s enrollment if the student is 19 or older and has 5 or more unexcused absences in a semester.
- Once a Student’s enrollment is revoked, the student’s presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. [See policy FEA]

#### **5 years old and younger:**

- Students enrolled in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or any District accelerated compensatory programs are required to comply with the Compulsory Attendance Laws.

#### **Attendance for Course Credit – (The 90 Percent rule) – State Definition**

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. *(Even if the student has passing grades, they must **also** attend 90 percent of the days that the class is offered in order to receive credit for that class).* The actual number of days a student must be in attendance in order to receive course credit will depend on whether the class is held for a full semester or a full year. [TEC 25.092]

A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit for the class **if** they complete a special plan which allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. The special plan **must** be approved by the principal, **prior** to the student's first absence.

If a student attends less than 90 percent of the days a class is offered and/or has not completed a special plan approved by the Principal, the student may be able to submit a Petition for Credit (Appeal) to the School's principal. The Appeal must be submitted by the deadline as decided by each individual school. If the Appeal is valid and submitted on-time, an Attendance Review Committee will determine whether there were and/or are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit, if appropriate. [See policy FEC].

In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the Attendance Review Committee will consider the following on a case by case basis:

- They will review the time (attendance) needing to be recovered and verify how much time and percentage of days was actually missed by the student for a particular circumstance.
- They will determine if the absences are for reasons listed in this handbook under the Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance – State Defined and Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance – District Guidelines sections.
- The accumulation of absences for migrant students prior to enrollment in the District.
- The acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences.
- Whether the absences were for reasons for which the student or the student's parent/guardian could exercise any control.
- They will review all makeup work that has been completed, check 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.
- They will consider the best interest of the student.

The student and/or parent/guardian will be given an opportunity to present any information to the Attendance Review Committee about the absences and discuss ways to earn or regain credit.

The student and/or parent/guardian may appeal the Attendance Review Committee's decision to the Board of Trustees of Comal ISD by filing a written request with the Superintendent of Comal ISD within any deadlines and in accordance with policy FNG (LOCAL).

### **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance - State Definition**

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences, if the student makes up all the work.

#### **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance as Defined by State Law with approved documentation to verify absence.**

**These absences will NOT count against the 90% rule (for course credit purposes) however, all make-up school work must be completed.**

**Pre-approval of these absences may be required and signed documentation verifying the absences must be turned in within two (2) days of returning to school.**

The exemptions include the following activities and events:

- Required court appearance (including travel time if necessary – one day to and one day from county/city of the court requesting the student’s presence)
- Religious holy day(s) (including travel time if necessary)
- A portion of a school day is missed for a doctor/dentist/medical appointment and the absence is verified by a signed note or form issued by the health care professional and turned into the school by the student and/or parent/guardian within two (2) days of the appointment.

The student is temporarily absent because of a documented appointment for the student or the student’s child that is with a health care professional licensed to practice in the United States. The appointment must be a face-to-face consultation with a health care professional. A consultation over the phone or via video (telemedicine) is not considered an appointment with a health care professional.

A documented appointment with a health care professional includes an appointment of a student diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder with a health care practitioner to receive a generally recognized service for persons with that disorder.

To be considered temporarily absent, the student must begin classes or return to school on the same day of the appointment. The appointment should be supported by a document, such as a note from the health care professional.

- Activities related to obtaining US citizenship.
- Student serving as an election clerk.
- Maximum of two (2) days per school year for a junior or a senior to visit a college/university (the appropriate school form must be completed and returned to the high school attendance office for verification).
- Maximum of five (5) days per year to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or is immediately returned from continuous deployment of at least four months outside the locality where the parent, stepparent, or guardian regularly resides. The District is required to excuse up to 5 days for this purpose in a school year. An excused absence for this purpose must be taken no earlier than 60 days before the date of deployment or no later than 30 days after the date of return from deployment. The family must provide to the school, written proof from the Government/uniformed service stating the terms of deployment.

### **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance – District Guidelines**

The District allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements with proper documentation validating the absence for several types of absences. The student is still required to make up all the school work missed during the absence, however, some absences will require that the student make up both the missed school work and make up the missed time because of the 90% rule. (*See the Attendance for Course Credit – (The 90 Percent rule) – State Definition section of this handbook.*)

**Acceptable Reasons for an “Excused Absence” (that will not count against the 90% Rule) as Defined by the District with approved documentation to verify the absence.**

- **These absences will NOT count against the 90% rule (for course credit purposes).**
- **Missed school work must be completed but missed time does not need to be recovered.**
- **Pre-approval of these absences may be required and signed documentation verifying the absences must be turned in within 2 days of returning to school.**

The exemptions include the following activities and events:

- Hospitalization
- Death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent)
- Natural disasters, weather or road conditions as declared by the District making travel dangerous
- Sport related competitions for approved off campus physical education/Olympic caliber credit. These students must have an off campus physical education/Olympic caliber class listed on their class schedule (Activities must be pre-approved by the Comal ISD PE Coordinator at least two (2) weeks prior to the event)
- Olympic try-outs (Must be pre-approved by the school principal)
- Visa renewals – up to three (3) days only if necessary, for the travel (one day to, day of renewal, and one day return)
- A full day’s absence due to a Doctor/Medical appointment that is verified by a signed note or form issued by the doctor/clinic and turned into the school’s attendance office within two (2) days of the absence. The appointment must be a face-to-face consultation with a health care professional. A consultation over the phone or via video (telemedicine) is not considered an appointment with a health care professional.
- Nurse excused-students are sent home by the school nurse after meeting specific medical criteria as established by district and health department policy.

**Acceptable Reasons for an “Excused Absence” (that does count against the 90% Rule) as Defined by the District with approved documentation to verify absence.**

- **These absences WILL count against the 90% rule (for course credit purposes).**
- **The school work must be completed and the missed time must be recovered.**
- **Pre-approval of these absences may be required and signed documentation verifying the absences must be turned in with-in two (2) days of returning to school.**
  - Personal or family illness verified by a note from parent/guardian. A personal or family illness may not exceed a total of eight (8) days in a school year.
  - NOTE: These 8 absences may only be used for illnesses lasting (4) four consecutive days or less and they cannot be used for non-excusable, unacceptable reasons. (*see Doctor’s/Medical Notes - After an Absence Due to an Illness and Unacceptable Reasons for an Absence as Defined by the District sections in this handbook.*)

- Death outside the immediate family
- Emergencies recognized and approved by the school principal

### **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 are subject to disciplinary action. FC Sec. 65.003 (a) and (TEC Sec.25.093)

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

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

- At the elementary school level, “parts of days” is defined as missing part of the instructional day. (this includes tardiness and leaving school early)
  - At the secondary level (high school and middle school), "parts of days" is defined as missing more than ten minutes of any class period. (this includes tardiness and leaving school early)
- For a student younger than 12 years of age, the student’s parent/guardian could be charged with a criminal offense based on the student’s failure to attend school.
  - If a student age 12 through age 17 violates the Compulsory Attendance Law, the parent/guardian can be charged with a criminal offense and the student could be charged with a civil offense.
  - The parent of a student who is 18 years of age or older shall not be subject to penalties as a result of their child’s violation of the State Compulsory Attendance Law.

### **Violations to Compulsory Attendance – Defined by the District**

A few examples of unacceptable, unexcused, absences as defined by the District are listed below:

#### **Unacceptable Reasons for an Absence as Defined by the District.**

- **These events will be documented as an “Unexcused Absence” and WILL count against the 90% rule (for course credit purposes).**
- **The school work must be completed, the missed time must be recovered, and disciplinary action may be taken.**
  - Truancy.
  - Parent/guardian notes for personal or family illnesses in excess of eight (8) days in a school year. NOTE: These 8 absences may only be used for illnesses lasting (4) four consecutive days or less (*see the Doctor/Medical Notes - After an Absence due to an Illness section in this handbook*) and these 8 absences cannot be used for non-excusable, unacceptable reasons.
  - Any absence not listed in the Exceptions to Compulsory Attendance - State Defined or Exceptions to Compulsory Attendance -District Guidelines as listed in this handbook.

Examples of a common unexcused absence are:

- Vacations/pleasure trips
- Missing the bus
- Car problems
- Traffic and railroad crossing delays
- Over slept
- Babysitting
- Birthday or other personal celebrations
- Jobs
- Rare special circumstances not approved by the principal in advance
- Youth programs not associated with the District, including but not limited to athletics, cheerleading, dance, theater, fine arts, and other similar programs.

### **Tardiness - Arriving to School Late:**

Arriving to school on time is critical to the academic success of students. Excessive tardiness without an excused note, can be considered an unexcused “part-day” absence which can affect the Attendance for Credit (the 90% Rule) and may also be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law which is subject to disciplinary action.

- Elementary Schools: The Tardy bell rings at 7:40 a.m. Any student arriving after 7:40 am and before 7:55 am is considered tardy unless a signed, acceptable, medical appointment note is turned in to the front office staff. Any student arriving between 7:56 a.m. and 9:59 a.m. is considered very late, incurring a part-day unexcused absence, unless a signed, acceptable, medical appointment note is turned in to the front office staff. If a student arrives to school after 7:40 a.m. the parent/guardian must sign their student in at the front office prior to the student proceeding to their classroom. Tardiness can be considered, missing a part of the instructional day and a violation of compulsory attendance.
- Middle School and High School (secondary schools): A student who enters a classroom after the tardy bell rings without a properly signed admittance slip is counted as being tardy. The only excuse for being tardy is school related business. Unexcused tardiness may cause the student to be assigned to before and/or after school detention, in school suspension (ISS) or any other discipline the school deems appropriate. A tardy in excess of ten (10) minutes, without the proper documentation, will be counted as an absence during that class period. Excessive tardiness may be considered a violation of compulsory attendance.

Examples of unexcused tardiness may include:

- Missing the bus
- Car problems
- Traffic and railroad crossing delays

- Over sleeping
  - Babysitting
  - Unable to find a parking spot
  - The student drop-off line was too long and/or too slow
- ***NOTE: The only excuses for being tardy are documented medical appointments and school related business.***

### **Leaving School Early:**

Completing the entire instructional day is critical to the academic success of students. Excessively leaving school early can be considered a “part-day” absence. Excessively leaving school early, without a signed excused note, can be regarded as the student missing part of the instructional day which can affect the student’s Attendance for Credit (the 90% Rule) and may also be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law which is subject to disciplinary action.

- If a student is leaving the campus before the school day ends, the student must “sign-out” prior to leaving the premises. Failure to do so may result in an administrative discipline referral.
  - For elementary schools, the parent/guardian “signs the student out” at the front office before leaving the premises.
  - In secondary schools (middle school and high school), the student and parent/guardian “signs the student out” at the Attendance Office before leaving the premises.

If a student has been excluded by reason of illness or injury by the school nurse or administrator, permission for an adult designated by the parent/guardian to sign the student out will be permitted. This adult must be prepared to show proper identification before the student will be released.

***NOTE: The only excuses for leaving school early are documented medical appointments and school related business.***

### **Absences: General District Guidelines**

- Parents/guardians should call the Attendance Office at their child’s school to report an absence for each day. This phone call does not replace the need for turning in a signed and dated note.
- A student absent for any portion of the day must turn in a parent/guardian or healthcare professional signed and dated note, within two (2) days of returning to school from the absence, verifying the reason for the absence.
- When a student’s absence, for a personal illness, exceeds four (4) consecutive days, the parent/guardian shall notify the school/teacher and/or Attendance Office. Upon returning to

school, the student shall, within two (2) days, turn-in a statement from a doctor/health clinic verifying the illness in order for the absences to be excused.

- Personal or family illness verified by a note from parent/guardian, are not to exceed a total of eight (8) days in a school year and must be turned in within two (2) days of the student returning to school. NOTE: These 8 absences may only be used for illnesses lasting four (4) consecutive days or less (*see Doctor/Medical Notes - After an Absence due to an Illness and Unacceptable Reasons for an Absence as Defined by the District sections in this handbook*) **and** they cannot be used for non-excusable, unacceptable reasons.
- If a student is returning to school after an appointment, arriving late or leaving early, the student must first sign in and/or out at the school upon arrival/departure and before proceeding to their classroom or leaving the premises. Failure to do so may result in an Administrative disciplinary referral. In order for a student returning to school after an appointment, arriving late, and leaving early to be documented as excused, a signed note must be turned in within (2) days verifying the reason for the absence.
  - For elementary schools, the signed note can be given to either the front office staff or their classroom teacher.
  - In secondary schools (middle school and high school), the student “signs in” and turns in the note to the Attendance Office before proceeding to their classroom.
- Students who drive themselves to school may **not** go back and forth to their vehicles during the school day. Attempting to do so may result in an Administrative disciplinary referral.

### **Official Attendance Taking Time**

The District must submit to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) an official attendance record reflecting attendance at a specific time each day.

- The official attendance is taken, for TEA recording purposes, every day during the 2<sup>nd</sup> class period for elementary schools and secondary schools (which include middle school and high school).

***The official attendance taking time does NOT represent a time during the school day when the attendance of the student is no longer, monitored, relevant and required. The attendance of a student is monitored and recorded by the school for the entire school day.***

- A student absent for any portion of the day, before, during or after the TEA official attendance taking time, must turn in an acceptable, signed, note, within two (2) days of the absence, verifying the reason for the absence in order to receive either an excused absence, approved tardy or approval for leaving school early coded on their attendance record.
  - For elementary school students, the signed note can be given to either the Front Office Staff or their classroom teacher.
  - In secondary schools (middle school and high school), the signed note must be given to the Attendance Office Staff.



## **Parent Notes - After an Absence**

When a student is absent from school, the student must turn in a note, describing the reason for the absence, signed by the parent, within two (2) two days of returning to school.

- For elementary school students, the signed note can be given to either the Front Office Staff or their classroom teacher.
- In secondary schools (middle school and high school), the signed note must be given to the Attendance Office Staff.
- A personal or family illness verified by a note from the parent/guardian are not to exceed a total of eight (8) days in a school year. **NOTE:** These 8 absences may only be used for illnesses lasting four (4) consecutive days or less **and** they cannot be used for non-excusable, unacceptable reasons. (*see Doctor/Medical Notes - After an Absence due to an Illness section in this handbook*)
- A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 years of age or older **and** living separate and apart from the parent/guardian.

## **Doctor/Medical Notes - After an Absence Due to an Illness**

When a student is absent from school for medical reasons, the student must turn in a note, describing the reason for the absence, signed by the doctor or health clinic, within (2) two days of returning to school.

- If a student is absent for more than four (4) consecutive days because of a personal illness, a note must be issued by a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. This note must be turned in within (2) two days of returning to school. If a parent/guardian works in a health care facility, in order for the absence to be excused as a physician's note, the note must contain an original signature from someone other than parent/guardian.
- For elementary school students, the signed note can be given to either the Front Office Staff or their classroom teacher.
- In secondary schools (middle school and high school), the signed note must be given to the Attendance Office Staff.

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or Attendance Review Committee may require a statement issued by a doctor or health clinic verifying the dates of the illness or condition that caused the student's absence from school. [See policy FEC (LOCAL).]

## **Driver's License Attendance Verification Form - (VOE form)**

A student between the ages of 15 and 18 who is applying for a driver's learning permit and/or a permanent driver's license will be required by the State of Texas, Department of Public Safety (DPS) to provide a Driver's License Enrollment Verification Form (VOE).

- These forms are issued by the front office staff at the high school where the student is enrolled. A VOE form will only be issued to those students who have a qualifying attendance record.

- VOE Forms will not be issued unless the student met the Attendance for Credit (90% Rule) during the previous semester.
- It can take several days for the high school to generate the VOE forms, therefore, plan ahead when requesting your VOE form.

## ***ACADEMIC PROGRAMS***

The school counselor provides student's and parent's information regarding academic programs to prepare for higher education and career choices. [For more information, see **Academic Counseling** and policies at EIF.]

## ***BULLYING***

**Bullying** is defined in Section 37.0832 of the Education Code 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:

1. 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;
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;
3. Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or
4. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Bullying includes cyberbullying. (See below) This state law on bullying prevention applies to:

1. 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;
2. 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
3. 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.

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. This may also be reported through our STOP!T app via a smart phone app or at <https://appweb.stopitsolutions.com/login>. You may contact the school to obtain the access code. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. The district will also contact the parents of the victim and of the student who was found to have engaged in the 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.

The principal 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 his or her child be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district. [Also see **School Safety Transfers**]

The school district's anonymous reporting system is Stop !T

A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office, superintendent's office, and on the district's website.

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

[Also see **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation, School Safety Transfers, Hazing**, and policy FFI]

### ***CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) PROGRAMS***

The District offers the following CTE Clusters : Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources, Transportation Distribution & Logistics, Education & Training, Hospitality & Tourism Architecture & Construction, Arts A/V Technology & Communication, Business Management & Administration , Finance, Health Science Information Technology, Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security, Manufacturing and Marketing, Human Services, Information Technology and STEM.

Comal ISD will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and CTE programs. [Also see **Nondiscrimination Statement** for additional information regarding the district's efforts regarding participation in these programs.]

### ***CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN***

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children. 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. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused 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).

Possible physical warning signs of sexual abuse could be difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches. Behavioral indicators may include verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior. Emotional warning signs to be aware of include withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

A child who has experienced sexual abuse 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 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.

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child that are available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see:

[http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention and Early Intervention/Programs Available In Your County/default.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp).

Reports may be made to:

The Child Protective Services (CPS) division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (1-800-252-5400 or on the web at <http://www.txabusehotline.org>).

### ***CLASS RANK / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT***

Please review Board Policy EIC (Local) and the High School Course Guide to obtain specific information regarding honor graduates and their roles at graduation. Student 2014-15 cohort and beyond must also have taken four credits of science and four credits of math, which must include Algebra II.

To be eligible for top 10% admission, students must receive a distinguished level of achievement and an endorsement. Students in the freshman cohort must also have taken four credits of science and four credits of math, which must include Algebra II. Rank point averages must comprise the top ten percent of the graduating class as determined by the District's procedure to qualify for automatic admission under Education Code 51.803. Please note: The University of Texas at Austin requires top 6%.

To be eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian honors, a student must have been continuously enrolled at the high school campus from which he or she will graduate for two full years immediately preceding graduation. Students in the 2014-2015 cohort, must have completed a minimum of one endorsement and earned distinguished level of achievement by completing four science credits and four math credits, which must include Algebra II. Establishment of two full years is based on enrollment prior to the end of the first grading period of the junior year.

### ***CLASS SCHEDULES***

All students are expected to attend school for the entire school day and maintain a class/course schedule to fulfill each period of the day. Exceptions may be made occasionally by the campus principal for students in grades 9–12 who meet specific criteria and receive parental consent to enroll in less than a full-day's schedule.

#### **Bell Schedules**

The following bell schedule will be used:

**Elementary:** 7:40 – 3:05    **Secondary:** 8:45 – 4:10

## **Schedule Changes**

Schedule changes can have a significant impact on the calculation of the nine-week average.

Schedule changes will be considered for the following reasons only:

- The student is a senior not scheduled in a course needed for graduation.
- The student has already earned credit for a course in which he/she is currently scheduled.
- The student does not have the prerequisite(s) for a class listed on his/her schedule.
- The student has previously failed this course under the same teacher.
- The student has been dismissed from a program for which approval must be granted for placement.
- The student does not have a full schedule.
- There is a data entry error (no lunch, class listed twice, free period, etc.).
- Course level change (see below)
- Other as approved by building administrator or designee.

## ***COURSE LEVEL CHANGES***

### **Academic and Pre-AP Courses**

Course level changes may be considered at the end of the first nine weeks for courses other than Advanced Placement. To be eligible for a course level change, a student must be misplaced in the current course. Course level change options and grading considerations for such changes include the following:

1. In order to transfer to a lower level class, the student must have made a sincere effort to succeed, as determined by the campus personnel, by completing work and attending tutorials. If these conditions are met and the student is earning less than a grade of 75, that student will be considered for a change. Final approval will depend upon space availability in the receiving class.
2. A student who transfers to a lower level class after the first nine weeks is not eligible to earn weighted points for the semester. However, if a student transfers to a lower level course after the first semester, the student will receive weighted points for the first semester only as per board policy EIC Exhibit B. (Updated on 12/5/2016)
3. A student who transfers to a higher level class after the first nine weeks is not eligible to earn weighted points for the first semester. In order to receive weighted points at the semester for a Pre-AP course, the student must be enrolled in the advanced course for the entire semester.

### **AP Courses**

Course level changes for students in Advanced Placement courses may not be considered before the 5th week of the 9-week grading period. To be eligible for a course level change, a student must be misplaced in the current course. Course level change options and grading considerations for such changes include the following:

1. In order to drop an AP course, a campus committee will meet to determine the best academic plan for the student. This committee shall consist of the student, parent, teacher, counselor, and academic dean. The committee should encourage the student to fulfill their original goal of successfully completing the AP course and create a detailed plan that will help them be successful in completion of the course. A period of time will be determined by the committee and the members will meet again after that time frame to discuss other options available to the student if they still wish to drop the course at the end of the 9 weeks.

2. A student who transfers from an AP course to an academic level course after the first nine weeks is not eligible to earn weighted points for the semester. However, if a student transfers to a lower level course after the first semester, the student will receive weighted points for the first semester only as per board policy EIC Exhibit B. (Updated on 12/5/2016)

3. A student who transfers to a higher-level class after the first nine weeks is not eligible to earn weighted points for the first semester. In order to receive weighted points at the semester for an AP course, the student must be enrolled in the advanced course for the entire semester.

All AP course requirements may be found in EIC (local) exhibit C

*\*AP Government and AP Macroeconomics are exceptions to the AP Guidelines/Agreement. These are semester courses, which are graduation requirements, and students will not be able to drop these courses before the 3rd week of the 9 week grading period.*

## **COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS**

[Notification of Automatic College Admission \(PDF, 26KB\)](#)

For two school years following his or her graduation, a district student who graduates in the top ten percent and, in some cases, the top 25 percent, of his or her class is eligible for automatic admission into four-year public universities and colleges in Texas if the student:

- Completes the Foundation Plan with an Endorsement and a Distinguished Level of Achievement, including four credits in science and four credits in math to include Algebra II.

In addition, the student must submit a completed application for admission in accordance with the deadline established by the college or university.

The University of Texas at Austin Automatic Admission Policy (Senate Bill 175), may limit the number of students automatically admitted to 75 percent of the University's enrollment capacity designated for first-time resident freshmen. For students who are eligible to enroll in the University of Texas at Austin during the summer or fall 2019 and spring 2020 term, the University will be admitting the top six percent of the high school's graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through an independent review process.

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

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

[See EIC (LOCAL) and **Class Rank/Highest Ranking Student** for information specifically related to how the district calculates a student's rank in class].

## **COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES**

Students in grades 10-12 have opportunities to earn college credit through the following methods:

- Enrollment in certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include courses termed dual credit, or Advanced Placement (AP);
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with Alamo College
- Enrollment in certain CTE courses; and
- Enrollment in UT OnRamps courses

Note that if a student wishes to enroll in a community college course at a college that does not include the high school within its service area, the student is limited by state law to enroll in no more than three courses of this type.

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

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

The program, called OnRamps, is designed to help your student be more successful in college by exposing him or her to a rigorous, high-quality, college-level course. The OnRamps Statistics course matches an existing course taught at UT Austin and is designed to prepare students for the kinds of work and ways of thinking expected in college.

## ***COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS***

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, or where the parent is unsatisfied with the decision by the principal, the district has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG (LOCAL) in the district's policy manual. A copy of this policy and the form for filing a complaint may be obtained in the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's website at [www.comalisd.org](http://www.comalisd.org). In general, the student or parent should submit a written complaint and request a conference with the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the superintendent or his designee. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees. Policy FNG (Local) requires a parent or student to file a complaint within 15 district business days of the date the student or parent first knew, or should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint. Informal resolution is encouraged but it does not extend any deadlines except by mutual written consent.

## ***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—on and off campus as well as in 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.

### **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment – spanking or paddling the student – will not be used as a discipline management technique in Comal ISD.

### **Disruptions of School Operations**

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

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

### ***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.

To assist in reducing the spread of illnesses such as the flu, students are required to stay home from school when they have a fever of 100.0 or higher without the use of fever reducing medications such as Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen. Students are required to be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications before returning to school. In addition, students should not come to school when they are feeling ill, are vomiting or have diarrhea as these symptoms may indicate an illness which may be contagious.

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

### **Lice Management Plan**

Lice are not a public health threat and do not carry disease. In accordance with recommendations from the CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Texas Department of State Health Services, students with lice will not be excluded from attending school. Parents/guardians will be contacted when lice are discovered and encouraged to pick up their student to begin treatment immediately. If this is not possible, a written or electronic notice will be sent requesting treatment to be completed at home before the student returns the following day. If the infestation is severe, the nurse may exclude the student until treatment has been completed. From the Texas Department of State Health Services website:

As of September 1, 2017, Texas Education Code, Chapter 38, [Section 38.031](#), Notice of Lice, states the following: "The board of trustees of an independent school district shall adopt a policy



requiring a school nurse of a public elementary school who determines or otherwise becomes aware that a child enrolled in the school has lice shall provide written or electronic notice of that fact to:

(1) the parent of the child with lice as soon as practicable but not later than 48 hours after the administrator or nurse, as applicable, determines or becomes aware of that fact; and

(2) the parent of each child assigned to the same classroom as the child with lice not later than the fifth school day after the date on which the administrator or nurse, as applicable, determines or becomes aware of that fact.”

Additional information about confidentiality is included within the law.

Comal ISD complies with this required notification legislation. This notification process does not include classroom checks unless a cluster of lice cases has been noted, to avoid loss of instructional time. This practice is consistent with evidence based practice from CDC, and the district requests parents/guardians to communicate with their campus nurse or administration when a student is treated for lice at home.

Additional information on lice, treatment, and prevention can be found at

<http://www.dshs.texas.gov/schoolhealth/lice.shtm>,

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/135/5/e1355>,

<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/index.html>.

## ***COUNSELING***

### **Academic Counseling**

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

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

### **Personal Counseling**

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, emotional or mental health issues, or substance abuse. A student who wishes to meet with the school counselor should contact the campus administration or school counselor. 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. [Also see **Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention and Suicide Awareness.**]

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

The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent’s written consent. Parental consent is not necessary when a psychological examination,

test, or treatment is required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

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

### ***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 for it—may, in circumstances determined by the principal or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject. Prior instruction may include, for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, home-schooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a non-accredited school.

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

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

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

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

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course for which the student has had no prior instruction or to accelerate to the next grade level. The exams offered by the district are approved by the district's board of trustees. The dates on which exams are scheduled during the school year will be published in the Grading Guidelines and on the district's website.

A student in grade 6 or above will earn course credit with a passing score of at least 80 on the exam or a score designated by the state for an exam that has alternate scoring standards. A student may take an exam to earn course credit no more than twice. If a student fails to achieve the designated score on the applicable exam before the beginning of the school year in which the student would need to enroll in the course according to the school's course sequence, the student must complete the course.

A student in elementary or middle 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 principal no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. The district will not honor a request by a parent to administer a test on a date other than the published dates. If the district agrees to administer a test other than the one chosen by the district, the student's parent will be responsible for the cost of the exam. [For further information, see policy EHDC (LOCAL).]

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

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

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

### **Dating Violence**

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. 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 or the student's family members or members of the student's household, destroying property belonging to the student, threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship, 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, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law, that negatively affects the student.

Two types of prohibited harassment are described below.

### **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. 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 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.

### **Sexual Harassment**

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

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

### **Retaliation**

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

### **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 districts officials to whom to make a report.]

### **Investigation of Report**

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

During the course of an investigation, the district may take interim action to address the alleged prohibited conduct.

When an investigation is initiated for alleged prohibited conduct, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying, as defined by law. If so, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted. [See policy FFI.]

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.

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

## ***DISCRIMINATION***

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

## ***DISTANCE LEARNING***

Distance learning and correspondence courses include courses that encompass the state-required essential knowledge and skills but are taught through multiple technologies and alternative methodologies such as mail, satellite, Internet, video-conferencing, and instructional television.

The Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) has been established as one method of distance learning. A student has the option, with certain limitations, to enroll in a course offered through the TxVSN to earn course credit for graduation.

Depending on the TxVSN course in which a student enrolls, the course may be subject to the “no pass, no play” rules. [Also see **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations.**] In addition, for a student who enrolls in a TxVSN course for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment is required, the student must still take the corresponding EOC assessment. If you have questions or wish to make a request that your child be enrolled in a TxVSN course, please contact the school counselor. Unless an exception is made by the superintendent, a student will not be allowed to enroll in a TxVSN course if the school offers the same or a similar course.

If a student wishes to enroll in a correspondence course or a distance learning course that is not provided through the TxVSN in order to earn credit in a course or subject, the student must receive permission from the principal prior to enrolling in the course or subject. If the student does not receive prior approval, the district will not recognize and apply the course or subject toward graduation requirements or subject mastery. More information on TxVSN is located in board policies EIC (LOCAL) and EHDE (LOCAL).

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

### **School Materials**

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

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

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

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

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

The principal will designate the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing by students. [See policies at FNAA.]

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

### **Non-school 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 at GKDA. To be considered for distribution, any non-school material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the principal for prior review. The principal will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies at DGBA, FNG, or GF.]

Prior review will not be required for:

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

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

## ***DRESS AND GROOMING***

Comal ISD takes pride in the appearance of its students. As such, appropriate student dress and grooming are important factors in the safe and orderly operation of the schools. Each student's appearance should reflect a positive image of the school and contribute to a distraction-free learning environment.

Our district values and needs the support of parents in upholding the district and campus dress and grooming guidelines. The student and his/her parent(s) may determine the student's personal dress and grooming standards provided that the student's dress and grooming:

- **shall not lead school officials to reasonably believe that such dress or grooming will disrupt, interfere with, disturb, or detract from school activities; and**
- **shall not create a health problem or safety hazard for the student or others.**

Using these general guidelines and the specific guidelines listed below, school administrators, with the input and support of faculty members, have the final decision in determining and enforcing student dress and grooming standards at school and at all school-related activities. Exceptions will be permitted for bona fide religious reasons. **Parents are expected to be knowledgeable and supportive of the dress and grooming guidelines.**

### **Specific Guidelines/Restrictions for Student Dress and Grooming Guidelines**

- Students should wear garments, shoes, jewelry, accessories and hairstyles that are appropriate and modest in length and coverage;
- Reflect a positive image of the school and contribute to a distraction-free learning environment; and
- Lead teachers and/or staff to reasonably believe that the issue does not interfere with, disturb, or distract from the classroom and/or learning environment.

Students are not to wear clothing that is tight, loose, sagging, cut, torn, baggy, revealing, spaghetti-strap, backless, low cut or short.

**Pants** – must be worn at the waist or upper hip and must not reveal underclothing

**Shorts and Skirts** - must be fitted at the waist or upper hip, must not reveal underclothing, and must be mid-thigh in length or longer

**Tops, Shirts and Blouses** – must not reveal underclothing, midsection, torso, back, chest, breasts or cleavage

**Dresses** – must not reveal underclothing, midsection, torso, back, chest, breasts, or cleavage and must be mid-thigh in length or longer

**Shoes** – must not detract from or interfere with the learning environment or present a safety or health hazard. Tennis shoes or closed-toe shoes are preferred. House shoes/house slippers of any kind are not allowed.

**Head Coverings** – no type of head covering is to be worn with the exception of (1) a cap or hat that is part of a uniform worn at a school activity or (2) for religious or medical purposes.

**Underclothing** – must wear appropriate underclothing

**Pajamas/loungewear** – **any and all pajamas/loungewear** are prohibited.

**Jewelry/Piercings** – noisy, distracting and excessive jewelry or accessories are prohibited (including wallet chains). Jewelry/Piercings must not detract from or interfere with the learning environment or present a safety or health hazard.

**Tattoos** - permanent or temporary, must be covered at all times.

**Hair/Make-up** – Hair must be well groomed, neat and clean at all times; hair style/color and makeup must not detract from or interfere with the learning and school environment.

**Backpacks** – must not detract from or interfere with the learning environment or present a safety or health hazard

Students participating in school-related activities, such as extracurricular or UIL activities or other special functions, may have a different dress or grooming code required by the sponsor, coach, or administration.

### **Interpretative Authority**

The example and guidelines listed above may not cover every possible instance of appropriate or inappropriate grooming or appearance. The interpretative authority as to what dress or grooming is inappropriate, disruptive, a hindrance to best learning situations, or a detriment to best discipline shall be vested in the principal, the assistant or grade level principal, or any other administrative authority in the school system. Non-compliance of the dress code/grooming standards will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

## ***ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES***

### **Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones**

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess personal mobile telephones; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. A student must have approval to possess other telecommunications devices such as netbooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable computers.

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

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See **Searches** and policy FNF.]

If a student uses a telecommunications device without authorization during the school day, the device may be confiscated. The principal will determine whether to return the device to the student at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the item(s).

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*. The school may charge the owner for the release of certain telecommunications devices. [See policy FNCE] Such administrative fees will include the following:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense – Warning + parent notification
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense - \$5.00 administrative fee
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense - \$10.00 administrative fee
- 4<sup>th</sup> + offense – \$15.00 administrative fee



Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student or student's parents will be disposed of after 30 days. The district is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen telecommunications devices. [See policy FNCE.]

### **Possession and Use of Other 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 by the campus Principal. 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. [See **Searches** and policy FNF.]

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*. The district is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic device.

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

In some cases, students may find it beneficial or might be encouraged to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must obtain prior approval before using personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional use. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook). When students are not using the devices for approved instructional purposes, all devices must be turned off during the instructional day. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

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

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in the use of district-owned technology resources for instructional purposes; specific resources may be issued individually to 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, bullying, 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 digital citizenship and Internet safety information that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology at <http://bit.ly/cisddigitalcitizenship>

Using any device or technology to record the voice of another person or to video record another person in any way that disrupts the educational environment, invades the privacy of others, or without the prior consent of the individual being recorded is prohibited.

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.

## ***END-OF-COURSE (EOC) ASSESSMENTS***

[See **Graduation and Standardized Testing**]

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

### **Extracurricular Activities**

The district believes that extracurricular activities afford students opportunities to develop leadership, interpersonal, and citizenship skills. A variety of extracurricular programs exists in the forms of clubs, teams, and performing groups; participation, however, is a privilege, not a right.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

1. Being a member of a Comal ISD extra-curricular organization is an honor and a responsibility. Many people will look up to members because of their positions. Members will be recognized as an extra-curricular member in and out of school, by other students and the community.
2. Members must follow all of the extra-curricular expectations and standards.
3. Members must work to build an image of dedicated, hard-working, honest young adults who function as a team. Members will strive to improve themselves and others through positive interaction and accountability.
4. Extra-curricular members must display consideration, cooperation, and dedication to maintain the integrity of the program.
5. Members will be held to high behavioral standards. The program requires that members consider their position as an extra-curricular representative in their actions, both in and out of school, and be prepared to be held accountable by the organization for actions and behavior that may not necessarily take place at school or a school related activity to include social media.
6. Members must adhere to all school and district policies and code of conduct.

*Eligibility for initial and continuing participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association overseeing inter-district competition. If a student is involved in an academic, athletic, or music activity governed by UIL, the student and parent are expected to know and follow all rules of the UIL organization. [See <http://www.uil texas.org> for additional information.]*

The following requirements apply to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives, at the end of any grading period (after the first six weeks of the school year) a grade below 70 in any academic class (other than two identified advanced classes per semester at high school) may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks. (See list of courses below).
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to 10 absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum of 5 absences for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of 2 absences for state competition. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.
- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.
- Any student assigned to DAEP or ISS for disciplinary reasons may not participate in nor attend extracurricular activities in accordance with the Extracurricular Student Activities Code of Conduct. [See **Appendix C**]
- A student who misses class because of participation in an activity sponsored by a non-approved organization will receive an unexcused absence.

Courses:

- AP Art History
- AP Art Studio - Drawing
- AP Art Studio - Three Dimensional
- AP Art Studio - Two Dimensional
- AP Biology
- AP Calculus AB
- AP Calculus BC
- AP Chemistry
- AP Computer Science Principles
- AP Economics
- AP English 3 (Language)
- AP English 4 (Literature)
- AP Environmental Science
- AP European History
- AP French 4

- AP German 4
- AP Human Geography
- AP Music Theory
- AP Physics 1
- AP Physics 2
- AP Physics C
- AP Psychology
- AP Research
- AP Seminar
- AP Spanish 4 (Language)
- AP Spanish 5 (Literature)
- AP Statistics
- AP US Government
- AP US History
- AP World History

### **Activities Limitation**

Students who are eligible to participate in extracurricular activities will participate in not more than one contest or performance per activity during the period from the beginning of classes on Monday through the end of classes on Friday.

Tournament, post season competition and contests postponed by weather (varsity level only) or public disasters, which are sanctioned by the UIL or by other organizations approved by the Board of Trustees, shall not be subject to the one-contest-per-week limitation.

### **Exception to Extracurricular Eligibility Requirements**

A student who is ineligible for participation in extracurricular activities may participate in a public performance if the performance is required to demonstrate mastery of a particular course. The performance must be held on campus, (unless adequate facilities do not exist on campus) not be competitive, not be subject to an admission charge, and not be held in conjunction with any other extracurricular activity,

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—for offenses identified as “General Conduct Violations” in the *Student Code of Conduct*. (**Appendix B**) If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by *The Student Code of Conduct* or by local policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization’s standards of behavior and/or the *Extracurricular Student Activities Code of Conduct*. (**Appendix C**) [For further information, see policies at FM and FO. For student-organized, student-led groups, see **Meetings of Non-curriculum-Related Groups**.]

### **Clubs and Organizations**

Each school organizes clubs considered beneficial to the students and the educational program. All new clubs may be created by filing a petition with the building principal. A faculty member

must sponsor the club and the principal must approve the organization. Non-school groups must receive permission from the principal to publicize non-school club activities. These clubs do not award Comal ISD letter jackets for participation.

### **Letter Jacket Requirements**

All Varsity members of a team, if such designation is available, will be eligible for purchase of a letter jacket. Other ways to earn a letter jacket and be able to purchase include:

- Winning a UIL District Title as part of a team or as an individual.

### ***FEES***

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

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

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

### ***FIELD TRIPS***

Field trips are intended to enhance or supplement the schools' instructional program. The school district requires parent permission and emergency information forms to be signed and returned before students are permitted to leave the campus. [See **Transportation**]

### ***FUNDRAISING***

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. All fund raising projects shall be subject to prior approval of the principal. [For further information, see policies at FJ, GE and the Activity Funds Manual.]

### ***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 1000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

### ***GRADE CLASSIFICATION***

Please refer to the High School Course Guide (located on the district's website at [www.comalisd.org](http://www.comalisd.org) for Grade Classification guidelines.

### ***GRADING GUIDELINES***

For information regarding the District's grading guidelines, please refer to the *Grading Guidelines* located on the district's curriculum and academics website.

### ***GRADUATION***

#### **Requirements for a Diploma**

To receive a high school diploma from the district, a student must successfully:

- Complete the required number of credits;
- Complete any locally required courses in addition to the courses mandated by the state; and
- pass the statewide end-of-course (EOC) exams, as outlined below

Beginning with students who entered grade 9 in the 2011–2012 school-year, students are required, with limited exceptions, to perform satisfactorily on the following EOC assessments: English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology and United States History. A student who has not achieved satisfactory performance on the EOC assessments to graduate will have opportunities to retake the assessments.

If a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an EOC assessment, the district will provide remediation to the student in the content area for which the performance standard was not met. [Also see **Standardized Testing**.]

## **Graduation Programs**

A student who is unable to participate in physical activity due to a disability or illness may be able to substitute a course in English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies for the required credit of physical education. This determination will be made by the student's ARD committee, Section 504 committee, or other campus committee, as applicable.

Information regarding specific courses required or offered in each curriculum area, along with a description of advanced measures available to students in the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program can be found in the Course Guides located on the district's website at [www.comalisd.org](http://www.comalisd.org).

Please be aware that not all courses are offered at every secondary campus in the district. A student who wants to take a course not offered at his or her regular campus should contact the counselor about a transfer or other alternatives. If the parents of at least 22 students request a transfer for those students to take a course in the required curriculum other than fine arts or career and technology, the district will offer the course for the following year either by teleconference or at the school from which the transfers were requested.

Students entering high school in 2014 and beyond will graduate under the new Foundation High School Program. These students are required to declare an endorsement prior to entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Students are also eligible for a distinguished level of achievement by successfully completing the curriculum requirements for the Foundation High School Program and the curriculum requirements for at least one endorsement, including four credits in science and four credits in mathematics to include Algebra II. Students can also earn performance acknowledgements on their diploma and transcript for outstanding performance, which are outlined in the high school course guides.

For more information regarding graduation requirements, please refer to the district website, and/or contact the appropriate campus counselor.

## **Certificates of Coursework Completion**

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

## **Students with Disabilities**

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

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

Please also be aware that if an ARD committee places a student with a disability on a modified curriculum in a subject area, the student will be automatically placed in the Minimum Program, in accordance with state rules.

If a student receiving special education services is scheduled to graduate under the Minimum Program or in accordance with the provisions of his or her IEP, the student's ARD committee will determine whether the general EOC assessment is an accurate measure of the student's achievement and progress and, if so, whether successful performance is required for graduation, or whether an alternative assessment is more appropriate. STAAR Alternate is the only alternative assessment currently allowed by the state. [See **Standardized Testing.**]

### **Graduation Exercises**

Students shall meet all state and local graduation requirements, including all applicable exit-level testing to be eligible to participate in commencement activities and ceremonies.

Students who are eligible to graduate but are assigned to a disciplinary alternative education program at the end of the school year will not be allowed to participate in commencement activities.

### **Graduation Expenses**

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

### **Graduation Speakers**

Certain graduating students will be given an opportunity to have speaking roles at graduation ceremonies.

A student must meet local eligibility criteria, which may include requirements related to student conduct, to have a speaking role. Students eligible for speaking roles will be notified by the principal and given an opportunity to volunteer.

[For student speakers at other school events, see **Student Speakers.**]

[See FNA (LOCAL) and the *Student Code of Conduct.*]

### **State/Local Scholarships and Grants**

- Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the Foundation High School Program, Recommended High School Program or Distinguished Achievement Program (Advanced) may be eligible under the T.E.X.A.S. Grant Program for tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions. [For further information, see the principal or counselor and policy EJ (LEGAL).]
- Local scholarships, funded by community groups, are awarded each year. To become eligible for each scholarship, a student must complete the proper application form and file it in the counselor's office by the indicated deadline. Students should listen to announcements, check the appropriate bulletin boards, view the campus, and visit their counselor for scholarship information.
- Contact the counselor for information about other scholarships and grants available to students.



## ***HARASSMENT***

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

## ***HAZING***

Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off campus directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated to, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include other students.

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. [Also see **Bullying** and policies FFI and FNCC.]

## ***HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS***

### **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 websites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>.

\* Please note that, although the state literature required to be distributed by school districts has not yet been revised, entering college students must now show, with limited exception, evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination prior to 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.

[Also refer to **Immunizations**.]

## **Severe Food or Environmental Allergies**

The district requests to be notified when a student has been diagnosed with a severe food or environmental allergy, especially those allergies that could result in dangerous or possibly life-threatening reactions either by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact. It is important to disclose the allergen 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 severe allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis.

Comal ISD is compliant with Texas SB 66 by notifying parents that emergency epinephrine auto-injectors are available on each campus for anaphylactic reactions in students previously undiagnosed with severe life-threatening allergies. Staff members trained in the recognition of

severe allergic reactions and administration of epinephrine are available during normal school hours. Students with known diagnosed severe allergies should continue to provide a written plan of care and emergency medications as prescribed by their physician.

Food being brought onto campuses must comply with the guidelines below:

- Non-food items are highly encouraged, please see the following list for ideas: Stickers, Pencils, Mini Notepads, Colorful Erasers, Bookmarks, Bubbles, Bouncy Balls, and Party Favors. You can also find a suggested snack list [here](#).
- Guardians must provide at least 24-hour notice to the teacher and office by sending a note with the student or calling the school if they are bringing food for holiday celebrations. Prior to bringing snacks to the class, please inform the teacher and admin if your snacks contain the following: Peanuts, Tree Nuts, Milk, Eggs, Wheat, Soy, Shellfish, or Fish. This will allow proper time to notify parents of students with food allergies. Some campuses may exclude nuts or other allergens based on student allergies.
- Per Health Department regulations, any food items MUST be store bought with labels that provide an allergen statement.
- In an effort to make sure students with food allergies are inclusive in birthday celebrations, the 24-hour notice will be strictly enforced. If no prior notice is given, holiday treats will not be allowed until the following day.
- Celebration treats will be distributed in the last 30 minutes of the day.

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

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

Students in middle or junior high school shall engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters OR at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within a two-week period for at least four semesters.

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

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

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council held four meetings. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available under the Community Tab on the Comal ISD website. [See also policies at BDF and EHAA.]

The goal of the SHAC is to collaborate with parents, staff, students, and community advocates to improve learning and health through district policy, process, and practice. Duties include recommendations to the board of trustees and school district administration pertaining to all 10 areas of coordinated school health: Health Education, Community Involvement, Physical Education & Physical Activity, Nutrition Environment & Services, Health Services, Counseling, Psychological & Social Services, Social & Emotional Climate, Physical Environment, Employee Wellness, Family Engagement, and Community Involvement. [See **District Wellness Policy and Plan** at FFA Local and FFA Regulation.] [See also **Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction**.]

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

### **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 the principal to obtain the results of his or her child’s physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

### **Vending Machines**

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

### **Tobacco Prohibited**

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

### **Asbestos Management Plan**

All Comal ISD owned buildings have been tested and material samples have been analyzed by an independent laboratory. All of the known asbestos within our buildings has either been removed or is being managed according to Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1986. Comal ISD Maintains an Asbestos Management Plan which is on file at the Facilities Maintenance office located at 1409 FM 1101, New Braunfels, TX. All interested parents, teachers, employees, or other persons are invited to review the plan during normal office hours. Anyone interested in reviewing this plan should contact the Comal ISD Facilities Maintenance Office.

### **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, 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 United States 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 further questions or who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child’s school assignment area may contact the district’s IPM coordinator. Information on the district’s application and use of pesticides is available upon request.

The District is not responsible for injuries incurred by a student touching or interacting with feral animals on campus. Parents should instruct their student not to touch or transport feral animals as they can transmit life threatening diseases. Every effort will be made to limit student access to feral animals on campus.

## ***HOMELESS STUDENTS***

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's liaison. Additional information is available from the Comal ISD website or by visiting the Texas Homeless Education Office (<http://www.utdanacenter.org/theo/>).

## ***HOMEWORK***

Homework is an effective tool in developing responsibility, study habits, and skills. It is an extension of the learning process and involves the home in the student's curriculum. It should be purposeful, related to classroom experiences, and be age and grade appropriate.

For more information regarding the district's homework guidelines, please refer to the ***Grading Guidelines*** published on the district's curriculum and academics website.

## ***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 <http://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/#exclusions>. The form must be notarized and submitted to the campus nurse prior to the first day of school. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are: diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella (German measles), mumps, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis (polio), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, 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 the Department of State Health Services. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

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

Students will be screened for exposure to Tuberculosis per Comal County Health Department recommendations.

As noted above at **Bacterial Meningitis**, entering college students must now, with limited exception, furnish evidence of having received a bacterial meningitis vaccination prior to 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.

## ***KINDERGARTEN ACCELERATION GUIDELINES***

Generally, children are best placed at a grade level with students of their own age. However, some students of kindergarten age may already have mastered the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

(TEKS) for kindergarten and, for this reason, are ready to go on to first grade. Acceleration by Examination for kindergarten is to allow students to advance to first grade who are not yet six years of age but are academically ready to do so. Typically, these are students who have been enrolled in a private kindergarten (accredited or non-accredited) or a home school arrangement. Kindergarten acceleration opportunities will be offered only once per year. Comal ISD does not accept another district's kindergarten acceleration testing. A student who enrolls in Comal ISD must meet Comal ISD standards if deadlines have not passed.

A student in kindergarten may be accelerated to first grade if he or she meets **ALL** of the following requirements in this order:

1. The student is five (5) years of age on September 1 of the school year in which tested;
2. The student is six years old on or before December 31 of the school year in which tested;
3. The student is enrolled in kindergarten in the District;
4. The student's parent or guardian initiates the request in writing within the first two weeks of school;
5. The parent/guardian timely files the request with the campus principal and attends a conference to discuss the request;
6. The student scores at or above the kindergarten end-of-year expectations on the District's early reading assessment, which is administered by the kindergarten teacher; and
7. The student scores at least 80 on each of the following kindergarten content area assessments (language arts, mathematics, science and social studies) through Credit by Exam. Comal ISD will purchase and administer the exams to the student.

The principal will make the recommendation for acceleration and the decision made will be final.

## ***LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES***

### **Questioning of Students**

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

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

### **Students Taken Into Custody**

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

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.

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

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

The principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raise 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 regard to a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

[For further information, see policies FL (LEGAL) and GRA (LEGAL).]

### ***LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS***

A student with limited English proficiency (LEP), also referred to as an English **Learner (EL)**, 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, made up of required campus personnel and at least one parent representative. The student's parent must consent in writing to any services recommended by the LPAC for an EL.

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 through these assessment results, the LPAC will convene to create a plan for individualized linguistic and instructional accommodations as well as any additional special programs the student would benefit from, including enrichment programs. Students are not to be excluded from participation in any

program based only on limited English proficiency. Testing will be conducted throughout the school-year to inform the LPAC of student progress and instructional needs. Additionally, ELs are evaluated through the STAAR, TELPAS, oral language proficiency testing, and norm-referenced testing for evaluation by the LPAC to determine if a student has met state-mandated reclassification criteria at the end of each school-year. Once a student has been reclassified from an EL program, the student is monitored by the LPAC for the two years following reclassification from the program to ensure academic success without the support of EL services.

Prior to the administration of state-mandated assessments each year, the LPAC will convene to determine in which language and version each STAAR assessment will be administered to each student participating in an EL program. The LPAC will also determine each ELL's eligibility and need for certain allowable designated supports or accommodations for state-mandated assessments. The Spanish version of STAAR in grades 3-5 may be administered to any student participating in an EL program. Language of testing is determined by the LPAC and includes both ELs and non-ELs participating in the district's dual language program. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC 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 identify EL students, including those whose parents have denied services as mentioned in Standardized Testing.

If a student has been identified by the LPAC as an EL based on limited proficiencies in English and the student also receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student's ARD committee in conjunction with the LPAC will work collaboratively to make decisions based on the needs of the student.

## ***MAKE-UP WORK***

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

For information regarding make-up work, please refer to the District's *Grading Guidelines* published on the district's curriculum and academics website.

### **DAEP Makeup Work**

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

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

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***

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 container, properly labeled by a pharmacy, provided by the parent, along with a written request to administer the medication from the treating physician and parent for the prescribed length of time.
- 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, upon a parent's written request, provided by the parent, when properly labeled and in the original container [see FFAC (LEGAL)] for a period of one school year.
- 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.

**Please refer to the Comal ISD website and/or the campus nurse to obtain the required district form to administer any of the above medications.**

In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student 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.
- As allowed by Texas SB 66 and for administration of emergency epinephrine for life threatening allergic reactions.

Students may not possess or carry medications while on school grounds, school sponsored trips, or buses unless the following circumstances apply. Parents/guardians must transport medication to the school.

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

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

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

## **Psychotropic Drugs**

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

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

## ***NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT***

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Comal ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability 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 gender:  
Marie Kuehler - 830-221-2635  
Executive Director for Human Resources and Customer Service  
1404 IH 35 North  
New Braunfels, Texas 78130
- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability:  
Jennifer Johnson - 830-221-2179  
Director for Dyslexia and 504 Services  
1404 IH 35 North  
New Braunfels, Texas 78130
- All other concerns regarding discrimination:  
Andrew Kim – 830-221-2064  
Superintendent  
1404 IH 35 North  
New Braunfels, Texas 78130

## ***NONTRADITIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS***

Students at all grade levels who have been identified as being at risk of dropping out of school, who are not performing at grade level, or who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-administered assessment instrument, shall be provided accelerated and/or compensatory educational services based on needs assessments. The principal shall ensure that each identified student is receiving services. [See **Requirements for a Diploma.**]

## ***PERSONAL MESSAGES/DELIVERIES***

In order to keep classroom interruptions to a minimum, the office personnel will not deliver personal messages or miscellaneous items, including food, to students during class time except in case of an emergency. Parents are encouraged to communicate any instructions to their children before they arrive at school.

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

The Texas Health and Safety Code requires that all children enrolled in any public school in Texas, must be screened or have a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems, spinal deformities, and Acanthosis Nigricans an indicator for high insulin levels. Students are screened at specific grade levels determined by the state. Parents of students identified through any screening program as needing a referral or further examination shall be advised through a referral letter or phone call.

A student desiring to participate in the UIL athletic program shall submit a statement from a health care provider authorized under UIL rules indicating that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate in the athletic program. This examination is required in the first year of middle school competition and the first and third years of high school competition.

In other years, the student shall complete a medical appraisal form. A student may be required to have a physical examination based on answers to the appraisal form.

Parents of students identified through any screening programs as needing treatment or further examination shall be advised of the need and referred to appropriate health agencies.

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

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

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, 2001. [See policy EC (LEGAL) for more information.]

## ***PRAYER***

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not

encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

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

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, 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. Expectations and standards for promotion shall be established for each grade level, content area, and course and shall be coordinated with compensatory/accelerated services. [See District Policy EHBC].

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

- 5th grade students must pass the STAAR math and reading test to be promoted to 6th grade.
- 8th grade students must pass the STAAR math and reading test to be promoted to 9th grade.
- Students have three opportunities to pass the STAAR math and reading test.
- If a student does not pass the math and/or reading test, the school must provide the student with accelerated instruction after each testing opportunity, and the student must participate in that accelerated instruction.

A student in grade 5 or 8 will have two additional opportunities to take a failed STAAR 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, and other required staff, will determine the additional accelerated 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 accelerated instruction before beginning the next grade level. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an Accelerated Instruction Plan (AIP) will be designed for the student to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policies at EIE.]

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

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

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

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

Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

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

## ***REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS***

### **Progress Reports**

The purpose of the progress report is to inform students, parents/guardians, and campus administrators regarding progress in a subject, in conduct, or in both. The progress report reflects both satisfactory and unsatisfactory student progress.

- All elementary students in grades 2-5 will receive a progress report at the mid-point of the nine-week period. Progress reports will be accessed electronically.
- All secondary students will receive a progress report at the 3<sup>rd</sup> week point of the nine-week period. Progress reports will be accessed electronically.
- It is strongly suggested that parents be contacted if the student is in danger of failing at the progress reporting period or if there is a significant drop in grades.
- If a student's grade falls below 70 after the mid-point of a grading period, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian by phone or in writing.

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 how to schedule a conference.]

### **Report Cards**

The report card is a communication tool for parents/guardians and students. Report cards provide information regarding academic progress as well as attendance information.

- Report cards are computer generated for grades Pre-K – 12th.
- Report cards are issued once at the end of each nine-week grading period.
- Report cards for students in the Dual Language Program will have a content area component, a component for first language acquisition, and a component for second language acquisition.
- Report cards for students in the Spanish Immersion Program will have a content area component, a component for first language acquisition, and a component for second language acquisition.
- Report cards for grades 2-12 are accessed electronically.
- Pre-K, Kindergarten and First Grade report grades are sent home with students each nine weeks. Student delivered report cards require a parent/guardian signature.

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the superintendent 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**.]

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).

## ***RETALIATION***

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

## ***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 should:

- 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, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

## **Accident Insurance**

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

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

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

### **Fire Drill Bells**

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

### **Tornado Drill Bells**

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

## **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 because of severe weather or another emergency.

In times of a weather or other type of emergency impacting district operations, including delayed starts and school closures, the district will contact parents and staff via multiple sources. Local media will also be contacted.

On mornings when possible hazardous conditions exist, school officials will check the roads and make a decision by 5:30 a.m. earlier notices will be given the previous day or evening, whenever possible.

SchoolMessenger (phone/email) - To receive important messages from your campus and the District by phone and email, it is important that your child's campus has accurate and current information on file so that we can contact you as needed. If we do not have valid contact information on file, you could be missing important notifications.

SMS Text Messaging - You can elect to receive urgent messages, such as school closures and delays, via text message. To "opt in," text the word YES to 68453. You will receive the following reply message: You are registered to receive approx 3 msgs/mo. Txt STOP to quit, HELP for help. Repeat the opt-in process for any wireless numbers that you wish to include. Please ensure that Comal ISD has your wireless number(s) in our student information database.

Comal ISD Mobile App - Receive important notifications via the district's mobile app (Apple) (Android), as well as school calendars and the latest news. You can also use the mobile app to access your child's grade through TxConnect.

Social Media - Connect with Comal ISD on our social media pages including Facebook and Twitter.

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

[See **Standardized Testing.**]

## ***SCHOOL FACILITIES***

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

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

Each campus will designate areas to be open to students 30 minutes prior to the start of school. Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing the activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

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

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

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

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

### **Use of Hallways during Class Time**

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

### **Cafeteria Services**

The district participates in the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily. Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. See your campus principal, school website, or the district's Child Nutrition department, 1404 IH 35 North, New Braunfels, TX, 78130 to apply.

Students remain on the school campus during their lunch period, and are expected to behave in an appropriate manner in the cafeteria. Students are asked to cooperate in keeping the dining area clean by disposing of their trash in the proper receptacles. No food or drink is to be carried into the classroom area.

General Information for all Meal Accounts:

The student's ID number also acts as the school meal account number.

- Students should not give away their student ID or use another student's number.
- Students may not use their meal account to buy meals for other students.
- Problems with meal accounts should be reported immediately to the Child Nutrition Cafeteria Manager.
- Change is made at the cash register only if the student is making a food purchase.
- Bills under \$20 are preferred.
- Monthly menus are available on the Child Nutrition webpage or using the Nutrislice APP that can be downloaded from *Google Play* or *iTunes*.

The district follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day. Students may buy breakfast and lunch daily and may prepay as many days as they like. Prepayment of checks or cash will be accepted in the cafeteria payment box. Checks may be given for prepayment, but will not be accepted on the serving line. Checks should be payable to Comal ISD Child Nutrition. The total amount of the check will be deposited into the student's meal account. The student's full name and personal meal number (PIN) should be written on the check.

In the event your bank returns a check written to any Comal ISD campus or department unpaid, Comal ISD or its agent will redeposit your check electronically. Additionally, you understand and agree that the district may collect a returned check fee of \$25.00. When you provide a check as payment, you authorize the district either to use information from your check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction. When the district uses information from your check to make an electronic fund transfer, funds may be withdrawn from your account as soon as the same day we receive your payment. You will not receive your check back from your financial institution. The use of a check for payment is your acknowledgement and acceptance of this policy and its terms.



Payment by credit/debit card or by e-check will be accepted. Comal ISD uses **Lunch Money Now** for this service. After completing your transaction, you will receive an e-mail confirmation that your payment has been received. (See **Child Nutrition link** on the school website)

### **Elementary/Middle Schools:**

Money deposited to a student's meal account may be used to purchase meals. Money in students' accounts may not be used for a la carte purchases without written permission from the parent or guardian. If parents have not provided written permission, students may bring additional money to purchase a la carte items. Students should have money deposited in their meal account for their use.

A la carte items may not be charged.

### **High Schools:**

Money deposited to a student's meal account may be used to purchase meals and a la carte purchases. Students should have money deposited in their meal account for their use. In the event a student forgets their money, the student will not be allowed to charge, but will be given a sandwich and milk at no charge.

When a student withdraws or graduates from the District, the parent or guardian should request a refund and close the student's meal account. The Refund Request form is located on the Child Nutrition webpage. Money left in the student's meal account becomes the property of the Child Nutrition department, if not claimed within six months of when the student withdraws or graduates from the District.

### **Library**

The library is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure. Information regarding library use and check out/check in procedures may be obtained from the campus principal or librarian.

### **Meetings of Non-curriculum-Related Groups**

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

### **SEARCHES**

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

### **Students' Desks and Lockers**

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

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

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

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

### **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 in order 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) for more information.]

### **Vehicles on Campus**

Students who park cars, or other motorized vehicles on school property must apply for a parking permit. Parking permits are granted on a space available basis, but priority is given to seniors and students with special circumstances, as determined by the building or assistant principal. The principal's decision is final. Students must have a valid Texas operator's license and proof of automobile insurance with student's name listed on the policy.

A fee of \$20.00 is charged for the parking permit. Other applicable fees include ticket violations at \$5.00 each, and tire boot lock removal at \$30.00.

Students may not go to the parking lot during school hours without permission from the principal or principal's designee. Speed limit is 10 M.P.H. Racing or "dragging" is prohibited on school property. Loitering is not allowed in the parking area. Disciplinary action may be taken. Parking permits may be revoked for disciplinary reasons at the discretion of the principal. Possession of a permit does not necessarily guarantee holder a parking space in the student parking lot.

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

### **Trained Dogs**

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

### ***SPECIAL PROGRAMS***

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, limited English proficiency students, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about

eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the school principal or counselor.

## ***STANDARDIZED TESTING***

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

Many colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. Students are encouraged to talk to with their school counselor to determine the appropriate exam to take and the time frame best suited for the student to test. ACT and SAT testing timeframes will vary for each student. Comal ISD offers SAT school day, free of charge, to all Junior level students.

### **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 will take state-mandated assessments, such as the STAAR, in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8
- Reading, annually in grades 3–8
- Writing, including revising and editing, 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, unless the student is enrolled in a reading or math course intended for students above the student’s current grade level, in order for the student to be promoted to the next grade level. [Also see **Promotion and Retention** additional information.]

STAAR Alternate 2, for students receiving special education services, will be available for eligible students, as determined by the student’s ARD committee.

A Spanish version of STAAR is also available to students in grades 3-5 who participate in the district’s dual language program. Language of testing decisions are made by the LPAC.

### **End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments for Students Grades 9–12**

Beginning with ninth graders in the 2011–2012 school year and, as modified by House Bill 5, end-of-course (EOC) assessments are administered for the following courses:

- Algebra I
- English I and English II
- Biology
- United States History

Satisfactory performance on the applicable assessments will be required for graduation

There are three testing windows during the year in which a student may take an EOC assessment, which will occur during the fall, spring, and summer months. If a student does not meet satisfactory performance, the student will have additional opportunities to retake the assessment.

STAAR Alternate 2, for students receiving special education services, will be available for eligible students, as determined by the student's ARD committee. These particular EOC assessments may have different testing windows than the general assessments, and the ARD committee will determine whether successful performance on the assessments will be required for graduation.

### **TSI (Texas Success Initiative) Assessment**

Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test, called the Texas Success Initiative (TSI). The purpose of the TSI assessments to assess the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering freshmen-level students should have if they are to perform effectively in undergraduate certificate or degree programs in Texas public colleges and universities. This assessment may be required before a student enrolls in a dual-credit course offered through the district as well. Beginning in fall 2013, all Texas public colleges and universities will begin administering a new TSI assessment, which will assist as one of several factors in determining whether the student is considered ready to enroll in college-level courses or whether the student needs to enroll in what is termed developmental education courses prior to enrollment in college courses.

### ***STEROIDS***

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

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

Students participating in UIL athletic competition may be subject to random steroid testing. More information on the UIL testing program may be found on the UIL website at <http://www.uil texas.org/health/steroid-information>.

### ***STUDENTS IN PROTECTIVE CUSTODY OF THE STATE***

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

A student who is placed in the custody of the state and who is moved outside of the district's attendance boundaries is entitled to continue in enrollment at the school he or she was attending prior to the placement and until the students reaches the highest-grade level at the particular school. In addition, if a student in grade 11 or 12 is transferred to another district and does not meet the graduation requirements of the transferring 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.

### ***STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARDS (Secondary Campuses Only)***

Students are required to visibly display their Comal ISD issued identification (ID) card on the front of their person while on campus during school hours and while riding the bus. A student must have their ID card worn and displayed at all times.

Students will receive one (1) ID card, lanyard, and ID holder at no expense to the student/parent. The cost for replacement/duplicate ID cards is \$5.00. Daily temporary ID's may be sold for \$1.00. Schools may also sell lanyards for a fee of \$3.00.

### **Comal ISD Secondary Schools**

Consequences for Failure Wear and Display Student Identification (ID) Card- *Consequences are Per Semester.*

Violations 1-10: Warning and Temporary ID issued

Subsequent Violations: Campus based detention to include: After School Detention, Saturday School or Lunch Detention (*Reminder: students who do not attend assigned detention may be assigned to In School Suspension*)

*To be eligible for exam exemptions, students must not exceed ten daily temporary ID's for the school year to earn exam exemptions.*

### ***STUDENT SPEAKERS***

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce the following school events:

1. Football games
2. Opening announcements and greetings for the school day; and
3. Any other school-related event designated by the campus principal with approval of the Superintendent.

If a student meets the eligibility criteria and wishes to introduce one of the school events listed above, the student should submit his or her name in accordance with policy FNA (LOCAL).

[See policy FNA (LOCAL) regarding other speaking opportunities and **Graduation** for information related to student speech at graduation ceremonies.]

### ***SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION***

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 abuse intervention services on its website:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhsa-child-adolescent-services>

### ***SUICIDE AWARENESS***

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 <http://www.texassuicideprevention.org> or contact the school counselor for more information related to suicide prevention services available in your area.

## ***TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, AND TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT***

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.

### **In-District Transfers**

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

### **Home Schooling/Non-Accredited Private School/Other Transfer Students**

A student coming to public school from home schooling, a non-accredited private school or a differently structured high school will need to demonstrate mastery of basic skills up to the grade level to which he/she is requesting credit. Mastery will be determined as follows:

For students in grades 9-12, mastery will be determined as follows:

- On any courses completed by home schooling or non-accredited private schooling, the student must take a credit by criterion-referenced exam test (UT or Texas Tech) for each course and score a 70 or better in order to be awarded credit. Credit by exam must be completed within one school year of enrollment. If a criterion-referenced test does not exist for the course, the student may be administered a standard departmental test made by teachers. The grade for the class credited will be the grade earned on the exam.
- Students enrolling in new courses during the first six weeks of a semester will be given a comprehensive teacher-made criterion referenced exam covering the essential elements of the course discussed during this time period. The test grade will be used as the six weeks grade. A time limit will be established by the teacher as to when the exam will be given.
- Students enrolling in new courses during the second six weeks of the semester will be given the opportunity to take the final exam at the end of the semester. The grade on this exam will be used as the grade for the course.
- Students who transfer from schools with different scheduling arrangements will follow the above procedures in determining placement and credit. [See **School Safety Transfers and Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education** for other transfer options.]

## ***TRANSPORTATION***

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. An exception can be made by the coach/director or administration with the written request from the parent to release the student to the parent or to another adult designated by the parent.

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

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. Bus routes and stops will be designated annually, and any subsequent changes are posted at the school and on the district's website. For the safety of the operator of the vehicle and all passengers, students must board buses or other vehicles only at authorized stops, and drivers must unload passengers only at authorized stops. Further information may be obtained by calling the Comal ISD Transportation Department.

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

See the *Student Code of Conduct* for provisions regarding transportation to the disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP).

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

### **General School Bus Safety Rules:**

Student conduct that distracts the driver, endangers the health and safety of other students, or demonstrates a willful disregard for transportation rules will be reported for disciplinary action. Rules and standards of conduct on the school bus include but are not limited to the following:

1. Follow the driver's directions and instructions at all times.
2. Students must arrive at least five (5) minutes early at their bus stop.
3. Observe all usual classroom rules.
4. Fasten their seat belts, if seat belts are provided.
5. Students are to enter the bus in an orderly manner and sit in their assigned seat. The bus driver will assign seats to all students. Seat assignment is at the discretion of the bus driver and may change at any time.
6. Students are to remain seated, facing forward at all times.
7. All portions of a student's body are to remain inside the bus.
8. Students are to be silent during any railroad crossings. This ensures that the bus driver can listen for any possible approaching train.
9. All students with assigned school ID cards, must have them visible upon entry of the school bus.

10. The use of aerosol products, perfume, and cologne is prohibited.
11. Students may not have in their possession any weapon (**including toy look-alikes**):
12. Explosives, fireworks, knives, unsheathed sharp-pointed items, pea-shooters, water balloons, laser pointers or any other articles which might cause pain or injury to others.
13. Skateboards, scooters, bicycles are not permitted on the bus.
14. Bulky objects that cannot be held in the student's lap are not permitted on the bus:
15. School projects, band instruments, etc. No objects may block the aisle or emergency exits.
16. Animals/pets (i.e. lizards, frogs, insects, spiders, dogs, cats, rats, etc.) must be transported by parents. They are not permitted on the bus.
17. Helium filled and/or any other type of balloons are not permitted on the bus.
18. All electronic devices such as videogame consoles, MP3 players, cell phones, etc. must be used with headphones at all times. If they cause a distraction for the driver in any way they will be confiscated.
19. All valuables are the responsibility of the student. The Transportation Department takes no responsibility for breakage or loss.
20. No items are to be propelled or thrown out the window. (The student and parent/guardian shall be held responsible for any damages that result from such an act.)
21. Littering, throwing or propelling objects inside the bus is not permitted.
22. Wrestling, fighting, pushing, scuffling or horseplay is unsafe and not permitted.
23. Defacing or vandalizing (including but not limited to: cuts, scratches, marks) a school bus is not permitted. The parent/guardian will be held financially responsible for the cost of repairs and the student will not be permitted to ride the school bus until restitution is made.
24. Using profanity, vulgar language, obscene gestures, unnecessary conversation, loud noises, offensive gestures, and offensive materials, engaging in verbal abuse (such as name calling, racial or ethnic slurs or derogatory comments) is not permitted.
25. Students riding to school will not be permitted to exit the bus except at their school.
26. Students riding home in the afternoon may not exit the bus except at their designated stop.
27. Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the vehicle and before crossing in front of the vehicle follow any other rules established by the operator of the vehicle.
28. Students must ride the bus to which they are assigned. Students may not board another bus without written permission from the campus and/or the Transportation Department.
29. There are no on/off privileges. Once a student boards, they may not exit the bus except at their designated stop or school; except if a parent/guardian is at the bus and their identification is checked.
30. Secondary students participating in after-school activities must obtain a pass from the sponsor of the after-school activity, daily, to board the after-school shuttle bus.
31. No one is to stop or interfere with the movement of the bus.

**Prohibited Items on the School Bus (included but not limited to):**

1. Tobacco, tobacco products, e-cigarettes, matches, lighters, etc.
2. Light emitting devices (i.e. flashlights, lasers, etc.)
3. Animals or pets of any kind with the exception of a district documented service animal with prior approval.
4. Skateboards, scooters, bicycles, etc.
5. Glass containers
6. Alcoholic beverages, drugs, or chemicals
7. Weapons, explosive devices, or aerosol containers



8. Students may not transport medications on buses unless authorized and prearranged with the campus nurse and/or campus administration. Emergency epinephrine, certain seizure emergency medications, asthma rescue inhalers, and diabetic medications require physician authorization yearly to be self-carried by students. Please contact your campus nurse for more information.

9. Food or drink (except water in a bottle)\*

10. Chewing gum

\*Students are permitted to carry their lunches or school permitted snacks while on the bus, however, they must be sealed/closed and inside their closed backpack while on the bus.

**Consequences:** Transportation is a privilege. That privilege is contingent upon the student following the policies, rules and standards of conduct. Students being transported by Comal ISD school buses shall comply with the Comal ISD Student Code of Conduct. Any student who fails to comply with the established policies, rules and standards while on school transportation shall be subject to disciplinary action and may be denied transportation service. When denied transportation service the parent is responsible for arranging the student's transportation to and from school.

The following is a guideline, however, the severity of the behavior may cause deviation from this guideline and result in more stringent disciplinary action:

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Infractions Bus Conduct Report will be provided to the student for delivery to the student's guardian or sent electronically. A good faith effort will be made to reach the guardian by phone to discuss behavior in an attempt to correct the conduct.

3<sup>rd</sup> Infraction Bus Conduct Report will be provided to the student for delivery to the student's guardian or sent electronically. Student's Bus Privileges will be denied for three (3) school days. A good faith effort will be made to reach the guardian by phone to discuss behavior in an attempt to correct the conduct.

4<sup>th</sup> Infraction Bus Conduct Report will be provided to the student for delivery to the student's guardian or sent electronically. Student's Bus Privileges will be denied for five (5) school days. A good faith effort will be made to reach the guardian by phone to discuss behavior in an attempt to correct the conduct.

5<sup>th</sup> Infraction Bus Conduct Report will be provided to the student for delivery to the student's guardian or sent electronically. Student's Bus Privileges will be denied for ten (10) up to forty-five (45) school days. A good faith effort will be made to reach the guardian by phone to discuss behavior in an attempt to correct the conduct.

6<sup>th</sup> Infraction Bus Conduct Report will be provided to the student for delivery to the student's guardian or sent electronically. Student's Bus Privileges will be denied for ten (10) up to the remainder of the school year. If this occurs during the last month of the school year, the suspension may be extended to the end of the next school year's semester. A good faith effort will be made to reach the guardian by phone to discuss behavior in an attempt to correct the conduct.

Discipline shall be correlated to the seriousness of the offense, the student's age and grade level, the frequency of misbehavior, the student's attitude, the effect of the misconduct on the school environment, and statutory requirements.

Because of these factors, discipline for a particular offense (unless otherwise specified by law) may bring into consideration varying techniques and responses.

**Violations of the following rules may necessitate an immediate suspension of transportation privileges as well as campus disciplinary actions made in accordance with the student code of conduct:**

1. Using or possessing alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.
2. Deliberately disregarding the safety of the other passengers or the driver.
3. Destruction of property (i.e. vandalizing the bus)
4. Possessing firearms, knives, clubs, or other dangerous objects.
5. Engage in inappropriate verbal, physical, or sexual conduct.
6. Terroristic Verbal or physical threat of driver and/or other passenger(s).
7. Racial or ethnic slurs.
8. Fighting on the bus.
9. Activities relating to gangs, secret societies, or fraternities.

You have the right to request a conference regarding the decision taken towards your child's misconduct and the consequence applied. In order to schedule this conference, you must contact the Student Transportation Services Office within 24 hours of receipt of the Bus Conduct Report. The Comal ISD Student Code of Conduct contains additional information regarding the complaint and concerns process or reference Board Policy FNG (Local).

Disruption of Transportation: Parents/Legal Guardians/other adults are not permitted to board the school bus and discuss problems with students and/or bus drivers. Please call the Student Transportation Services Office with your concerns. Anyone boarding the bus without authorization, shouting obscenities, or threatening the bus driver or any student on the bus will be reported to local law enforcement.

School Administrators, Transportation Department and Emergency personnel may board the bus as needed.

The Disruption of Transportation (Education Code 37.126) is a class C misdemeanor. This can be issued to any adult or student for any type of disruption or delay of school bus transportation. Disruption or delay of school bus transportation may result in a fine up to \$500.00.

## ***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*.

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

### **General Visitors**

For the safety of our students and of those within the school, visitors must report to the main office and officially register through the visitor check in system and receive a badge prior to admittance to the school. Students may not go to the parking lot or outside the building to meet a visitor or parent. Visitors or parents who wish to deliver a lunch to a student must check into the front office. Persons with official business are permitted on the school campus. Non-students, such as friends from other schools, or siblings or relatives may not be on campus to visit during the school day. Pets or animals, other than certified assistance animals are not to be brought to school without prior approval.

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

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted. Unauthorized visitors may have charges of trespassing filed against them.

### **Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students**

On High School Career Day, the district invites representatives from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present information to interested students.

## ***WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL***

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

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

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

## 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.

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

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

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

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

**EOC assessments** are end-of-course tests, which are state-mandated, and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments will be required for graduation beginning with students in grade 9 during the 2011–2012 school year. These exams will be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and United States History.

**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 to 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.

**PGP stands for Personal Graduation Plan** which is required by state law for all students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

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

**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 issue.

**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, effective beginning with certain students for the 2011–2012 school year. STAAR can be administered in either paper or online format.

**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.

**State-mandated tests** 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, when applicable, 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 a 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 language learners make in learning the English language, and is administered for those who meet the participation requirements in kindergarten–grade 12.

**TxVSN** is the Texas Virtual School Network, which provides online courses for Texas students to supplement the instructional programs of public school districts. Courses are taught by qualified instructors, and courses are equivalent in rigor and scope to a course taught in a traditional classroom setting.

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

# APPENDIX A

## Comal Independent School District

### District Title 1 Parental/Family Involvement Guidelines

#### I. Definition

*Parental involvement means the participation of parents/families in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—*

*(A) that parents/family play an integral role in assisting their child’s learning;*

*(B) that parents/family are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education at school;*

*(C) that parents/family are full partners in their child’s education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child;*

#### II. Statement of Purpose

Comal Independent School District (CISD) is committed to the goal of providing a quality education for every child enrolled in its schools. Recognizing that parental/family involvement is the key to academic achievement, CISD seeks to involve parents/families in an effective partnership between home and school that will provide the best possible education for our students. Parents/families are invited and encouraged to participate in a variety of involvement activities including participation in the joint development of the District Improvement Plan and Parental/Family Engagement Guidelines.

#### III. Parent/Family Involvement in Developing the Guidelines Document

Comal ISD’s District Parent/Family Involvement Guidelines committee is comprised of parents/families, community members, administrators, and other staff members. This committee will meet annually to review and revise the District Title 1 Parent/Family Involvement Guidelines. The Guidelines will be made available at campuses participating in Title I and will be available in the Student and Parent Handbook which is posted online and can be requested in hard copy. An annual evaluation by the committee will involve identifying barriers to greater participation by parents/families (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). These findings will be used to design strategies for more effective parent/family involvement and to revise the parent/family involvement guidelines as necessary.

#### IV. Building School and Parent/Family Capacity for Strong Parental/Family Involvement

Parent/Family Involvement is vital to the academic success of our students. Building capacity for involvement equips parents/families to be effective advocates for their child and partners with educators. Comal ISD will support the following building capacity requirements to develop and maintain an optimum learning environment for all students:

- Communication between home and school is a valuable tool in providing a successful educational experience for our students. Information related to the school and parent/family programs, meetings, and other activities, will be sent to the parents/families of participating children in a language they can understand. Schools may use communication strategies such as personal contact, newsletters, notes sent home with the students and/or e-mail (and other forms of media such as School Messenger and Facebook) to invite parents/families to participate in the school's activities. Whenever possible, childcare and language interpreters will be provided with prior notice. In carrying out parental/family involvement communication, CISD shall provide full opportunities for the participation of parents/families of children with limited English proficiency, parents/families of children with special needs, and parents/families of migratory children. Computers are accessible for parent/family use on Title 1 campuses in order to stay more informed and to further support communication.
- The district will provide coordination, technical assistance and other supports necessary through the District Support Services and Campus Support Staff, the Family Engagement Associate, to aid in the planning and implementation of parent/family involvement activities.
- The district will provide information to facilitate the understanding of curriculum, instructional objectives, and methods used in the classroom, the State's academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, State and local academic assessments, how to monitor a child's progress, and how to work with educators to improve the achievement of their children. This may be offered by newsletters, conferences, annual meetings, the different media methods used by campuses, and/or presentations by the Family Engagement Associate and/or staff. Materials and training will be made available to help parents/families work with their children.
- The district will educate school personnel about involving parents/families and in the value and utility of parent/family contributions. Training will be offered on: reaching out to parents/families, communicating and working with parents/families as equal partners, implementing and coordinating parent/family programs, and building ties between parents/families and the school.
- Comal ISD will coordinate and integrate parental/family involvement strategies with programs such as Pre-K and conduct other programs such as family resource centers to better prepare students for school by providing coordination between district and school staff to provide appropriate topic presentations for parent/family education.
- In addition to the strategies mentioned above, parents/families will be informed of their campus Title 1 participation and invited to participate to support their child and campus. Parents/families are invited to participate in a jointly developed school/parent compact which outlines how parents/families, the entire school staff, and students all share responsibility for improved student achievement. This compact is distributed on the campus and is reviewed at the annual meeting. The campus Title 1 Parental/Family

Involvement Guidelines describes the means by which the school and parents/families will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve our local high standards. Family Resource Centers, facilitated by a Family Engagement Associate, are located at all elementary Title I campuses to provide a place for parents/families to effectively participate in the school and their child's education. Family Engagement Associates organize and facilitate presentations and learning events for parents and family members. Reasonable support for parental/family involvement activities will be provided as they are requested.

Comal ISD welcomes parents/families and community members to be part of the educational experience for the benefit of all our students. Working together to improve our schools will allow all students the opportunity to be successful learners. Comal ISD provides opportunities for parents/families to become partners with the school in promoting the education of their children both at home and at school; a positive link between home and school will create the most conducive learning condition for every child. Comal ISD is committed to providing excellent service to our students and families.



# APPENDIX C

## Comal Independent School District

### Extracurricular Student Activities Code of Conduct

Each particular extracurricular activity has a constitution, handbook, rule book, and/or regulation guide. These are communicated to the student and parent by the activity's coach/director, for any student in grades 6 through 12 participating in any Comal ISD extracurricular activity. Students shall comply with the Extracurricular Student Activities Code of Conduct. **Appendix C** contains the *minimum* requirements and guidelines for participation and extracurricular activities.

#### STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The District believes that extracurricular activities afford students opportunities to develop leadership, interpersonal, and citizenship skills. A variety of extracurricular programs exists in the form of clubs, teams, and performing groups. Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. Because students represent their school and the District in highly visible positions in elected offices and/or appointed positions in which they perform, participate, or compete, these students are viewed as role models. The demands and responsibilities require participants to commit time and effort while maintaining high standards of conduct.

#### DEFINITION OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

An extracurricular activity is an activity sponsored by the UIL, the Board, or an organization sanctioned by Board resolution. The activity is not necessarily directly related to instruction of the essential knowledge and skills, but may have an indirect relation to some areas of the curriculum.

Extracurricular activities include public performances (except as described below), contests, demonstrations, displays, and club activities. In addition, an activity is subject to the provisions for an extracurricular activity if any one of the following criteria applies:

1. The activity is competitive;
2. The activity is held in conjunction with another activity that is considered extracurricular;
3. The activity is held off-campus, except in a case in which adequate facilities do not exist on campus;
4. The general public is invited; or
5. An admission is charged.

**Exception.** A student ineligible to participate in an extracurricular activity, but who is enrolled in a state-approved course that requires demonstration of the mastery of the essential knowledge and skills in a public performance, may participate in the performance if:

1. The performance is one to which the general public is invited; and
1. The requirement for student participation in public is stated in the essential knowledge and skills of the course

*The commissioner of education is not authorized to approve extracurricular organizations outside of school sponsored or UIL sponsored groups. Local boards of trustees are responsible for the sanctioning and approval of outside organizations as "extracurricular organizations" for their individual districts.*

### **NOTICE OF DUE PROCESS**

Before a student is suspended or removed from participation in an extracurricular activity, and before any other consequence is imposed as provided in this policy, the alleged infraction of the rule will be documented and a reasonable investigation of the allegation shall occur. The Principal or designee shall then schedule a conference with the student and the student's parent to explain the reasons for which the action is being taken and to offer the student an opportunity to present their side.

### **INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY/EXTRACURRICULAR CODES OF CONDUCT AND HANDBOOKS**

In cooperation with the campus administration, activity coaches/directors are authorized to develop individual activity codes of conduct and handbooks to address minor infractions or offenses identified as "General Conduct Violations" in the CISD *Student Code of Conduct*. A student's participation in a particular extracurricular activity is conditioned upon the student's compliance with the requirements and standards of behavior set forth in the individual extracurricular activity code of conduct, the CISD *Student Code of Conduct (Appendix B)*, and *The Extracurricular Student Activities Code of Conduct (Appendix C)*. Activity coaches/directors may take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the activity, against a student who violates any required standard of conduct. The program sponsor in cooperation with the campus administration has the authority to develop the specific guidelines for membership within their individual extracurricular activity code of conduct. Final approval of the individual extracurricular activity code of conduct in each area will be given by the appropriate CISD Support Service Center Administrator or designee. Due to the vast differences among the various extracurricular groups, the individual program codes of conduct are developed for the purposes of defining the specific requirements within the organization.

### **STATEMENT OF ELIGIBILITY**

Participants who meet UIL and CISD eligibility requirements and are selected to represent a CISD school extracurricular program, agree by signature of parent and student, the understanding of the codes and agree to comply with the behavior guidelines as set forth in the CISD Student Code of Conduct, Extracurricular Student Activities Code of Conduct, and the individual extracurricular program codes of conduct.

### **TRYOUT PROCEDURE**

Tryout procedures and the calendar for the various extracurricular activities are determined by the individual activity directors in partnership with CISD guidelines. Upon completion of the tryout procedure for the extracurricular activity, the sponsor will notify all participants of their membership status. **The results of tryout procedures are final and cannot be appealed.**

### **DRESS AND GROOMING**

Students who participate in extracurricular activities shall comply with the District's policy on student dress and grooming and the coach/director's specific requirements for the activity.

## **EQUIPMENT**

Any District equipment issued to a student is the financial responsibility of the student and for the student's use while participating in a school-related activity/organization. Students must care for District-issued equipment as if it were their own. Equipment must be properly stored, in the proper location, and shall be kept clean and maintained.

Students who lose or damage District equipment will be required to pay for the cost of replacement.

All District equipment must be returned at the end of the season or school year, as directed by the coach/director. Exceptions would be for musical instruments loaned over the summer.

Individually owned equipment is the sole responsibility of the student; CISD will not be responsible for any loss or damage that occurs to student-owned equipment.

If uniforms are required for an activity/organization, the student shall be required to ensure that the uniform is worn only at appropriate times and is neat and clean for the practice, performance, competition, or game/tournament. A fee for the maintenance, dry cleaning, or laundering of the uniform may be collected.

## **TRAVEL**

Students who have the opportunity to travel in connection with the CISD extracurricular activity/organization are representatives of the District and must exhibit exemplary behavior at all times.

Students who dress or act inappropriately while traveling to or from a CISD activity may be suspended or removed from the activity or organization, depending upon the nature of the misconduct. When feasible, such action should be taken in consultation with the principal.

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation if provided by the school to and from the event. An exception can be made by the coach/director or administration with the written request from the parent to release the student to the parent or to another adult designated by the parent.

Students involved in travel shall:

- Be on time for all trips;
- Dress neatly and in compliance with the District dress code and grooming;
- Be on their best behavior in restaurants and hotels;
- Care for any equipment assigned to the student and return it to the proper storage location upon return to the school;
- Be on their best behavior while on the bus or other vehicle; and
- Promptly obey all instructions given by the coach/director or any adult chaperone.

## **GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT**

Students who participate in extracurricular activities shall comply with the following rules of conduct at all times.

Students who participate in extracurricular activities shall:

- Show respect for CISD officials and staff;
- Participate in every practice, competition, performance, game, tournament, and event required by the coach/director, unless the coach/director has granted an excused absence;
- Arrive promptly, properly attired, for every practice, competition, game, tournament, etc., unless the coach/director has granted an excused absence/tardy;
- Adhere to the grooming standards established by the individual activity sponsor's code of conduct.
- Demonstrate a sportsmanlike behavior;
- Demonstrate a positive attitude;
- Be polite to others.
- Exemplify honesty in all school work;
- Maintain good conduct in their classes.
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior while engaged in school-related travel.

Students who receive poor conduct reports in class may also be subject to suspension or dismissal from extracurricular activities.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY CONFLICTS**

#### **ACTIVITIES SPONSORED BY CISD**

In the case of a conflict between CISD sponsored student activities, extracurricular or otherwise, coaches/directors will work together to accommodate the student to participate in all activities to the extent possible. UIL and other CISD sponsored performances, games, or competitions will take precedence over clinics and/or practices. Students involved in multiple CISD sponsored activities shall not be penalized by a grade reduction or limitation on further participation based upon such a conflict.

#### **ACTIVITIES SPONSORED BY OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS**

In the case of a conflict between CISD-sponsored student activities and student activities sponsored by outside organizations, UIL and other CISD sponsored performances, games, competition, clinics and/or practices will take precedence over the activity sponsored by the outside organization. Absences or tardies to CISD extracurricular activities due to schedule conflicts with activities sponsored by outside organizations will be unexcused. Consequences for unexcused absences or tardies due to participation in outside organizations will be at the discretion of the CISD coach/director.

#### **EXTRACURRICULAR ABSENCES IN A SCHOOL YEAR**

For participation in an extracurricular activity sponsored or sanctioned by the District, UIL, or an organization sanctioned by the Board, the District shall make no distinction between absences for UIL activities and absences for other extracurricular activities approved by the Board. A student shall be allowed in a school year a maximum of ten extracurricular absences not related to post-District competition, a maximum of five absences for post-District competition prior to state, and a maximum of two absences for state competition. [FM (LOCAL)].

## **PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES ON DAY OF ABSENCE**

Unless extenuating circumstances exist, students are expected be in attendance for at least half of the school day in order to practice after school that day or participate in an extracurricular activity that day/night. A student absent from school for any portion of a school day shall provide a note that describes the reason for the absence. The note shall be signed by the student's parent or, if the student is 18 or older or is an emancipated minor, by the student.  
[FEB (LOCAL)]

Students who fail to appear for a scheduled event without a written excuse from the student's parent will be prohibited from participating in the next scheduled activity. Students' absences from extracurricular activities shall be excused for only those reasons set forth by the coach/director. Excessive unexcused absences may result in suspension or dismissal from the activity/organization. Such decisions shall be made in consultation with the campus principal and are subject to appeal through CISD Board Policy FNG (LOCAL).

Students with injuries will be allowed to attend any practice, performance, game, or other event relating to the activity/organization and allowed to participate only to the extent authorized by written order of the student's physician.

Students should make every effort to schedule health care appointments at times that will not interfere with school or extracurricular activity participation. If a conflict is unavoidable, the student shall inform the coach/director prior to the appointment and provide written documentation, acceptable to the coach/director, of the appointment. The note shall be signed by the student's parent or, if the student is 18 or older or is an emancipated minor, by the student.

## **DISCIPLINARY INTERACTIONS AND LOSS OF EXTRACURRICULAR PRIVILEGES**

In addition to obeying rules set forth in the Comal ISD *Student Code of Conduct*, the particular extracurricular activity's constitution, handbook, rule book, and/or regulations, if any, or rules otherwise communicated to the student by the activity's coach/director, a student in grades 6 through 12 participating in any Comal ISD extracurricular activity shall comply with the *Extracurricular Student Activities Code of Conduct* and will be disciplined as outlined below:

### **A. General Conduct Guidelines**

Students participating in extracurricular activities are prohibited from minor infractions, as outlined in the Comal ISD Student Code of Conduct.

#### **Action Taken:**

Disciplinary action will be applied by sponsors of extracurricular activities, as deemed appropriate, for any minor offenses.

### **B. Removal from the Regular Education Setting**

Students participating in extracurricular activities are prohibited from the following behaviors as outlined in the Comal ISD *Student Code of Conduct*:

## **1. Behaviors resulting in In-School Suspension.**

### **Action Taken:**

Disciplinary action as outlined below represents the **minimum** consequences that may be administered.

Any student removed from the regular educational setting and assigned to In-School Suspension, shall be suspended from all extracurricular activities as outlined below:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: (Grades 6-8 or 9-12) Suspension: The student shall be suspended from further participation in all extracurricular activities for the term of the ISS.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: (Grades 6-8 or 9-12) Suspension: The student shall be suspended from further participation in all extracurricular activities for up to 3 school calendar days upon completion of ISS term, at the discretion of the coach/director.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: (Grades 6-8 or 9-12) Suspension: The student shall be suspended from further participation in all extracurricular activities for up to 5 school calendar days upon completion of ISS term, at the discretion of the coach/director.

The principal and/or Campus Coordinator shall make all final disciplinary action decisions.

## **2. Behaviors resulting in Out-of-School Suspension from School.**

### **Action Taken:**

Disciplinary action as outlined below represents the **minimum** consequences that may be administered.

Any student suspended from school, shall be suspended from all extracurricular activities as outlined below:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: (Grades 6-8 or 9-12) Suspension: The student shall be suspended from further participation in all extracurricular activities for the term of the suspension.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: (Grades 6-8 or 9-12) Suspension: The student shall be suspended from further participation in all extracurricular activities for up to 10 school calendar days, at the discretion of the coach/director.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: (Grades 6-8 or 9-12) Suspension: The student shall be suspended from further participation in all extracurricular activities for the remainder of the semester.

The principal and/or Campus Coordinator shall make all final disciplinary action decisions.

### **3. Behaviors resulting in Disciplinary AEP Assignment (Mandatory or Discretionary)**

#### **Action Taken:**

Disciplinary action as outlined below represents the **minimum** consequences that may be administered.

Any student removed from the regular educational setting and assigned to CDC shall be suspended from all extracurricular activities as outlined below:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense, (Grades 6-8 or 9-12) Suspension: The CDC assignment will be followed by campus counseling, campus-based community service, and no participation in all extracurricular activities for 10 school calendar days after returning from CDC.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense (Grades 6-8 or 9-12) Suspension: The student shall be suspended from further participation in all extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense, (Grades 6-8 or 9-12) Suspension: The student shall be suspended from further participation in all extracurricular activities for one school calendar year after returning from CDC.

The principal and/or Campus Coordinator shall make all final disciplinary action decisions.

#### **STATEMENT OF TRANSFER**

Any student transferring within the Comal Independent School District, who is under suspension, investigation, or who has been found guilty of violating the Extracurricular Student Activities Code of Conduct will be assessed the same penalties as prescribed by the campus in which the infraction occurred. (Refer to UIL guidelines regarding eligibility on transfer.) Students transferring from outside of CISD will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

# APPENDIX D

## COMAL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

### ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

#### STUDENT AGREEMENT FOR ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

*You are being given access to the District's electronic communications system. Through this system, you will be able to communicate with other schools, colleges, organizations, and people around the world through the Internet and other electronic information systems/networks. You will have access to hundreds of databases, libraries, and computer services all over the world. With this educational opportunity comes responsibility. It is important that you read the Guidelines for Acceptable Use of Comal Independent School District Technology Resources, and the agreement form. You are encouraged to ask questions if you need help in understanding the documents.*

Tools available to students may include but are not limited to:

- **Google Docs**-Students and teachers can create documents, spreadsheets, and presentations and then collaborate with each other in real-time. Collaboration is available within the district's G Suite system only.
- **Google Calendars**-Students can organize their schedules and share events.
- **Google Sites**-Students can create websites for classroom projects or as a portfolio of their schoolwork.
- **Google Classroom**-Teachers and students can use this organizational tool to manage assignments and content.
- **Gmail**-Each 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade students may have an email account. Elementary students will not be assigned an email address. Email communication is available between users in the district's G Suite system and district-approved outside organizations only.
- District provided textbook accounts.
- District provided supplementary instructional resource materials and software.
- Online testing.
- New district-provided technologies as they become available.

Access to Comal ISD computer resources is a privilege, not a right. Failure to comply with the guidelines set out in the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) may result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and / or other disciplinary action consistent with District policies. Damage caused by intentional misuse of equipment will be charged to the user. Student users should refer to the Student Code of Conduct for a detailed description of the consequence of improper use of the computer system. Please note that the Internet is a network of many types of communication and information networks. It is possible that you may run across areas of adult content and some material you (or your parents) might find objectionable. While the District will use filtering technology to restrict access to such material, it is not possible to absolutely prevent such access. It will be your responsibility to follow the rules for appropriate use.



Comal ISD will comply with all legal requirements for safety and security such as the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA), Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Please contact your child’s teacher with any questions or concerns.

Students should have no expectation of privacy with regard to District provided accounts. At any time Comal ISD has the right to access and view a student’s account. Students who misuse their accounts will be referred to their school’s administrator who will handle any infractions on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Comal ISD Code of Conduct and AUP.

### **Use of Personal Telecommunication Devices**

The District will open a filtered, wireless network through which students will be able to connect privately owned (personal) telecommunication devices. Students using personal telecommunication devices must follow all classroom guidelines and the guidelines stated in this document and in Board policy while on school property, attending any school-sponsored activity, or using the Comal ISD network.

### **RULES FOR APPROPRIATE USE:**

- Students may be assigned an individual account. If assigned an account, the student is responsible for not sharing the password for that account with others. Students will be held responsible for the intentional or negligent misuse of this information, or any misconduct that results from the disclosure of this information;
- The account is to be used only for identified educational purposes;
- The student is expected to use polite and civil communication; and
- The student will be held responsible at all times for the proper use of his/her account, and the District may suspend or revoke access if the student violates the rules in accordance with the Comal ISD Code of Conduct and AUP.

### **INAPPROPRIATE USES INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:**

- Using the system for any illegal purpose;
- Tampering with software protections and/or circumventing or attempting to circumvent any Internet filtering device (including use or attempted use of proxy, VPN, or “anonymous” sites) or other measures designed to circumvent the filtering system;
- Encrypting communications to avoid security review;
- Altering or attempting to alter system software or hardware configurations on network systems or local devices;
- Installing or using unauthorized software programs;
- Disrupting or using unauthorized accounts, access codes, or identification numbers;
- Using someone’s account;
- Impersonating any person or communicating under a false or unauthorized name;
- Posting personal information about yourself or others (such as addresses and phone numbers);
- Downloading or using copyrighted information without permission from the copyright holder, pirating software, and plagiarizing. Students may be held liable for any of their own actions that violate copyright laws;
- Intentionally introducing a virus or other malware to the computer system;

- Posting messages (anonymous or otherwise) or accessing materials that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, bullying, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal;
- Sending or storing messages or materials with the intent to defraud, harass, defame or threaten others;
- Sending mass mailings or spamming;
- Playing unauthorized network games or installing / using unauthorized software;
- Wasting school resources through the improper use of the computer system;
- Using school computers for advertising, profiting, political lobbying, and/or soliciting; and
- (Suggest: Using school digital resources (including but not limited to computers) for personal use, including but not limited to using school computers for advertising, profiting, political lobbying, and/or soliciting; and)
- Gaining unauthorized access to restricted information or resources.

#### **CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE USE:**

- Disciplinary or legal action, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and applicable laws;
- Suspension of access to the system; and/or
- Revocation of the computer system account.

## HANDBOOK AND STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT:

We acknowledge that we have been notified that:

1. We can receive a paper copy of the Comal ISD Student and Parent Handbook and Student Code of Conduct for the 2019-2020 school year by contacting our child's campus and
2. We can electronically access it on the district's website at [www.comalisd.org](http://www.comalisd.org). We understand that students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

## STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT:

I understand that my computer use is not private and that the District will monitor my activity while using the district's computer system (including the District's WiFi network connections). I have read the District's electronic communications system policy and administrative regulations found in the Student and Parent Handbook, and agree to abide by their provisions. I understand that violation of these provisions may result in suspension or revocation of system access and other disciplinary action consistent with District policies.

## PARENT ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT:

I have read the District's Guidelines for Acceptable Use of Comal Independent School District Technology Resources listed below and in **Appendix D** of the Student and Parent Handbook, and this agreement form. In consideration for the privilege of my child using District's electronic communication system, and in consideration for having access to the public networks, I hereby release the District, its operators, and any institutions with which they are affiliated from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from child's use of, or inability to use, the system, including without limitation, the type of damage identified in the District's policy, and administrative regulations.

Students will indicate agreement with the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) by physically signing the agreement during the first week of school. Parents wishing to deny access to G Suite (Comal ISD education Google account) must opt out by selecting NO for the Google Access permission on this form. Parents wishing to deny access to an individual student login account may opt out by selecting NO on this form for Internet access. By selecting NO, students will only have access to district-provided textbook accounts, supplementary instructional resource software and online testing.