

# NATALIA HIGH SCHOOL

HOME OF THE FIGHTING  
**MUSTANGS**

"EXCELLENCE IN TOTUS SULUM"

**2011 - 2012**

## **Student Handbook**

**Joseph Justice**

**Diana Caballero**

*Assistant Principals*

**Donald E. Mathis**

*Principal*

**Maria Alaniz**

*Guidance Counselor*

# *Natalia High School*

## **Parent & Student Handbook 2011 - 2012**

### **Board of Trustees**

Gloria Vasquez - President

Eric Smith - Vice President

Paul Almendarez - Secretary

Darrell Kempf

Mike Loza

Louis Mendez

Tiffany Rodriguez

### **Administration**

Dr. Guillermo Mancha, Superintendent, 663-4416

Joyce St. John, Director of Special Education, 663-4416

Jeannette Roberts, Director of Technology, 663-4416

Mary Estrada, Business Manager, 663-4416

### **Natalia High School Administration**

Donald E. Mathis, High School Principal, 663-4417

Joseph Justice, Assistant Principal, 663-4417

Diana Caballero, Assistant Principal, 663-4417

Mary Alaniz, Counselor, 663-4417

Linda Perez, School Secretary, 663-4417

*Handbook effective August 22, 2011*



## **Mission Statement 2011-2012**

**In our relentless pursuit of academic excellence, Natalia High School maintains high expectations for all students that makes learning *the* priority.**

### **Goals 2011-2012**

#### **Curriculum & Instruction**

**Provide a rigorous, challenging, and relevant curriculum for every student, in every classroom, every day.**

#### **Learning Community**

**Promote relationships that encourage all stakeholders to be partners in the education and development of our children.**

#### **Learning Environment**

**Pledge to protect and nurture every student.**

**NATALIA HIGH SCHOOL**

**2011-2012**

**ADMINISTRATION AND OFFICE STAFF**

Donald E. Mathis – **Principal**

Joseph Justice – **Assistant Principal**

Diana Caballero – **Assistant Principal**

Maria Alaniz – **Guidance Counselor**

Nick Mendez – **Athletic Director**

Linda Perez – **Campus Secretary**

Alpha Gamez – **Attendance Clerk**

Aurora Seaton – **Counselor's Clerk**

Donald Armstrong	Geometry & Algebra
Candace Burleson	BCIS
Justin Charrier	World History
Olga Contreras	SPED
Mary Daly	Algebra & Pre-Calculus
Anjali Dandona	Chemistry & Anatomy and Physiology
Katherine Darter-Willems	Family and Consumer Science
Maria Friedel-Hughes	Spanish
Wesley Haltom	Agricultural Science
Ruth Ann Hickerson	Theater Arts & Professional Communications
Gloria Loza	Spanish
Melynda McGregor	Physical Education & Health
Philip McCraw	English & Choir
Nick Mendez	AVID
Jeff Neely	World Geography
Varsha Radhakrishnan	Biology & Anatomy and Physiology
David Ramsay	SPED
John Reep	English
Audra Smith	Band Director
Luis Tellez	Physics & IPC
Shannon Walter	English
Travis Weissler	US History & Economics/Government
Eileen Woolsey-Wilkerson	Art
Theresa Yantis	Algebra & Math Models

Frank Garza, Minerva Garza, Laureen Gonzales, Cynthia Valdez: Instructional Aides

Laura Aguilar (Manager), Catalina Arellano, Elvira Martinez, Catalina Monreal, Margaret Monreal: Cafeteria Staff

## **NOTICES TO PARENTS**

### **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

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

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

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of gender: Joyce St. John, Director of Special Education, 8<sup>th</sup> & Pearson, Natalia, Texas 78059(830) 663-4416.
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Joyce St. John, Director of Special Education, 8<sup>th</sup> & Pearson, Natalia, Texas 78059(830) 663-4416.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent Dr. Guillermo Mancha. [See FB(LOCAL) and FFH(LOCAL)]

### **Asbestos Management Plan**

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations addressing asbestos, and is available in the maintenance director's office. If you have any questions, please contact Richard Morales, Director of Operations, at (830) 663-4416.

### **Pest Management Plan**

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Chuck Beard, Maintenance Supervisor.

### **Additional Notices**

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

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

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

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# PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to the 2011–2012 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 Natalia High School Student Handbook is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. In an effort to make it easier to use, the handbook is divided into two sections:

**Section I—PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**—with information to assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook.

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

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

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Natalia Independent School District *Student Code of Conduct*, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning.

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

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

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

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

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

[See **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights** on page 3 and **Directory Information** on page 9 for more information.]

Please note that references to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. A copy of the district’s policy manual is available for review in the school office or online at [www.nataliaisd.net](http://www.nataliaisd.net).

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

This section of the Natalia High School Student 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.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements of the graduation programs with your child, once your child begins enrolling in courses that earn high school credit.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** on page 22 and **Academic Programs** on page 13.]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office at (830) 663-4417 for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 54.]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policies at GKG and contact the campus principal].
- 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 campus principal.
- 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 information in this handbook at **School Health Advisory Council** on page 46].
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies at BE and BED for more information.]

## **Parent Involvement Coordinator**

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs is Joyce St. John, and she may be contacted at (830) 663-4416.

## ***PARENTAL RIGHTS***

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Reviewing Instructional Materials**

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

[Also see **Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom** on page 5 for additional information.]

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

Teachers may display students' work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement. However, the district will seek parental consent before displaying students' artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, and the like on the district's Web site, 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 counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns, and
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.

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

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

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

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



- When it relates to media coverage of the school.

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

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

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

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows. [See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** on page 52 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, please submit a written request to the campus principal stating this preference.

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

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

## **School Safety Transfers**

As a parent, you have a right:

- To request the transfer of your child to another classroom if your child has been determined by the principal to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code

25.0341. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the superintendent for information. [See policy FDB.]

[See **Bullying** on page 17, and policy FFI(LOCAL).]

- To request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See policy FDE(LOCAL).]
- To request the transfer of your child to a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. [See 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(LOCAL).]

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

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.

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

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

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

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will

include a statement that informs the parent of his or her rights if the parent disagrees with the district. Additionally, the notice must inform the parent how to obtain a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*.

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is Joyce St. John at (830) 663-4416.

### **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, and the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English. If the student qualifies for these extra services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

### **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; and
- Graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent related to leave or deployment activities may be excused by the district. The district will permit no more than 18 excused absences (9 days per semester) per year for this purpose.

Additional information may be found at <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/mil>.

### **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, counselors, diagnosticians,

and support staff; a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or volunteer); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties.

“Legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student’s case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official’s professional responsibility; or investigating or evaluating programs.

- Various governmental agencies.
- Individuals granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she 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 principal is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated.

Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

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

The address of the superintendent’s office is: 8<sup>th</sup> & Pearson, Natalia, Texas 78059.

The address of the principal’s office is: 8<sup>th</sup> & Kearney, Natalia, Texas 78059.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student’s records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights. A request to correct a student’s record should be submitted to the 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** on page 54, and **Complaints and Concerns** on page 20 for an overview of the process.]

The district’s policy regarding student records found at FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL) is available from the principal’s office and on the district’s website at [www.nataliaisd.net](http://www.nataliaisd.net).

The parent’s or eligible student’s right of access to and copies of student records do not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records—such as a teacher’s personal

notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher—do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

**Please note:**

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

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

**Directory Information**

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

However, release of a student’s directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal 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 student information for the following school-sponsored purposes: all district publications and announcements.

For these specific school-sponsored purposes, the district would like to use your child’s: student name, address, telephone listing, email address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, degrees, honors and awards received, dates of attendance, grade level, most recent institution attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, height and weight of members of athletic teams. . This information will not be used for other purposes without the consent of the parent or eligible student, except as described above at Directory Information.

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

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

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

**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 conveniently organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact Donald E. Mathis at (830) 663-4417.

## **ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE**

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

### **Compulsory Attendance**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance**

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

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities relating to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Service as an election clerk; and
- Documented healthcare appointments, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student's return to campus.

In addition, a junior or senior's absence of up to two days related to visiting a college or university will be considered an exemption, provided the student receives permission from the campus principal, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed.

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

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

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

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

If the student is age 18 or older, the student's parents will not be subject to penalties as a result of their child's violation of state compulsory attendance law. [See policy FEA(LEGAL).]

## **Attendance for Credit**

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Fieldtrips and Activities**

A student who has earned nine absences per semester will be denied participation in voluntary field trips. If a student is absent for more than **two** hours (two classes) during the day of the scheduled after school activity, they cannot participate (unless the absence is school related) in any after-school activity. This includes all athletic home games.

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

When a student must be absent from school, the student, upon returning to school, must bring a note, signed by the parent, that describes the reason for the absence. Failure to present a note within 48 hours of returning to school will result in an unexcused absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older. Once a student has seven (7) absences for the semester, every absence thereafter will be unexcused unless proper documentation is provided (funeral, medical, religious holy days).

### **Making-Up Missed Work**

Students shall receive a zero for assignments and tests that are not made up because of unexcused absences, including truancy. The highest grades for missed assignments due to unexcused absences shall be a 50.

Make-up assignments or tests shall be made available to students after any absence. Teachers shall inform their students as to the time allotted for completing make-up work after an absence; however, the student shall be responsible for finding out about the assignments and for satisfactorily making up the work within the allotted time.



Students who miss a class for a previously scheduled event such as a basketball game or band trip may be required to take a test or submit make-up work prior to the event.

Students who miss a class due to illness or any other approved absence generally have one day for each day missed to make up work. Previously assigned work for which they have had adequate notice and time to complete, even with the absence, should be handed in on time unless approved by the teacher. Any test missed due to absence will be made up immediately upon return or at the earliest possible time at the teacher's discretion.

Different tests may be administered to students who miss the regularly scheduled tests. Written assignments may be required over and above what was done in class.

Students who have been absent for any reason are encouraged to make up the work they missed. Failure to make up work may result in academic penalties.

Students who are absent from school for any length of time on the day of a school related activity will not be allowed to participate in school related activities on that day or evening unless the absence was due to a documented health care appointment, or they receive prior written approval from the principal. School related activities are not counted as absences for attendance purposes.

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

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than 5 consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school.

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

[See policy FEC(LOCAL).]

### **Driver License Attendance Verification**

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

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

### **Credit Recovery and A+ Program**

Natalia ISD uses a credit recovery system offered to any student that has failed a class with approval from both the counselor's office and Natalia High School administration based on individual student needs. Students that have failed a class will not automatically be assigned A+. The decision will be made on a case by case basis. The primary use of the recovery system will be used for math and science courses, and may also be used as a support system in some circumstances where failure has not occurred. The system is not designed to receive credits in advance. A+ is a self-paced program with no assigned teacher assisting or tutoring; however, as the master schedule permits, teachers may be assigned to act as a tutor. Students are only allowed to work on credit recovery with an authorized monitor present, and at the present time the system can only be used at school. Students who pass the self-passed courses will receive

high school credit. Regular progress reports will be given to the counselor's office and in some cases grades will be given showing progress. Students who are eligible will only be allowed to make up two full credits or four half credits during the school year. Students can only take two courses at a time. To take part in the credit recovery program the following criteria must be met:

- Must have failed the class or lost credit because of attendance.
- Student must work continuously on credit recovery. Student may be dropped from the course if all criteria are not met.

Once assigned a credit recovery course, students must complete a minimum of two lessons per week in each course or four lessons if doing only one course. Students will be dropped from the entire program if this is not followed and will not be able to re-enter the program until the next school year. Some students may be working diligently and not be able to keep up with this policy. If that is the case, exceptions based on documented evidence may be made with a recommendation from the monitor and/or tutor teacher if one is present.

Any senior not having the required credits to graduate because of a class failure or losing credits due to attendance will be able to take credit recovery after the graduation ceremony is completed. This system of summer credit recovery will continue for just two weeks after graduation ceremonies. The High School counselor or any administrator must recommend a student for the summer credit recovery program. Anyone allowed in the summer credit recovery program must be in attendance every day. The program starts at 9:00 am and continues until 12:00 noon Monday through Friday for two weeks after graduation ceremonies. If a student is working diligently following the required criteria for the summer A+ credit recovery program and still not able to complete the work in time, the two week time limit may be extended with a recommendation from the monitor and administration approval.

### **Pre AP/Advanced Placement (AP)/ Dual Credit Courses/Deadline for Drops**

Advanced Placement (AP), Pre-AP and Dual Credit courses are available for any student willing to meet the challenge of a rigorous curriculum in all academic areas.

- All Dual Credit students will be required to sign a Dual Credit Contract.

Students are required to pay fees and meet eligibility requirements for dual credit classes. All students taking dual credit classes will be required to pay a non-refundable \$50 charge to enter the dual credit program for the year regardless of the number of courses taken. Natalia ISD will pay the remaining portion. There may be other fees or materials required by the college that will be the responsibility of the student to pay. The student may also be responsible to pay the AP exam fees. The sponsoring college will determine admittance into the course based on one or more of the following requirements:

- THEA, Alternative THEA, TAKS scores, SAT scores, Grades, or ACT scores.

Students must follow the college procedures for adding and dropping a dual credit class. The decision for adding or dropping a dual credit class will also include a signed parental request submitted to the dual credit supervising teacher/counselor for approval within the first 30 school days before continuing with the college add/drop procedures. The present course grade average will transfer to the new class without interpretation without any added points. If the present Dual Credit course grade from the college instructor is a 77%, it will be transferred without honors points to the corresponding high school course as a 77%. Students who do not make a request for a schedule change in the above manner will be required to remain in the course until the end

of the current semester or until the Dual Credit Program Director/Counselor deems a change is needed.

The dual credit program director/counselor reserves the right to recommend a student drop the class if the student is failing or barely passing throughout either semester. This may mean forfeiture of funds paid to take the class. If a student receives a semester dual credit grade average of 74% or less the following procedures will be followed:

The dual credit program director/counselor may drop the student from the course and not allow the student to take the course the second semester. Input will be taken from the dual credit class monitor before this decision is made.

The dual credit program director/counselor may allow the student to continue under a probationary contract to be determined by the dual credit program director/counselor. If the probationary contract is not followed, the student may be dropped from the course at any time during the semester. The present course grade average will transfer to the new high school class as explained above.

It is the student's responsibility to keep up with his or her grade throughout a dual credit course. The class monitor/program director/counselor may assist but it is ultimately the responsibility of the student to keep up with the grade. It is important to remember that Natalia ISD does not have any control over the college instructors, syllabi, class policies or college policies. This makes it imperative that the student keep in contact with the college instructor. We have simply agreed to give corresponding High School credit if the student receives a passing grade of 70% from the college.

All High School students taking dual credit classes must receive a 70% or higher from the college course in order to receive High School credit regardless whether or not the college allows credit with a grade below 70%.

Dual Credit/Pre AP/AP teachers or monitors reserve the right to recommend a student drop the advanced class if the student is failing or barely passing throughout either semester. The counselor will review teacher recommendation and meet with the individual student to determine if a change should be made. Parents will be notified if it is determined that a student be dropped from an advanced class.

Dual Credit class students are not allowed to be unsupervised. Dual Credit classes are complete classes and students are required to be in class every day at the assigned time. When a student is in Dual Credit class, they must stay with the assigned individual responsible for Dual Credit in the assigned room unless otherwise directed.

Any dual credit courses will be exempt from UIL eligibility-The dual credit classes include the following:

<u>Course #</u>	<u>Title</u>
1335	English 3 DC
1336	English 3 DC
0385	English 4 DC
0386	English 4 DC
1385	English 4 DUBL
1386	English 4 DUBL
0506	US Gov. DC

0507	Eco Fe DC
1340	U.S. History DC
1341	U. S. History DC
1367	Intro to Business
1468	Pre-Calculus DC
1333	Chemistry
1334	Chemistry

### **Correspondence Courses/ Night School/ Credit-By-Exam/Home School/GED**

Information on these courses is available from the counselor. Except in the case of seniors, written notification to parents and students is not required regarding the students' potential need for night school and correspondence courses. In addition to progress reports and report cards being mailed home, fliers will be posted around the school and the counselor will meet with individual students as needed. Counselor approval is required for correspondence, night school, or credit by exam.

The school counselor provides students and parents with information regarding academic programs to prepare for higher education and career choices. [For more information, see page 22 of this handbook and policies at EIF.]

[See **Academic Counseling** on page 22.]

### ***ATHLETICS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES***

Boys' athletics class will be available to boys participating in football, basketball, baseball, track, cross country, etc. Girls' athletics class will be available to girls participating in football, basketball, baseball, softball, volleyball, golf, track, cross country, etc. Student athletes will not be allowed to leave any class early to go to athletics class unless a departure time has been previously approved by one of the principals and distributed to all teachers. One of the principals must approve and sign a copy of a request for any student to leave any class early. All students must be supervised at all times. Students will be required to dress out daily as this is a requirement of the class. All students are required to be in Athletics class the first and second day of class according to their schedule. No schedule changes will be made the first two days of class. Schedule changes will ONLY be made during the third, fourth and fifth days of classes. NO schedule change requests will be accepted after the fifth day of class.

Every physical education student is required to bring clothes as specified by the physical education department and to suit out and participate in class activities. A current doctor's statement is required of all students who need to be excused from participating in physical exercise. Those students physically unable to take part in physical education must attend regular P. E. class and receive alternative P.E. or health instruction. Students may substitute fall semester marching band or athletics for a half unit of P.E. credit based on participation in marching band activities. Students will be required to dress out daily as this is a requirement of the class.

## **AWARDS AND HONORS**

UIL rules permit a student to earn one award jacket during his/her years at Natalia High School. An additional symbolic award may be presented for each intra-school activity each year.

## **BULLYING**

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

Bullying could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, assault, demands for money, confinement, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, and ostracism. In some cases, bullying can occur through electronic methods, called "cyberbullying."

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, counselor, principal, or another district employee. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying and will take appropriate disciplinary action if an investigation indicates that bullying has occurred.

[Also see **School Safety Transfers** on page 6, **Hazing** on page 45, and policy FFI(LOCAL).]

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

The district offers career and technical education programs in agriculture science, family and consumer sciences, and building trades. Natalia ISD will 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** on page 51 for additional information regarding the district's efforts regarding participation in these programs.]

## **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, which may be accessed at [www.nataliaisd.net](http://www.nataliaisd.net). 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 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 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, the campus counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (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%20and%20Early%20Intervention/Programs%20Available%20In%20Your%20County/default.asp).

The following Web sites might help you become more aware of child sexual abuse:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index.aspx?id=2820>

<http://sapn.nonprofitoffice.com/>

<http://www.taasa.org/member/materials2.php>

[http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml)

[http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml)

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**

To determine class rank, the student's Grade Point Average (GPA) will be used. In the event of a tie for top honors, determining who had the highest numerical grades by semester will break the tie.

### **1. Regular Courses**

A (90-100) = 4; B (80-89) = 3; C (75-79) = 2; D (70-74) = 1; F (0-69) = 0

### **2. Weighted Courses**

A (90-100) = 5; B (80-89) = 4; C (75-79) = 3; D (70-74) = 2; F (0-69) = 0

Weighted Courses include any designated Pre-AP Courses (including Pre-Calculus), AP Courses.

1. Dual Enrollment classes will be weighted.

2. Courses previously taken as weighted will be treated as weighted courses.

Class rankings will be calculated and released at the following intervals: end of the junior year, end of the fall semester of the senior year, and upon graduation.

[For further information, see policies at EIC.]

## **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.

## **CLASSIFICATION/PROMOTION/CREDIT REQUIREMENTS**

Students are promoted only on the basis of academic achievement. A student who has not earned a passing grade of at least 70 will not earn credit for the course.

Since credit requirements for graduation vary according to the graduation plan chosen and date of high school entry, students should refer to the NHS Program Guide available in the Counselors' office for the number of credits needed to graduate.

Students will be classified as follows:

Grade 9	0 - 5.5 credits
Grade 10	6 - 11.5 credits
Grade 11	12 - 17.5 credits
Grade 12	18 credits

Note: A student's grade level classification can change during the school year.

Exceptions: Students can be reclassified as in the case of early graduates and graduating juniors or if they reach the necessary credits through credit recovery or correspondence courses.

## **Valedictorian and Salutatorian Honors**

To be eligible for valedictorian and salutatorian honors, a student must have attended Natalia High School for the last two years (junior and senior) of his/her high school career. If the valedictorian and salutatorian positions are held by students of the same gender, the next highest ranked student of the opposite sex shall also be recognized. Semester grades are used in computing the grade point average, which is the determining factor in ranking the top two students for valedictorian and salutatorian honors. In the event of a tie for top honors, determining who had the highest numerical grades by semester will break the tie.

## **COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS**

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 Recommended or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program; or

Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT.

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 may limit the number of students automatically admitted to 75 percent of the University's enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshmen. For students who are eligible to enroll in the University of Texas at Austin during the summer or fall 2012 term, the University will be admitting the top nine 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 counselor for further information about automatic admissions, the application process, and deadlines.

[See also **Class Rank/Highest Ranking Student** on page 18 for information specifically related to how the district calculates a student's rank in class].

## ***COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES***

Students in grades 9–12 have opportunities to earn college credit through the following methods:

- Certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include courses termed dual credit, Advanced Placement (AP), or International Baccalaureate (IB);
- Enrollment in an AP or dual credit course through the Texas Virtual School Network;
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with Southwest Texas Junior College;
- Enrollment in courses taught at the following institutions in the district: Southwest Texas Junior College; and
- Certain CTE courses.

All of these methods have eligibility requirements and must be approved prior to enrollment in the course. Please see the counselor for more information.

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.

## ***COLLEGE DAYS***

Since most colleges and universities hold visitation days on Saturday, we encourage our students to take advantage of those scheduled visitation times that do not conflict with regular class days. Juniors and seniors are allowed up to two days excused absences for college visitations per school year. For a college visitation day to be considered excused a student must pick up a form at the counselor's office, get the required signatures and return it to a counselor prior to the college day. An absence note from a parent/guardian must be presented to the attendance office upon the student's return to school on the following school day, and the college day must be taken prior to May 1st.

## ***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, the district has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG(LOCAL) in the district's policy manual. A copy of this policy may be obtained in the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's Web site at [www.Nataliaisd.net](http://www.Nataliaisd.net).

In general, the student or parent should submit a written complaint and request a conference with the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to



the superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

## ***CONDUCT***

### **Applicability of School Rules**

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

### **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.

### **Social Events**

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

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

## ***CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS***

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

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

## **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 spring, students in grades 8 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 counselor in order to enroll in the high school courses that best prepare him or her for attendance at a college, university, or training school, or for pursuit of some other type of advanced education. The counselor can also provide information about entrance exams and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission to state colleges and universities, financial aid, housing, and scholarships.

### **Family Access**

The District is offering parents and guardians access to a password-secured, web-based program called Parent Connect that will provide parents and guardians the ability to view attendance, grades schedules assignments and emergency information for their student(s). The program can only be accessed by specific username and password assigned to each parent. The password information will be assigned after attending a mandatory orientation/training session. Sessions will be available several times throughout the year for all campuses.

### **Limits on Confidentiality**

According to American Counseling Association Ethical Standards cases in which confidentiality with a minor can be breached are the following:

- Danger to self
- Danger to others
- Child abuse
- Court ordered

### **Personal Counseling**

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues, or substance abuse. The counselor may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns. A student who wishes to meet with the counselor should contact Mary Alaniz, campus counselor, at (830) 663-4417.

### **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 EHBAA(LEGAL), FFE(LEGAL), and FFG(EXHIBIT).]

## **COURSE CREDIT**

A student in grades 9–12 will earn credit for a course only if the final grade is 70 or above. For a two-semester (1 credit) course, the student's grades from both semesters will be averaged and credit will be awarded if the combined average is 70 or above. Should the student's combined average be less than 70, the student will be required to retake the semester in which he or she failed.

### **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, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a non-accredited school.

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

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

[For further information, see the 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 dates on which exams are scheduled during the 2011–2012 school year include:

Dates Scheduled:

December 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011, and June 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012

A student will earn course credit with a passing score of at least 90 on the exam. A student in elementary school will be eligible to accelerate to the next grade level if the student scores at least 90 on each exam in the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the principal no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. The district will honor a request by a parent to administer a test on a date other than the published dates. If the district agrees to administer a test other than the one chosen by the district, the 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. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

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

## **Discrimination**

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

## **Harassment**

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance. A copy of the district's policy is available in the superintendent's office or on the district's website at [www.nataliaisd.net](http://www.nataliaisd.net).

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

## **Sexual Harassment**

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

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

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

## **Retaliation**

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

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

## **Reporting Procedures**

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

## **Investigation of Report**

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

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

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

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

## ***DETENTION REGULATIONS***

Detention will begin promptly at the time designated by the detention supervisor. If the student is more than five minutes late, they will be asked to leave and return the next day on time to serve their detention.

The assigned detention time will be doubled for every failure to attend detention. If a student was assigned a two-hour detention and they fail to show up, they will be assigned two two-hour detentions (total of four hours).

Detention is considered part of the attendance day. If you miss three or more assigned detentions within a four week period, the school attendance officer will file in the local courts under the "failure to attend school" statute.

- Students must bring books or materials related to academic subjects to detention hall, or they will be given penalty assignments. Students may be given attitude packages as determined by detention supervisor, principals, or designee.
- Upon entering the detention room, students will sign in, be seated, and start studying.
- Students will not disrupt detention hall in any manner (talking, signaling, passing notes, etc.). Students will not wander the halls. If a student is caught in the hallway without an appropriate pass, they will be escorted to the office immediately for further disciplinary action.
- Students will sit up at all times without slouching and keep feet off desks and chairs.
- Students will not be allowed to sleep in detention hall.
- Students will not leave the room or their seats without permission.
- Detention will take precedence over all school-sponsored activities such as meetings, games, practices, rehearsals, field trips, and extra-curricular activities.
- Students must provide their own transportation to school and home depending upon time of detention.
- If a student has an unexcused absence to detention, the student will be assigned a day of ISS/OSS and the detention will be doubled.

Once a student has been assigned a detention, he or she must sign it and show it to their parents. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the parents of the assigned detention.

### **Teacher Assigned Detention**

A teacher may assign a detention at any time including before school, lunch, or after school. These detentions will be assigned and monitored by the teacher making the assignment. These detentions are not turned into the high school office and will not be reflected in any school disciplinary process. At the teacher's discretion, failure to attend a teacher assigned detention may immediately be turned over to the high school office for assignment to a "School Detention."

If a teacher uses mandatory detentions as part of their classroom management system or academic program, they will notify the students and parents describing how the mandatory detention program will work.

### ***DISCRIMINATION***

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 23.]

### ***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. In limited circumstances, a student in grade 8 may also be eligible to enroll in a course through the TxVSN.

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** on page 34.]

If you have questions or wish to make a request that your child be enrolled in a TxVSN course, please contact the counselor.

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.

## ***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** on page 9.]

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

Students must obtain prior approval from the campus principal before posting, circulating, or distributing more than ten 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 within two school days.

The principal has designated the office area bulletin boards as the approved location for 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 GKDA. To be considered for distribution, any non-school material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, including the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and must be submitted to the campus 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**

The District's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, instill discipline, prevent disruption, avoid safety hazards, and teach respect for authority. Students should be dressed and groomed in a manner that is clean and neat and will not be a health or safety hazard to themselves or others. Modesty will be the dominant feature in all clothing.

The District prohibits any clothing or grooming that, in the administration's judgment, may reasonably be expected to cause disruption of or interference with normal school operations. The District prohibits pictures, emblems, or writings that are lewd, offensive, vulgar, obscene, or that advertise or depict tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs, or any other substance prohibited under policy FNCF (Local).

Determination as to what is neat, clean, decent, modest, and appropriate will be made by the administration. Determinations will be made in an objective, impartial, and consistent manner. The Administration's judgment in these matters shall be final.

If the Administration determines that a student's grooming or dress violates the dress code, the student shall be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school. If not corrected, the student shall be assigned to In-School-Suspension (ISS) for the remainder of the day, until the problem is corrected, or until a parent or designee brings an acceptable change of clothing to school. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action. Appropriate discipline procedures shall be followed in all cases.

## **Uniforms**

The Board has determined that requiring school uniforms improves the learning environment in the district. The Board requires that students from Pre-K to high school wear the uniforms established by Board Policy. Students who are new to the district and have never previously attended Natalia High School are exempt from the uniform requirement on their first day of enrollment. Returning students must be in compliance with the uniform policy.

## **Definition**

For purposes of Board Policy, uniforms shall be defined as one or more specific kinds of articles of clothing required to be worn by students at a particular school during normal school hours. Alterations that change the integrity of the uniform shall not be permitted.

## **Uniform Requirements**

Where uniforms are required, they shall include the following items:

- Long- or short-sleeved polo style shirts with collars



- Pants with or without pleats
- Walking shorts
- Skorts
- Sweatshirts and sweaters

#### 1. Uniform Shirts

- Long- or short-sleeved polo style shirts with collars and a two or three button placket. (Buttons may not be removed.)
- The shirts must be solid royal-blue, navy-blue, solid white in color. (Navy-blue will be phased out as a color choice for shirts by the 2013-2014 school year.)
- No logos, brand names, stripes, decorations, embroidery, or other visible images are permitted.
- Excessively tight shirts are not permitted. Shirts that are so short that they become untucked through normal movement are not permitted.
- Spirit shirts or school organization are permitted, if the following conditions are met:
  - The shirts must be polo style, have two or three button placket, and be royal-blue, navy-blue, or white.
  - The shirts must be distributed through an approved Natalia High School student organization. The organization must get prior approval from the high school principal before ordering and wearing the shirts.

#### 2. Uniform Pants, Walking Shorts, and Skorts

- Garments with or without pleats.
- The garment must be solid navy-blue or solid khaki in color.
- Garments cannot have cargo pockets.
- No wide bell bottoms that cover the entire shoe.
- The garments should not be hip-huggers. The garment should fit high enough that a shirt can be tucked in effectively.
- The garment cannot have lacing up the front, sides, or back instead of a zipper.
- The garment cannot have tool loops, unusual, or non-conforming features.
- The pants must have belt loops.
- Brand name labels are not permitted on the outside of the garment. (Clothing sold with brand name labels is acceptable if the labels are removed from the outside of the garment.)
- Walking shorts and skorts shall be worn no shorter than three (3) inches above the top of the kneecap.

#### 3. Skirts/Skorts

- The garment must be solid navy-blue or solid khaki in color.
- Garments made from denim-type fabric are not permitted.
- The garment should fit high enough that a shirt can be tucked in effectively.
- The garment cannot have lacing up the front, sides, or back instead of a zipper.

- The garment cannot have tool loops, unusual, or non-conforming features.
  - Brand name labels are not permitted on the outside of the garment. (Clothing sold with brand name labels is acceptable if the labels are removed from the outside of the garment.)
  - Skirts and skorts shall be worn no shorter than three (3) inches above the top of the kneecap.
  - Skirts cannot have a slit up the side that reveals the leg.
4. Sweatshirts or Sweaters
- Approved sweatshirts or sweaters must be solid royal-blue, navy-blue, or solid white in color. (Navy-blue will be phased out as color choice for sweatshirts and sweaters by the 2013-2014 school year.)
  - No logos, brand names, stripes, decorations, embroidery, or other visible images are permitted.
  - Hoods and pockets are not permitted.
  - Natalia athletic sweatshirts or approved Natalia High School sponsored clothes are allowed if they are distributed through an approved Natalia High School student organization and if the organizations obtains prior approval from the high school principal before ordering and wearing the clothing.

### **Funding Source**

The superintendent shall maintain federal and local funds for clothing needs of economically disadvantaged students who cannot afford to purchase uniforms. Any funds donated for this purpose shall be used only for that purpose. The district shall provide one uniform per year to each economically disadvantaged student who applies for assistance.

### **Exemptions**

A parent or guardian may request that their child be exempt from the uniform requirement. In order to exercise this option, the parent or guardian must submit a written statement (which is mandatory) and a written response to a questionnaire (which is optional) designed to assist in determining bona fide religious and/or philosophical objections to the uniform requirements. (See the NISD District Handbook for complete requirements.)

### **General Dress and Grooming Guidelines**

Additionally, the following guidelines for student dress and grooming shall be observed:

- Clothes will be neat and in good repair (no distracting rips, holes, etc.); cleanliness will be expected at all times.
- Clothing shall be appropriately sized. Wearing extremely tight-fitting, loose, or oversized clothing is considered to be disruptive to the school environment and, therefore, not appropriate school attire.
- Sagging pants will not be allowed. (Pants should be worn at the waistline, not below, and should not drag on the ground.)
- See-through attire will not be permitted. Clothes designed to be worn as sleepwear and house slippers will not be permitted.

- Types of boy's shirts that may not be worn are t-shirts (undergarments), tank tops, and shirts without sleeves. Shirts designed to be buttoned will be buttoned.
- All shirts must be tucked-in.
- Tops shall not be "bloused" in a manner that covers the belt or waistband.
- The midriff must be covered at all times.
- Jackets must not be provocative, distracting, or cause anyone to question their purpose or intended use. The high school principal, or the principal's designee, may disallow a student from wearing a jacket in the classroom and around the campus if the jacket is used to conceal violations of the dress code.
- Shorts will be permitted on students for the entire school year, with the following stipulations: shorts on females may be no shorter than three (3) inches above the knee; anything the administration deems inappropriate will not be permitted for girls or boys.
- No halter-tops or blouses with spaghetti straps or extremely low-cut necklines should be worn; **both shoulders are to be covered**. Tank tops are not allowed for **any** student.
- Skirts will be no shorter than three (3) inches above the top of the kneecap; slits or cuts are not permitted.
- Undergarments must be worn, **but not visible to others**.
- Shoes must be worn. Metal taps on shoes and shoes with steel toes will not be permitted. Thongs, beach sandals, and slippers are prohibited. A strap or support across the back of the ankle is required. The student may be required to bring an alternative pair of shoes for Physical Education classes or any activity where sturdier footwear is required. Shoes that are skates are not permitted.
- Hair shall be kept clean and well groomed. Excessive or distinctive facial make-up, hairstyles, hair coloring, etc. deemed to be a distraction will be prohibited. Hair which is not a human color (purple, blue, pink, orange etc.) is prohibited. Unconventional color or hairstyles such as Mohawks, spiked hair, or designs that cause a distraction shall not be permitted. Facial hair must be neatly groomed and trimmed.
- Hats, caps, or head covering of any kind are not to be worn inside the building. Hats worn inside the building may be confiscated.
- Colored glasses or sunglasses may not be worn inside the building unless prescribed by a physician.
- Any type of jewelry that may be deemed as a hazard for the wearer or others is not allowed.
- Students shall not be permitted to wear dangling key rings or chains, including chains attached to wallets, footwear, or backpacks.
- Body piercings are not allowed.
- All tattoos must be covered up or taped over while on school property or off school property as a representative of Natalia High School.
- Gang attire will not be permitted. Any article of clothing, jewelry, tattoos, bandanas, etc. that the administration deems inappropriate or tied to gang affiliation will be **strictly prohibited**. A list of gang-related attire shall be maintained at the high school.
- "Grills" on teeth are not permitted.
- Students shall not wear articles of clothing that create a health or other hazard to the student's safety, or to the safety of others.

The Administration, in cooperation with the sponsor, coach, or other person in charge of an extracurricular activity, may regulate the dress and grooming of students who participate in the activity. These special regulations may exceed the standard dress code policies in order to maintain the organization's specific standards, or to promote school spirit, if the dress code exception is linked to the organization's promotion of school spirit and/or school representation. Students who violate these standards may be removed or excluded from the activity for a period determined by the principal or sponsor and may be subject to other disciplinary action.

### **Dress Code Violations**

Dress Code Violations will not be tolerated.

- Two days after registering in Natalia ISD, if a student is out of school uniform they will be assigned, detention, ISS/OSS, additional duties, etc., as deemed appropriate by the principals. Further referrals will be dealt with as chronic behavior issues and will be dealt with accordingly.
- If a student is not wearing the proper uniform, according to the district uniform policy, they will be sent to the office where the parent/guardian will be called to bring them the proper uniform. The student will remain in the office or ISS until the parent/guardian brings the proper uniform. The student will be responsible for all class work missed while waiting in the office, or ISS, for their parent/guardian to bring the proper uniform. They may also receive a detention as a disciplinary action.

### ***ELECTIONS FOR SCHOOL, CLASS, AND CLUB OFFICERS***

A student must secure a majority vote to be declared elected. All elections must be held by secret ballot. Student organizations have by-laws which can result in the removal of officers for misconduct or failure to maintain standards. Class officers shall consist of a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and reporter. Each class will elect a male and female representative for student council and one male and female representative for the student site-based committee.

The senior class will nominate and elect the following representatives for the senior class: Most Beautiful/Handsome, Best Dressed, Most Likely to Succeed, Most Studious, Most Spirited, Most Athletic, Most Humorous, and Best All Around. No senior will be permitted to run for more than two of these honors. If a student is nominated for more than two honors, the student will choose two categories that he or she would like to be considered for.

### ***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.

If a student uses a telecommunications device without authorization during the school day, the device will be confiscated. The parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal's office, and **a fee of \$10 will be charged before any confiscated electronic device will be returned (TEC 37.082).**

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student or the student's parents will be disposed of after the notice required by law. [See policy FNCE.]

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See **Searches** on page 60 and policy FNF.]

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

### **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. 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** on page 60 and policy FNF.]

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

### **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 sending, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition 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, 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 and may, in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement.

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

See **Course Credit** on page 23, **Grading Guidelines** on page 39, **Graduation** on page 40, and **Standardized Testing** on page 63.

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

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

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.]

Clubs and organizations must be approved by the high school principal and must have a staff member as a sponsor. Some clubs and organizations function every year and others do not.

The following are the currently approved organizations at Natalia High School:

- Social Studies Club
- Spanish Club
- FFA (Future Farmers of America)
- FCCLA (Future Career and Community Leaders of America)
- Drama Club
- UIL Activities (University Interscholastic League)
- Cheerleaders
- FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes)
- National Honor Society
- Student Council
- Site-Based Management
- Grade Level Classes
- Band
- TAFE (Texas Association of Future Educators)
- Peer Mediation
- Science Club
- Letterman’s Club

Each club must have a constitution; new clubs may be created (art club, chess club) upon approval by the high school principal.

Students who hold positions such as class officers, club or organization officers, including the annual honors such as class favorite, must fulfill all eligibility requirements relative to the honor

or position. Students must meet UIL eligibility requirements in order to tryout or be eligible for any position, and continue eligibility at the time of participation. Some organizations may set higher standards. (This policy includes candidates for position as a cheerleader, mascot, flag, twirler, drum major or dance team member.)

The following requirements apply to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than an Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate course; or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or language other than English—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to 15 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.
- In addition to state requirements regarding eligibility for participation in UIL or other extracurricular activities, a student shall maintain a minimum grade average of 65 in each weighted class as designated in the district in which the student is enrolled. This waiver for weighted classes will be granted under the following conditions:
  - The request for this waiver must be made by the student to the campus principal during the week of the grace period.
  - The student must attend and document attendance at tutorials for the course failed. Attendance at tutorials must be at least 1 hour per week during the 3 week period.
  - At the end of the 3 week period, the student must be passing (70 or above) in all classes and this progress report must be presented to the principal.
  - A waiver will not be granted for the same course or other courses during two successive grading periods.

Before an event/activity, sponsors submit a list of qualified participants to the office. Any absence resulting from a student's attendance at an event when he or she is not on the approved list shall be considered unexcused.

## NHS Eligibility Dates 2011-2012 School Year

Six Weeks	Reporting Date	Date
First	First day of 6-weeks	08/22/11
	3-week Progress Reports	09/13/11
	End of 6-weeks	09/30/11
	Gain or Lose Eligibility	10/07/11
Second	First day of 6-weeks	10/03/11
	3-week Progress Reports	10/25/11
	Regain Eligibility	10/28/11
	End of 6-weeks	11/11/11
	Gain or Lose Eligibility	11/18/11
Third	First day of 6-weeks	11/14/11
	3-week Progress Reports	12/13/11
	Regain Eligibility	12/16/11
	End of 6-weeks	01/13/12
	Gain or Lose Eligibility	01/20/12
Fourth	First day of 6-weeks	01/17/12
	3-week Progress Reports	02/07/12
	Regain Eligibility	02/10/12
	End of 6-weeks	02/24/12
	Gain or Lose Eligibility	03/02/12
Fifth	First day of 6-weeks	02/27/12
	3-week Progress Reports	03/27/12
	Regain Eligibility	03/30/12
	End of 6-weeks	04/13/12
	Gain or Lose Eligibility	04/20/12
Sixth	First day of 6-weeks	04/16/12
	3-week Progress Reports	05/08/12
	Regain Eligibility	05/11/12
	End of 6-weeks	05/31/12
	(Student is eligible during summer months)	
	Eligibility for the first six weeks of the fall term is based on total credits or credits earned during the past school year.	

Important reminders regarding UIL eligibility:

- v For students to be eligible when school starts, they must have at least 6 credits as a sophomore, 12 credits as a junior, and 18 credits as a senior.
- v Christmas holidays: all students are eligible during the holidays.  
Spring Break: all students are eligible during spring break.

### Standards of Behavior

With the approval of the principal and superintendent, sponsors and coaches of extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics and marching band, may develop and enforce standards of behavior that are higher than the District-developed *Student Code of Conduct* and



may condition membership or participation in the activity on adherence to those standards. Extracurricular standards of behavior may take into consideration conduct that occurs at any time, on or off school property. No provision of an extracurricular behavioral standard shall have the effect of discriminating on the basis of sex, race, disability, religion, or ethnicity.

Students shall be informed of any extracurricular behavior standards at the beginning of each school year or, in the case of interscholastic athletics and marching band, at the time the students report for workouts or practices that occur prior to the actual beginning of classes. Students and their parents shall sign and return to the sponsor or coach a statement that they have read the extracurricular behavior standards and consent to them as a condition of participation in the activity.

Organizational standards of behavior of an extracurricular activity are independent of the *Student Code of Conduct*. Violations of these standards of behavior that are also violations of the *Student Code of Conduct* may result in independent disciplinary actions.

[For further information, see policies at FM and FO(Local). For student-organized, student-led groups, see **Meetings of Non-Curriculum-Related Groups** on page 59.]

## **Offices and Elections**

Certain clubs, organizations, and performing groups will hold elections for student officers. These groups include: Band, FCCLA, FFA, National Honor Society, Spanish Club, and Student Council.

## **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, which require use of facilities not available on district premises.

- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school. [See **Buses and Other School Vehicles** on page 71.]
- 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).

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.]

## **FUND-RAISING**

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

Clubs and organizations will be allowed to have fundraisers to defray costs of trips, banquets, award ceremonies, or scholarships provided the following criteria are met:

1. Because of the need for funds for the Junior-Senior Prom and the Senior Activities, the junior and senior classes will be allowed to have suppers before football home games each fall. Both classes will divide concessions at home volleyball and basketball games.
2. The Band Boosters will work the home football concession stands.
3. Organizations will be limited to one fundraiser per semester.

Exceptions:

- The junior and senior classes
  - Cheerleaders during May for uniforms and/or summer camp
4. No two fundraisers will be allowed to run at the same time.
  5. All notices of fund raisers should be posted no later than three weeks from the faculty report date; all fundraiser notices posted after this deadline will be denied for the time requested if the dates conflict with previously scheduled fundraisers. (See 4 above.)
  6. All sponsors are required to turn fundraiser monies in to the General High School account. No later than the next duty day. No sponsor should take collected funds home for any reason. Under no circumstances may a student hold the total collected money from the fund raiser or turn in the funds to the central office. If collected funds must be kept overnight, they should be secured in the school vault.
  7. All students are required to turn in the fundraiser profits to the sponsor by the assigned deadline. Failure to turn in funds by deadlines will result in suspension of privileges until all accounts are paid in full. Charges of “theft by product” may be filed against a student for funds not turned in.
  8. Class, club, and organization funds belong to and are under the sole control of that individual class, club, or organization.

9. All fundraisers that involve catalogue or item sales will be paid for prior to submitting the order to the vendor.

## **GANG-FREE ZONES**

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

## **GRADE CLASSIFICATION**

Students are promoted only on the basis of academic achievement. A student who has not earned a passing grade of at least 70 will not earn credit for the course.

Since credit requirements for graduation vary according to the graduation plan chosen and date of high school entry, students should refer to the NHS Program Guide available in the Counselors' office for the number of credits needed to graduate.

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

Credits Earned	Classification
6	Grade 10 (Sophomore)
12	Grade 11 (Junior)
18	Grade 12 (Senior)

Note: A student's grade level classification can change during the school year. Exceptions: Students can be reclassified as in the case of early graduates and graduating juniors or if they reach the necessary credits through the campus' credit recovery program.

## **GRADING GUIDELINES**

Grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated and distributed to students and their parents by the classroom teacher. These guidelines have been reviewed by each applicable curriculum department and have been approved by the campus principal. These guidelines establish the minimum number of assignments, projects, and examinations required for each grading period. In addition, these guidelines establish how the student's mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.). Grading guidelines also outline in what circumstances a student will be allowed to redo an assignment or retake an examination for which the student originally made a failing grade.

State law requires a student's score on an end-of-course (EOC) assessment to count as 15 percent of the student's final grade for the course.

Also see **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 54 for additional information on grading guidelines. See **Graduation** below, **Course Credit** on page 23, and **Standardized Testing** on page 63 for additional information regarding EOC assessments.

## **Determining Semester Grades and Grades for Semester Courses**

Semester grades are determined by adding the three six weeks grades twice and the semester test grade once and dividing by seven.

## **Determining Final Grades for Full Year Courses**

Final (end of year) grade will be determined by adding the two semester grades and then dividing by two.

## **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
- Depending on the year in which the student is scheduled to graduate, pass a statewide exit-level exam or achieve the required cumulative scores on end-of-course (EOC) assessments.

The exit-level test, currently required for students in grade 11, covers English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies and requires knowledge of Algebra I and Geometry; Biology and Integrated Chemistry and Physics; English III; and early American and United States History, World History, and World Geography. Students in grades 10 and 11 during the 2011–2012 school year must pass the exit-level test to graduate. A student in grade 12 who has not passed the exit-level test will have opportunities to retake it.

Also see **Standardized Testing** on page 63 for more information.

Beginning with students who enter grade 9 in the 2011–2012 school year, EOC assessments will be administered for the following courses and will replace the exit-level test as mentioned above: English I, English II, English III, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, World Geography, World History, and United States History. Students graduating under the Minimum Program must take EOC assessments only for courses in which they are enrolled and for which there is an EOC assessment. Each student will be required to achieve certain scores on the applicable EOC assessments to graduate, depending on the graduation program in which the student is enrolled. A student who has not achieved sufficient scores 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 **Grading Guidelines** above and **Standardized Testing** on page 63 for more information.

## **GRADUATION PROGRAMS**

The district offers the graduation programs listed below. All students entering grade 9 are required to enroll in the Recommended Program or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program. Permission to enroll in the Minimum Program will be granted only if a written agreement is reached among the student, the student's parent or person standing in parental relation, and the counselor or appropriate administrator. In order for a student to take courses

under the Minimum Program, the student must be at least 16 years of age; have completed at least two credits each in English language arts, math, science, and social studies courses that are required for graduation; or have failed grade 9 one or more times. [See policy EIF(LEGAL).]

Effective with ninth graders in the 2011–2012 school-year, in addition to the credit and course requirements for each program, performance on EOC assessments will be linked to a student’s eligible graduation program. To graduate, a student must meet a minimum cumulative score set by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for each content area: English, mathematics, science, and social studies. To determine whether the student meets the cumulative score, the student’s EOC assessment scores in each content area will be added together. If the student’s total score on the assessments within the content area is not equal to or greater than the cumulative score set by TEA, the student may retake any of the assessments in that content area until the student achieves the cumulative score. A student who does not make the minimum required score on any individual assessment will be required to retake that assessment.

To graduate on the Recommended Program, a student must perform satisfactorily on the Algebra II and English III EOC assessments, in addition to meeting the cumulative score requirements described above. To graduate on the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program, a student must demonstrate advanced academic performance on the Algebra II and English III EOC assessments, commonly referred to as college and career readiness standards, in addition to successfully meeting performance standards on the other EOC assessments. If this standard is not met, the student will graduate under the Recommended Program, regardless of whether the student has met all other requirements for graduation under the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program.

All students must meet the following credit and course requirements for graduation under the programs listed:

<b>Courses</b>	<b>Number of credits Minimum Program</b>	<b>Number of credits Recommended Program</b>	<b>Number of credits Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program</b>
<b>English/Language Arts</b>	4	4	4
<b>Mathematics</b>	3	4	4
<b>Science</b>	2 or 3	4	4
<b>Social Studies</b>	2.5 or 3.5	3.5	3.5
<b>Economics</b>	0.5	0.5	0.5
<b>Physical Education</b>	1	1	1
<b>Speech</b>	0.5	0.5	0.5
<b>Language other than English</b>		2	3
<b>Fine Arts</b>	1 (effective for grade 9 in 2010-2011 school year and thereafter)	1	1
<b>Electives</b>	7.5 credits (prior to 2010–2011) 6.5 credits (2010–2011 and thereafter)	5.5 credits	4.5 credits

<b>Miscellaneous</b>			Completion of 4 Advanced Measures*
<b>TOTAL</b>	22 credits	26 credits	26 credits

\*A student graduating under the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program must also achieve a combination of four of the following advanced measures:

4. An original research project or other project that is related to the required curriculum. These projects must be judged by a panel of professionals or conducted under the direction of a mentor and reported to an appropriate audience. Please note that no more than two of the four advanced measures may be received from this option.

Test data where a student receives:

- A score of three or above on an Advanced Placement (AP) exam;
- A score of four or above on an International Baccalaureate (IB) exam; or
- A score on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) that qualifies the student for recognition as a commended scholar or higher by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation, as part of the National Hispanic Recognition Program (NHRP) of the College Board, or as part of the National Achievement Scholarship Program of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. The PSAT/NMSQT score will count as only one advanced measure regardless of the number of honors received by the student.
- College academic courses, including those taken for dual credit, and advanced technical courses, including locally articulated courses, provided the student scores the equivalent of a 3.0 or higher.

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 from the options listed above, will be distributed to students each spring in order to enroll in courses for the upcoming school year.

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 CTE, the district will offer the course for the following year either by teleconference or at the school from which the transfers were requested.

### **Certificates of Coursework Completion**

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

## **Students with Disabilities**

Upon the recommendation of the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee, a student with disabilities may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her 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 or whether an alternative assessment is more appropriate. STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate are the alternative assessments currently allowed by the state. [See **STANDARDIZED TESTING** on page 63 for additional information.] If a student takes the STAAR Modified or STAAR Alternate assessment, the student's ARD committee will determine whether the score on an EOC assessment will count as 15 percent of a student's final grade, as well as whether successful performance and a cumulative score on the EOC assessments will be required for graduation.

## **Graduation Ceremony**

A tentative list of candidates for graduation will be made by the high school counselor or principal at the beginning of each school year. A copy shall be given to the superintendent. The counselor will notify, in writing, parents of any seniors who have failing grades at the end of the first semester. Approximately, six weeks before graduation, written notification shall be given to parents of seniors whose grades may not permit them to graduate. The superintendent will also receive notification.

Students must meet the requirements set forth by the State of Texas for graduation. They must also pass the required Exit Level TAKS/EOC (End of Course) tests to graduate. A student who completes the required number of credits for graduation but does not pass the required TAKS/EOC test or who is denied credit based on state mandated compulsory attendance law will not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony. Although some students may have earned sufficient credits to graduate, those who have not passed the TAKS shall not receive a diploma until he/she passes the TAKS/EOC exit tests.

A committee made up of teachers, class sponsors, the counselor, secretaries, and principals will plan the ceremony. If the senior owes money to the school for any reason, he or she will be able to walk the stage at graduation if they meet the requirements stated above, but no transcripts will be issued on behalf of the student until the account is settled. Misconduct may also eliminate a student from the ceremony. In this event, the student will not be allowed to attend the ceremony and the diploma will be mailed home. This policy follows the state guidelines.

The top ten percent, the valedictorian and the salutatorian will be determined at the end of the fifth six weeks. Besides the grade requirements, the valedictorian and salutatorian must have been continuously enrolled in Natalia High School for the two years prior to the graduation and have completed a Dual Credit or AP class in each of those years to be eligible.

### **Graduation Speakers**

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

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

In addition to the opening and closing remarks, the Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and President of the Senior Class may also have speaking roles at the graduation ceremony.

[For student speakers at other school events, see **Student Speakers** on page 69.]

[See FNA(LOCAL).]

### **Graduation Expenses**

Because students and parents will incur expenses in order to participate in the traditions of graduation—such as the purchase of invitations, senior ring, cap and gown, and senior picture—both 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 **Fees** on page 37.]

### **State Scholarships and Grants**

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

Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the Recommended High School Program or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program may be eligible under the T.E.X.A.S. Grant Program for tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions. [For further information, see the principal or counselor and policy EJ(LEGAL).]

### **HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 23.]



## **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 on page 17 and policies FFI and FNCC.]

## **HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

### **Communicable Diseases**

Parents of students with a communicable or contagious disease are asked to telephone the school nurse/principal so that other students and teachers who have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. Convalescing students are not allowed to come to school until the disease is no longer contagious. For more information concerning communicable diseases, please refer to the policy manual for the school district in the principal's office.

### **Emergency Care Information**

This information is not optional. We must have this for emergency situations.

- Must have telephone numbers
- Must be kept up-dated
- Notify office secretary of changes

The school nurse needs to be notified of any serious illness or injury which occurs during the school year (fractures, asthma, etc.).

The District is not responsible for medical expenses associated with a student's injury. The District does make available, however, optional, low-cost student accident insurance program to assist parents in meeting medical expenses. A parent who desires coverage for his or her child will be responsible for paying insurance premiums and for submitting claims.

### **Emergency Medical Protocols**

The symptoms listed below will be treated by the school nurse in accordance with the school policy.

#### *Emergency systems*

Anaphylaxis

Fever over 100 Degrees

Insect Bites

Hives/Skin rashes

#### *Treatment*

Benadryl or epi pen

Tylenol (if unable to contact parents)

Caladryl lotion or Benadryl

Caladryl lotion or Benadryl

## **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 from the district's website [www.Nataliaisd.net](http://www.Nataliaisd.net). [See also policies at BDF and EHAA.]

The duties of the SHAC range from recommending curriculum to developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, and employee wellness. See policies at BDF and EHAA.

## **Other Health Related Matters**

### **Physical Fitness Assessment**

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to teachers in the physical education department 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.]

### **Food and Drinks**

All food and drinks shall be eaten in the cafeteria or outside area only. Classroom parties or other occasions where food and drink might be consumed in the classroom must be approved in advance by the principal. Drink and snack machines will be shut off during instructional class time and passing periods.

***Students are not allowed to bring open container type drinks*** (cups with or without lids, bottles, cans, etc.) or food items into the halls or classrooms at any time unless given special permission to do so by a principal.

### **Tobacco Prohibited**

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

### **Asbestos Management Plan**

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, and is available in the district maintenance office. If you have any questions, please contact Richard Morales, Plant Operations/Transportation Director, (830) 663-4416.

### **Pest Management Plan**

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Richard Morales, Plant Operations/Transportation Director, (830) 663-4416.

## ***HOMELESS STUDENTS***

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Liaison for the Homeless Children and Youths, Joyce St. John, Special Education Director (830) 663-4416.

## ***HOMEWORK***

Each teacher has their own policy, procedures, and grading system for any homework they may assign. Contact your student's teacher for more information.

## ***HOME SCHOOL***

Home school student's credits will be only allowed based on the following criteria:

- The credits must match the Texas state (TEA) recognized curriculum for high school students.
- Verification of the credits will be determined based on either a passing grade of 70% or higher on "Credit-by-Exam" or proof of earned credit through an accredited institution accepted by TEA.

## ***IMMUNIZATION***

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

## ***LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES***

### **Questioning of Students**

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

The principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.

The principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

The principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

### **Students Taken Into Custody**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Notification of Law Violations**

The district is required by state law to notify:

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

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

## **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS**

A student with limited English proficiency (LEP) is entitled to receive specialized services from the district. To determine whether the student qualifies for services, a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will be formed, which will consist of both district personnel and at least one parent representative. The student's parent must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC for a LEP student.

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

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR-L, as mentioned at Standardized Testing, below, may be

administered to a LEP student. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to LEP students who qualify for services.

If a student is considered LEP and receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student's ARD committee will make these decisions.

## **MAKEUP WORK**

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

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

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

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

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

### **DAEP 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).]

### **Incomplete Work**

A student will be given an "incomplete" only when the number of days for make-up extends past the end of a six-week period or semester. Students will have one week after the end of the grading period to turn in all make-up work and change their incomplete status. It is strongly recommended that in the case of an anticipated absence that the students make up their work prior to the absence. The Attendance Committee will determine if the student will be allowed to make up days if they surpass their 90% attendance requirement. The teacher will score all make-up work at a maximum of 100% mastery.

Students who have planned absences for appointments or school related activities are expected to ask their teachers for assignments ahead of time. This is the responsibility of the student not the High School office.

All other incompletes are under the discretion of the teacher and must be changed to a grade within five school days after the report card is issued or the "I" will change to the average in the electronic grade book listed on the day the "I" was given.

## **In-School Suspension (ISS) 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, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
  - Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.
  - Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
  - Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.
- In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only:
  - In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district's medical advisor; and
  - When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district's form.

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

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

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

## ***NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY***

### **Membership Selection Procedures**

Membership in the National Honor Society is an honor bestowed upon a student. Selection for membership is by a Faculty Council and is based on outstanding scholarship, character, leadership, and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities and to maintain NHS Bylaws. (NHS Bylaws will be reviewed prior to the Selection Process beginning.)

1. NHS initial membership qualifications require the student to have a cumulative average of 90, (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grades). Students entering their 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade year are eligible to apply.
2. NHS members will be required to complete a self-evaluation form regarding their community service, leadership, and character.
3. Teacher evaluation forms will also be completed on each candidate.
4. Number of reports on discipline, absences, and tardiness will also be obtained and reviewed by the Faculty Council.
5. To conclude the process, candidates must have an interview with the Faculty Council. (Inductions will ideally be held at the beginning of the school year.)

### **Guidelines for Remaining Eligible**

1. All members must maintain a cumulative average of 90, or better.
2. Members must maintain good standing with the faculty and administration. Cases of cheating or insolence will be reviewed by the principal, faculty council, and adviser and may result in a member's dismissal.
3. Members must show interest in the organization by participating in society activities.
4. Members are expected to attend all meetings called by the adviser and/or the chapter president. If a member is unable to attend a meeting due to another school commitment, the member should contact the adviser as soon as possible.

## ***NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT***

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Natalia 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: Joyce St. John, Director of Special Education, 8<sup>th</sup> & Pearson, Natalia, Texas 78059, (830) 663-4416.
- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Joyce St. John, Director of Special Education, 8<sup>th</sup> & Pearson, Natalia, Texas 78059, (830) 663-4416.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent, Dr. Guillermo Mancha, (830) 663-4416.

## ***NONTRADITIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS***

[See **Requirements for a Diploma** on page 40.]

## ***OFFICE AIDES /TEACHER AIDES (STUDENTS)***

Only seniors will be allowed to serve as aides. These students will be responsible for going to the class/office to which they are assigned each day. Attendance will be monitored, and students will do jobs assigned by the teacher or other school personnel. Students may be an aide for one period only.

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

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

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

## ***PRAYER***

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

## ***PROMOTION AND RETENTION***

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

In grades 9-12, promotion is based on credits earned.

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.\*

In order to be promoted to grade 9, students enrolled in grade 8 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 8 assessment in English.

\* Because the 2011–2012 school year is the first year of implementation of the STAAR, students will not be required by state law to perform satisfactorily on the grade 5 or 8 STAARs for this one year only in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

Parents of a student in grades 3–8 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year.

With the exception of the 2011–2012 school year, a student in grade 5 or 8 will have two additional opportunities to take a failed assessment. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student’s parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous and the student must complete additional special instruction before beginning the next grade level. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policies at EIE.]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period or during the fourth week of each six-week grading period, parents will be given a written progress report of their child's performance in all courses. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any course at the end of a grading period, the parent should request a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. [See **Working Together** on page 2 for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal and are designed to reflect each student's academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See policy EIA(LOCAL) and **Grading Guidelines** on page 39.]

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

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

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

## **RETALIATION**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 23.]

## **SAFETY**

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

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or 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**

A voluntary, low cost accident insurance program will be offered to all students at the beginning of the school year. Students or parents shall pay the premium for the coverage if they choose to participate in the voluntary program.

Extra-Curricular Accident Coverage: The District will cooperate in a program to insure all students involved in extra-curricular school events (athletics, drill-team, cheerleaders, band, UIL

academics, student managers & trainers, choir, etc.) while under the supervision of school personnel. This program is a secondary accident insurance policy, should the student have his/her own private insurance. However, should the student not have private insurance, this coverage becomes the primary insurance carrier. It is understood that our Athletic Trainer must refer the student to the doctors, hospitals, etc. that participate in our PPO plan to receive maximum benefits. This program is to help cover doctors, hospital, etc. costs to students that may be injured while representing Natalia I.S.D.

## **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 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.

During weather related or other school-closing emergencies, the superintendent will release information to the public through the following media outlets:

- KMOL TV channel 4
- KENS TV channel 5
- KSAT TV channel 12
- WOAI AM radio 1200

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

See **Standardized Testing** on page 63.

## ***SCHEDULE CHANGES***

Requests for schedule changes will be accepted only during the first ten (10) school days of the fall semester or during the registration week. To qualify for a change of schedule a student must:

Submit a written parent request with a phone number for any course change (parent request with signature).

Receive teacher approval from both teachers (The one whose class the student is leaving and the one the student is hoping to enter.)

The counselor will review all changes for academic appropriateness.

All special education student class changes must be reviewed by the special education department chairman.

Dropping classes to remain eligible for U.I.L, to go to work, or to change teachers are not considered legitimate reasons. A committee comprised of teachers, an administrator, and the counselor will decide on controversial requests. The Academic Review Committee's decision is final. Any request to change a schedule after the first **five school days** will be under the discretion of the counselor and/or principal. The parents will be notified of any change in schedule after the **five day rule**. **There will be NO class change accepted past the five day rule.**

## ***SCHOOL EVENT CALENDAR***

All school events or school-sponsored events are to be scheduled through one of the High School administrators and are to be placed on a master calendar posted weekly on the High School website. No activity shall take place in the name of the school or any school organization without the approval of the principal. In the event date conflicts cannot be worked out, the event placed on the calendar first takes precedence.

## ***SCHOOL FACILITIES***

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

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

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

- Cafeteria and school parking lots.

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.

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

### **Monday-Friday**

First Bell	7:55
1 <sup>st</sup> period	8:00-8:49
2 <sup>nd</sup> period (Announcements)	8:53-9:47
3 <sup>rd</sup> period	9:51-10:40
4 <sup>th</sup> period	10:44-11:33
5 <sup>th</sup> period	11:37-12:26
Lunch	12:26-1:06
6 <sup>th</sup> period	1:10-1:59
7 <sup>th</sup> period	2:03-2:52
8 <sup>th</sup> period	2:56-3:45

### **Pep Rally Schedule**

First Bell	7:55
1 <sup>st</sup> period	8:00-8:45
2 <sup>nd</sup> period (Announcements)	8:49-9:39
3 <sup>rd</sup> period	9:43-10:28
4 <sup>th</sup> period	10:32-11:17
5 <sup>th</sup> period	11:21-12:06 (Release band and cheerleaders at 11:58)
Pep Rally	12:08-12:33
Lunch	12:33-1:13
6 <sup>th</sup> period	1:17-2:02
7 <sup>th</sup> period	2:06-2:51
8 <sup>th</sup> period	2:55-3:40

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

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

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

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

### **Cafeteria Services**

The district participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily. Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need.

Information about a student's participation is confidential. Applications shall be distributed district-wide at the beginning of each school year, and shall be available in the high school main office at any time. The food service director or designee shall determine eligibility.

Applications for free and reduced-price meal program participation shall be submitted to the main office or food service director. See the cafeteria manager, Director Child Nutrition Services, or call 830-663-4416 to apply.

It is the responsibility of the parents to make sure that your student/s have access to the healthy, nutritious meals being offered daily through NISD Child Nutrition Services. All meals should be prepaid or paid with cash at time of purchase.

Prepaid accounts work like a debit card. Meal accounts are maintained by Child Nutrition staff using a computer POS system. When a purchase is made using the student's ID number, the amount is deducted from that student's account.

Federal regulations do not mandate meals to be furnished to children without money.

The ability to charge meals is a privilege for students and faculty who have forgotten their money. Notification of negative accounts are sent home weekly with the students. Emails are sent to parents who have an email address on file with the district and Child Nutrition Department on a weekly basis for negative and low balance accounts.

The district and Child Nutrition Department acknowledge the link between education, attendance, behavior and healthy lifestyle choices.

There will be no charging over \$8 allowed in the cafeteria. After reaching the \$8 limit, the student will receive a sandwich and milk. Meals may be prepaid on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis in the food service office, each cafeteria, the serving line, or by mail. If paying by mail use the following address: Natalia Cafeteria, P.O. Box 548, Natalia, TX 78059. Pre-payment by the week or month helps speed up the serving process in the lunch line.

Meal Prices are as follows:

Breakfast – Free, once daily, for all Natalia High School students. Breakfast for adults and visitors is \$1.75.

Reduced Lunch is \$.40, once daily, at all campuses.

Regular Lunch is \$1.75 for Natalia High School students. Adult lunch is \$3, and for visitors lunch is \$3.25.

Students with special dietary needs must file the Eating and Feeding Evaluation Form with the Child Nutrition department. The form must be re-filed each year, as dietary needs change, and as the child grows. The form is available at all campus cafeterias. This is the only form we will accept.

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.

Texas Public School Nutrition Policy (TPSNP) guidelines will be followed at all times.

Competitive foods may not be sold, given away, or shared between students where reimbursable meals are sold or consumed.

Sharing of foods between students is prohibited by the TPSNP and for health and sanitation reasons. For more information on the TPSNP visit [www.squaremeals.org](http://www.squaremeals.org).

**\*\*Please Note:** USDA policy prohibits the denial of meals as a disciplinary action against any student who is enrolled in a school participating in the Child Nutrition Programs. Disciplinary

action which indirectly results in the loss of meals is allowable (student suspended from school). When the withholding of meals is the disciplinary action, or if the disciplinary action directly results in the loss of meals, it is inconsistent with the law and is not allowable.

All students, including ISS students, must have equal access to foodservice (all lines and meal types) if they are allowed to go to the cafeteria to receive meals during regular meal periods. If ISS students are allowed access to the cafeteria, either before or after regular serving times, they may be limited to only one reimbursable line or meal type.

The following guidelines for common courtesy and good manners are required:

- While eating on campus, students are allowed to eat in the **Cafeteria only**.
- Keep your proper place in line without crowding or passing in front of others.
- Observe accepted practices of neatness and cleanliness. Help keep tables clean and benches/chairs in place and clean.
- Dispose of all trash in the proper containers.

### **STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CLEANING UP AFTER THEMSELVES.**

**\*\*In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.**

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired, or have speech disabilities, may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800)845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### **Library**

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

- Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### **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).

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

### **SCHOOL SPONSORED TRIPS AND SENIOR ACTIVITIES**

All students, including band students, making a school-sponsored trip are expected to use transportation furnished or authorized by the school.

The school is not responsible if a student is injured at school or while on a school trip.

Students will follow the instructions of the bus driver and the adult sponsors of the trip.

**Students who owe library fines, cafeteria charges, monies from fundraisers, or any other financial obligation will not be allowed to attend trips or senior activities.**

Overnight field trips lasting more than 36 hours must have Board approval.

Academic or athletic events that are greater than seventy miles away or two or more days in duration may require an overnight stay.

Students must return on the bus if they attended the event by bus unless otherwise allowed by the principal.

Students are considered truant by the state if they do not have school permission to go on a field trip but go anyway with or without parent permission.

All students exhibiting habitual behavior problems will not be permitted to attend school sponsored trips as per teacher recommendations.

If any student exhibits inappropriate behavior during a field trip, the sponsors may call the parents and require them to come and pick up their son or daughter from the field trip.

The high school principal must approve all senior activities. The senior class is responsible for any expenses needed to provide for the senior class activities. The activities can be no longer than sixteen hours unless the principal is presented with a compelling reason to make an exception. Any trip longer than thirty-six hours must have Board approval. Any damage incurred during the senior activities will be paid by the student(s) who are responsible.

## **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.

### **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**

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*.]

## **Trained Dogs**

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

## **Metal Detectors**

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

## **Drug-Testing**

[For further information, see policy FNF(LOCAL). Also, see **Steroids**, on page 64.]

## **SEMESTER EXAMS**

All Teachers are required to give all their students a semester 1 and a semester 2 exam at the scheduled day and time. The scheduled days and times will not be altered in any way. All athletic classes and student aide assignments are exempted from final exams. Second semester senior final exams will be given earlier than the other class exams because of the need to average grades to determine graduation requirements. Except for an emergency such as a funeral, death in the family, wedding, or extreme illness, all high school students will be required to take all final exams at the scheduled day and time. No make-ups will be allowed unless the absence was due to an emergency described above. Each final exam is worth 25% of the final semester grade.

### **Spring Semester Senior Final Exam Exemption**

Some seniors may be exempt from all the spring semester final exams if all the following conditions are met:

- You must have a spring semester cumulative average of 80% or higher in each class in both core and elective courses.
- You must not have a single unexcused absence or three or more tardies in any one class the entire semester.
- You cannot have a total of more than five excused absences from any single class. (This will be up to and including attendance the day before the first scheduled senior exam.)

No student who enrolled at any time during the spring semester will be exempted from final exams. This includes students that may have withdrawn and re-enrolled during the spring semester.

The attendance officer will notify all qualified seniors the week before the scheduled final exams if they are qualified up to that point. The cumulative average will be determined by the teacher the day before the senior final exams are scheduled to begin or on a date given by administration. This is an all or nothing program. Seniors will be exempted from all exams or none based on the above criteria.

All seniors must continue with their regular daily attendance after completing their final exams. The seniors will be assigned different functions during the final exam periods such as commencement rehearsal, special senior luncheons, and conferences with the counselor etc.

### **Spring Final Exam Exemption for 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade**

In order to be exempted from all spring semester final exams at the end of the year, students must meet the following requirements:

- You must pass all your classes the second semester both core and elective with a 74% or higher average.
- Must have passed all TAKS/EOC tests given for their grade level.
- You must not have four or more tardies in any one class the entire year.
- No DAEP, ISS, or OSS assignments the second semester. If there is a carryover suspension or DAEP assignment from the first semester, the student is ineligible.
- Must have actively participated in an academic UIL activity.
- Must have seven or fewer absences the entire school year and no more than five the second semester.

Students will be notified if they meet all the criteria for eligibility. If you meet all the criteria but still wish to take the final exam to try and improve your grade, you may elect to do so, but the student must follow the final exam schedule and take the exam on the day and time scheduled. Eligible students that elect to do this only need to attend the exam and may leave after the final exam period is completed.

Those students remaining will work on academic and behavioral RTI Tier 1 & 2, preparation for the next TAKS/EOC test, and take final exams.

Seniors will still be required to be here for graduation rehearsal, senior luncheon, and attend a final meeting with the counselor to fill out forms related to graduation. All these events for seniors will be done in the last week of school. In other words, seniors who qualify for the early vacation will have three days off rather than five.

### ***SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING COMMITTEE***

The Texas Education Agency has empowered each school to use committee recommendations for developing district and campus plans. The state recommends that the committee consist of the following members: Two parents, two community members (live in community but do not have students enrolled in the school district), two business members (no residency or location requirement), six teachers, a counselor, and a principal. The superintendent, assistant principal and students are liaison members. This group is responsible for making recommendations on in-service, some budgetary concerns, curriculum, various policies, and facility use and construction. This committee serves as an advisory committee to the principal.

### ***SPECIAL PROGRAMS***

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

## **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 with the counselor early during their junior year to determine the appropriate exam to take; these exams are usually taken at the end of the junior year.

The ACT or SAT may be available at no cost to students. In addition, students in grades 8 and 10 may have the opportunity to take the corresponding preparation assessments at no charge. Please check with the counselor for details.

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

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

Beginning with ninth graders in the 2011–2012 school year, end-of-course (EOC) assessments will be administered for the following courses:

Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II

English I, English II, and English III

Biology, Chemistry, and Physics

World Geography, World History, and United States History

Satisfactory performance on the applicable assessments will be required for graduation and will also affect the plan under which the student may graduate.

Normally, there will be 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. For the 2011–2012 school year, however, there will be only the spring and summer administrations of the EOC assessments.

In each content area (English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies), a student must achieve a cumulative score. To determine whether the student meets the cumulative score, the student's EOC assessment scores in each content area will be added together. If the student's total score on the assessments within the content area is not equal to or greater than the cumulative score set by TEA, the student may retake any of the assessments in that content area until the student achieves the cumulative score. A student who does not achieve the minimum required score on any individual assessment will be required to retake that assessment.

A student may choose to retake an EOC assessment in situations other than those listed above as well.

STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate, 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.

STAAR-L, which is a linguistically accommodated assessment, will be available for students who have been determined to be limited English proficient (LEP) and who require this type of testing accommodation.

Additional information will be provided to students and parents prior to the spring 2012 administrations.

Also see **Course Credit** on page 23, **Grading Guidelines** on page 39, and **Graduation** on page 40 for additional information.

### **TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills)**

TAKS is a state-mandated assessment currently being transitioned to the STAAR program. However, depending on the grade level of the student, TAKS may still be administered to a student.

For a student in grade 10 or 11 during the 2011–2012 school year, the student will be assessed with TAKS in the subject areas of mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, and science. The test at grade 11 is called “exit-level” TAKS, and satisfactory performance on this test is required for graduation.

Also see **Graduation** on page 40 for more information.

### **THEA (Texas Higher Education Assessment)**

Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test, such as the Texas Higher Education Assessment [THEA]. The purpose of the THEA is 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 test may be required before a student enrolls in a dual-credit course offered through the district as well.

### **STEROIDS**

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

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

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

### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

#### **Automobiles on Campus**

Students must show proof of liability insurance and a valid Texas Drivers' License in order to be issued a parking permit. In addition, students must turn in a parent permission form that lists the names of all individuals who are permitted to drive the car being issued a parking permit. The permit is to be displayed on the vehicle just above the inspection sticker. All vehicles in the parking lot or driven on school grounds must have this permit. After one warning, a student's car without a permit may be towed away at the student's expense. Students must park their vehicles in the student parking lot; only with permission from the principal may students park elsewhere. Cars may be towed away at the student's expense if they are illegally parked.

Unless they are in the process of arriving to or departing from school, students are not permitted to be in the parking lot without written permission from the office. A student is not allowed to

sit in their car or any other car during lunch or at any time during the school day. Cars can only be used for transportation. Any other use of a vehicle is strictly prohibited and consequences will be given for breaking this rule. Students are required to drive with caution when entering and leaving school grounds. Discipline procedures may be taken against unsafe student drivers and passengers. All students receiving a parking permit will be required to be part of the voluntary drug testing program. Please see the district handbook for details.

**The cost of each parking permit is \$3.**

## **Dances**

Four school employee sponsors are required to attend. If the sponsors are not present at the time of the dance, the dance will be canceled.

The sponsors' names are to be given to the principal at least one day prior to the dance.

Once a participant leaves a dance, he or she may not reenter.

Only Natalia High School students are permitted to come to the dance.

In lieu of four sponsors, two sponsors and one police officer or one administrator must attend.

Students must present a school ID card in order to be admitted to a school dance.

A student who owes library fines, cafeteria costs, monies from fundraisers, or any other financial obligation will not be allowed to attend to a school dance.

## **Disciplinary Referrals**

Any student who receives three discipline referrals will automatically be placed in Tier II of the Discipline Management Plan. Five Discipline referrals can/may result in a referral to DAEP.

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

In-School Suspension (ISS) is considered a suspension the same as Out-of-School Suspension (OSS). ISS takes place during the school day in a designated room. Students may be placed in ISS for a variety of disciplinary issues. The assignment may be for a single period up to an entire day or multiple days. A student can only be assigned ISS through the disciplinary referral system. Only a school administrator can assign ISS. Parents of minor children assigned ISS must be notified of the placement. Once a student is assigned ISS, they will be briefed by the ISS supervisor. They will not be able to leave the ISS room for any reason other than a bathroom break. They will receive one bathroom break in the morning and one in the afternoon. Other bathroom breaks will only be given on an emergency basis and only to the bathroom immediately next to the ISS room. Students will eat lunch in the ISS room. If an ISS student is found anywhere else in the district during the school day, further disciplinary action will be given. All ISS students must work on assignments from their teachers. If there is little previous notice for the assignment, the student must work on previously known classroom work or simply study from their notes or textbooks until the assignments arrive. If an ISS student does not follow the ISS supervisor's policies, they will receive consequences. The ISS supervisor can and will assign work when a student receives no class work from the Teacher.

## **Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)**

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) is a suspension served outside of the school grounds in the home of the student. Before a student can be assigned OSS, the parent/guardian must be notified and the parent/guardian must come to school to pick up the student and take the student home. While serving OSS, the student is not allowed on campus for any reason including athletic events

and any other function taking place on school grounds. OSS may be assigned for a portion of a day or multiple days. The usual OSS limit is three days.

### **DAEP Placement**

The principal or assistant principal will make all DAEP placement recommendations to the superintendent. The DAEP Principal or stand-in for the Principal will then schedule a hearing where the campus representative, student, and parent will be required to attend. The final decision will be made at the hearing to consider the necessity and length of the placement. Any appeal of the decision will follow the grievance process described in the district handbook.

When a student is placed/assigned DAEP, they must report to the assigned district DAEP room at 7:00 am and remain at the assigned DAEP district room until 5:00 pm. The DAEP administrator will give a parent and student briefing regarding the DAEP rules and regulations. It is the parent's responsibility to have their children here by 7:00 am and be picked up at 5:00 pm. No district transportation will be provided at those times. If any assigned student fails to meet these assigned requirements, make-up will be assigned.

### **ID Cards (School Identity Cards)**

School ID cards will be issued during the first week of school. **School ID cards must be displayed at all times by all students.** Presentation of school ID cards will be required at the following functions:

- **Off-campus lunch** (School ID cards will be shown as the student leaves campus.) Monitors may pick up ID cards when students leave campus and return them upon arrival during the required lunch period.
- **All field trips** (School ID cards will be checked by the sponsors before they enter the bus or leave the school.)
- **All athletic events** (No student will be allowed in as a student without showing their school ID card at the entrance to the athletic event. They may enter by paying the adult price of admission if they have forgotten their school ID card.)
- **Breakfast and lunch** (If a student does not have their school ID card for breakfast or lunch, they will be asked to go to the end of the line and only be served after everyone else is served.) If a student has lost their ID card, they must purchase a new card. Lanyards must be worn with ID cards at all times.
- **Library** (All students must show their school ID cards before they may use any equipment in the library or check out any books. This includes using any book or the computers in the library.)
- **MML usage** (All students must show their school ID cards before they will be allowed to use any computer in the MML.)
- **Transcripts** (No current student will be able to receive a transcript without first showing his or her ID card.)
- **Report Cards/Progress Reports** (All students must show their school ID cards before receiving their report card or progress report. If the student does not have their ID card with them, the reports will be held in the office for parents to pick them up.)

- **After school functions** (All students will be required to show their school ID cards at all after school events such as dances. The student will not be allowed to enter the dance or function without presenting a valid student ID card.)
- **Automobile Registration** (All students must present a valid school ID card before receiving a school parking permit.) Vehicles must have appropriate registration and insurance or they will be towed. Vehicles not registered will be towed

If a student loses or misplaces his or her school ID card, a second one will be issued free of charge. All subsequent cards will be issued at the cost of \$5.00 per card. Report any lost, stolen, or misplaced ID cards to Mrs. Perez in the high school office.

## **Leaving School and Returning**

If it becomes necessary for a student to leave school during the school day, the student's parent/guardian must send a note or come by in person to request the student's release. Phone calls will not be accepted as a means to release a student. If a student leaves campus without a parents/guardian's note or presence, the student is truant. All students must sign in and out through the attendance office. If a person other than the legal parent or guardian will need to pick up a student, the parent/guardian must provide the office with written notice in the registration package that the person has permission to pick up the student.

## **Lockers**

Students are assigned a locker when they register for classes. Students are only to use the locker assigned to them. Students are not to give anyone their locker combination. No tape, decals or gummed stickers are to be used on the outside surface of the lockers. All materials inside lockers must be removed at the end of the school year, including gummed objects or residue. Divided shelves may be used to keep lockers neat and organized. All lockers are subject to search at any time. Students are not permitted to "jam" the locks and prevent their lockers from locking properly when closed. Anyone caught jamming their locks on lockers will lose locker privileges for the remainder of the school year. Should anyone be caught using another's locker both will lose locker privileges. Books found in a locker belonging to anyone who the locker is not assigned to will be confiscated. Books are assigned to students and students are responsible for the books. Warning: Lockers belong to the school district and can be searched at any time. This is your notice.

## **Lunch Permit**

Junior and Senior students are given the privilege of leaving campus for lunch. Beginning with the first progress report students must earn the privilege of leaving campus for lunch by passing all their classes, having no office referrals, and no more than four or more absences or a total (all classes combined) of four or more tardies since their last progress report or report card. Their off campus lunch eligibility will be determined by the progress reports, six-week report cards, office referrals, and attendance records. If a student has met all the criteria listed, they will be given the privilege of going off campus for lunch until the next progress report or report card is issued.

A parent who wishes to allow their son or daughter to participate in this program must fill out the "Lunch Permit" found in the registration packet. Filling out the form only allows your son or daughter the opportunity to participate in the program. After the form is completed and signed, the student will receive a lunch permit for the first three weeks of school. Beginning with the first progress report, students must pick up their lunch permits from the high school office if they

meet the eligibility requirements mentioned above. Please remember that students must also present their school ID cards before they will be allowed to leave campus.

The lunch permit privilege will be revoked for thirty days the first time a student is late returning from lunch. The permit will be revoked for ninety days for the second late return from lunch. The third time a student is late from returning from lunch will result in losing the privilege for the remainder of the year. Eligibility in the off-campus lunch program may be revoked any time during the school year due to student misconduct or by parent request.

**Freshmen and sophomores are not allowed to leave campus for lunch.**

## **Pregnant Students**

A pregnant student needs to notify the counselor and principal immediately when a doctor has indicated that she is pregnant. The office must have on file a doctor's note indicating that she is pregnant and giving the estimated time of delivery. The principal or counselor will explain services available.

## **Standards of Behavior that Apply to All Students**

Keep all food and drink out of all hallways and classrooms.

Students may not enter hallways before the first bell and may not come back into the classrooms after leaving at 3:35 unless they are involved in a teacher-sponsored activity.

Students may not run, push, jump, engage in rough play, use profanity, or shout in the halls and classrooms.

Students may not come into hallways during the lunch period until the bell rings to begin class unless the student has a pass from the teacher who is requesting the student's presence at that time.

Students are not allowed to have permanent markers, or light pointer pens.

Students are not allowed to express verbally or in writing tag names or tag lettering on school supplies or facilities. Writing on any part of the school, floors, walls, desks can be a state jail felony.

The application of makeup, hair products, eye makeup, or perfume/cologne will not be allowed in the classroom or cafeteria. Get dressed at home or in the restroom please.

Respect is an important aspect of Natalia High School. Respect is defined as a student doing whatever any staff member asks them to do unless they are asked to:

- Do something that will cause physical or emotional harm to themselves or someone else.
- Do something illegal.
- Do something immoral.

If a student follows the above procedure for showing respect to a staff member and still feels they have been unfairly accused or judged, the student must schedule a meeting at another time with the staff member to discuss the issue privately. The student should avoid arguing with a staff member in a class or public setting. If the issue cannot be resolved after meeting privately, the student may go to the high school administration to help resolve the issue.

Skateboards are prohibited on the campus at any time.



## **Students Over 18 Signing Out**

Eighteen year old students attending Natalia High School will be required to follow the same attendance policy as any other student in the district. If an eighteen year old student signs himself/herself out, it must be for a doctor's appointment, illness, or emergency of some type. Verification of this type of absence will be required. If the student signs himself/herself out for lunch without a lunch pass, that student will be considered truant.

The office has been instructed not to forbid any eighteen year old student from signing out, but consequences will be given upon his or her return if the student was not following school policy.

Once an eighteen year old student decides to enroll at Natalia High School, he or she will be required to follow all the same procedures as any other student. An eighteen year old student may decide to withdraw as a student at any time he or she wishes; however, the local and state attendance policies and required court appearances will continue. Any other tickets or violations that occurred while the student was enrolled at Natalia will also continue to completion. If a student is 17 years old on the first day of school, that student is then required to attend the entire year. If an 18 year old student is absent 5 days, or part of a day, during any semester, he/she may be revoked from attending school.

## **STUDENT SPEAKERS**

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce the following school events: pep rallies. Students are eligible to introduce these events if they are members of a high school athletic team, are members of the high school cheerleading squad, volunteer to speak, and are not in a disciplinary placement or suspension from any extra-curricular activity at the time of the speaking event. A student who is eligible and wishes to introduce one of the school events listed above should submit his or her name to the principal during the first week of the fall semester and/or spring semester. The names of all students who volunteered will be randomly drawn and matched to the event for which the student will give the introduction. If the selected student speaker declines or becomes ineligible, then no student introduction will be made at that event. The selection of students to introduce school events will occur at the beginning of each semester.

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

[See policy FNA(LOCAL).]

## **SUMMER SCHOOL**

Each school year the need for summer school will be determined by the high school administration in consultation with the counselor's office and central administration. Summer School subjects will only be English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Credit for summer school work will be permitted only if the work is done in a school that is approved by the Texas Education Agency or a district approved program. Work completed under the tutelage of a private teacher or agency will not be accepted for credit. Courses completed in summer school will be counted towards graduation and in the student's overall GPA. A transcript from another school in which summer work has been taken will be transferred to the student's permanent record in its entirety.

Natalia High School will offer summer school for credit recovery.

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

See **Standardized Testing** on page 63.

### **TARDINESS**

All students are expected to be in class with all necessary materials and ready to work prior to the ringing of the tardy bell. Students in the halls, or outside of class at the time of the tardy bell ringing without proper written permission (notes, passes, etc.), will be subject to disciplinary action. Students will be held accountable for each tardy, regardless of the reason for the tardy.

A tardy of 15 minutes or more will be counted as an absence, for which make up time will be required.

- Three tardies equals one absence.
- Whether a tardy will be considered excused or unexcused will be determined by the number of tardies and the individual circumstances of the student.
- Tardies will not be recorded when the following circumstances exist:
  - Road construction
  - Traffic accidents
  - Train delays
  - Late release from prior class (with appropriate teacher approval)
  - Any other unusual reason the teacher or principal finds acceptable

Tardies will be official when recorded in the office. Tardies are part of the school day. An absence for a class is part of the school day. Three or more absences over a 4 week period or 10 or more over a 6 month period will result in a case filed in court.

### **Tardy Referrals**

First referral to the office for tardies that are excused will not incur a consequence. If the tardy is unexcused, a one hour school detention will be issued. The attendance officer, office staff or teacher will write Detention slip and assign the detention for the first tardy.

The second tardy may/will incur a two-hour morning detention (6:00 am – 7:55 am).

Unexcused/failure to attend the two-hour detention will result in a day of ISS/OSS plus a two-hour morning detention.

Third referral to the office for tardies: The student will be assigned a day of ISS/OSS.

More than three tardies will be dealt with as chronic misbehavior. Students can be placed on probation, removed from UIL activities, band, football, etc., given additional work, duties, ISS, at home suspension, etc. Chronic tardy behavior may result in further serious consequences as in call to parents, suspension, etc.

Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe disciplinary action, in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

### **TELEPHONE (MAIN OFFICE)**

The school telephone is for school business. Students will not be allowed to use the telephone except in emergency situations. Under no circumstances is a student to use his or her cell phone to call home for parents to pick them during the school day. The office must know when an emergency phone call must be made, and we will make it.

Students will not be called from class to answer telephone calls. In case of an emergency, a message will be given to the student.

Non-emergency messages will be given to students between classes.

Emergency use of the telephone by students must be approved by the office staff.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

State-approved textbooks are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. 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 paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided textbooks and equipment for use at school during the school day.

## **TRANSCRIPTS/RECORDS**

Transcripts may be requested by submitting a written request. The transcript request form may be obtained at the high school front desk. There is a three-day waiting period between the initial request for transcript and delivery to the student. Transcripts will not be provided if fines are still owed to the school. Minor students are required to provide a written request with a parent signature in order to receive a transcript (See forms in main office or High School office). Transcript requests given the first two weeks in July will be processed during the third week due to the high school office being closed. A written request must be submitted each time a transcript is requested. Records or transcripts via written request will not carry a charge.

## **TRANSFERS**

[See **School Safety Transfers**, on page 6, and **Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education Services**, on page 6, 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. The principal, however, may make an exception if the parent makes a written request that the student be released to the parent or to another adult designated by the parent.

*During school-sponsored activities outside the NISD, Students will be released to parents/guardians only or at the principal's discretion.*

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

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

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

alternate pickup or drop-off location, you may contact Richard Morales, Director of Transportation at (830) 663-4416.

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

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

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

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*; bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

## **VANDALISM**

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

## **VIDEO CAMERAS**

For safety purposes, video/audio equipment may be used to monitor student behavior, 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/audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

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

### **General Visitors**

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

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

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

### **Visiting Students/Young Children**

Natalia students are not to bring young children or students from other schools to visit on campus during regular school hours including lunch. ***All student visitors during the school day must have an educational purpose and need to check in at the front office for a visitor's pass.***

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

On High School College 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.

**Visitors without a pass will be asked to leave the premises.**

## ***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 clearance; to the librarian to ensure a clear library record; to the clinic for health records; to the counselor for the last report card and course clearance; and finally, to the principal. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student, and a copy will be placed in the student's permanent record.

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

## 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 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, English III, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, World Geography, World History, 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 for state or district-wide tests; whether successful completion of state-mandated assessments is required for graduation, etc.

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

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

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

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

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

**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.

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

**STAAR Modified** is an alternative state-mandated assessment based on modified achievement standards that is administered to eligible students receiving special education services, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

**STAAR Linguistically Accommodated (STAAR L)** is an alternative state-mandated assessment with linguistic accommodations designed for certain recent immigrant English language learners.

**State-mandated assessments** are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Successful performance sometimes is a condition of promotion, and passing the grade 11 exit-level test or end-of-course 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 the classroom or campus. It also sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP. It outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

**TAKS** is the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, the state's standardized achievement test currently given to students in certain subjects in grades 10 and 11 and is required for graduation for students at these grade levels. .

**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.



# Natalia Independent School District

2011-2012

Student Code of Conduct



# ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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## *Student Code of Conduct Acknowledgment*

Dear Student and Parent:

As required by state law, the board of trustees has officially adopted the Student Code of Conduct in order to promote a safe and orderly learning environment for every student.

We urge you to read this publication thoroughly and to discuss it with your family. If you have any questions about the required conduct and consequences for misconduct, we encourage you to ask for an explanation from the student's teacher or campus administrator.

The student and parent should each sign this page in the space provided below, and then return the page to the student's school.

Thank you.

Guillermo Mancha, Jr., Ed. D.

Natalia ISD Superintendent of Schools

We acknowledge that we have received a copy of the Natalia ISD Student Code of Conduct for the 2011–2012 school year and understand that students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Code.

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

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

Print name of parent: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade level: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign this page, remove it, and return it to the student's school. Thank you.

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# STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

## ***Purpose***

The Student Code of Conduct is the district’s response to the requirements of Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code.

The Code provides methods and options for managing students in the classroom and on school grounds, disciplining students, and preventing and intervening in student discipline problems.

The law requires the district to define misconduct that may—or must—result in a range of specific disciplinary consequences including removal from a regular classroom or campus, out-of-school suspension, placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP), or expulsion from school.

This Student Code of Conduct has been adopted by the Natalia ISD Board of Trustees and developed with the advice of the district-level committee. This Code provides information to parents and students regarding standards of conduct, consequences of misconduct, and procedures for administering discipline.

In accordance with state law, the Code shall be posted at each school campus or shall be available for review at the office of the campus principal. Additionally, the Code shall be posted on the district’s Web site. Parents shall be notified of any conduct violation that may result in a student being suspended, placed in a DAEP, or expelled.

Because the Student Code of Conduct is adopted by the district’s board of trustees, it has the force of policy; therefore, in case of conflict between the Code and the student handbook, the Code shall prevail.

**Please Note:** The discipline of students with disabilities who are eligible for services under federal law (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) is subject to the provisions of those laws.

## ***Contents***

This Code is organized into the following sections:

1. School District Authority and Jurisdiction	page 2
2. Standards for Student Conduct	page 3
3. General Conduct Violations	page 3
4. Discipline Management Techniques	page 7
5. Removal from the Regular Educational Setting	page 9
6. Out-of-School Suspension	page 10
7. DAEP Placement	page 10
8. Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Serious Offenses	page 16
9. Expulsion	page 19
10. Glossary	page 25

# **1. School District Authority and Jurisdiction**

School rules and the authority of the district to administer discipline apply whenever the interest of the district is involved, on or off school grounds, in conjunction with or independent of classes and school-sponsored activities.

The district has disciplinary authority over a student:

1. During the regular school day and while the student is going to and from school on district transportation;
2. During lunch periods in which a student is allowed to leave campus;
3. While the student is in attendance at any school-related activity, regardless of time or location;
4. For any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location;
5. When retaliation against a school employee or volunteer occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location;
6. When criminal mischief is committed on or off school property or at a school-related event;
7. For certain offenses committed within 300 feet of school property as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line;
8. For certain offenses committed while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of another district in Texas;
9. When the student commits a felony, as provided by Education Code 37.006 or 37.0081; and
10. When the student is required to register as a sex offender.

The district has the right to search a vehicle driven to school by a student and parked on school property whenever there is reasonable cause to believe it contains articles or materials prohibited by the district.

The district has the right to search a student's locker or desk when there is reasonable cause to believe it contains articles or materials prohibited by the district.

## ***Reporting Crimes***

School administrators shall report crimes as required by law and shall call local law enforcement when an administrator suspects that a crime has been committed on campus.

## ***Revoking Transfers***

The district has the right to revoke the transfer of a nonresident student for violating the district's Code.

## ***Speaking at Graduation***

The district has the right to limit a student's participation in graduation activities for violating the district's Code.

In order to be considered as an eligible student speaker at graduation ceremonies, a student shall not have engaged in any serious misconduct in violation of the district's Code, including an out-of-school suspension, removal to a DAEP, or expulsion during his or her last two semesters.

See DAEP—Restrictions during Placement on page 14, for information regarding a student assigned to DAEP at the time of graduation.

## **2. Standards for Student Conduct**

Each student is expected to:

- Demonstrate courtesy, even when others do not.
- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline.
- Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
- Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
- Meet district and campus standards of grooming and dress.
- Obey all campus and classroom rules.
- Respect the rights and privileges of students, teachers, and other district staff and volunteers.
- Respect the property of others, including district property and facilities.
- Cooperate with and assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.
- Adhere to the requirements of the Student Code of Conduct.

## **3. General Conduct Violations**

The categories of conduct below are prohibited at school and all school-related activities, but the list does not include the most serious offenses. In the subsequent sections on Out-of-School Suspension, DAEP Placement, Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Serious Offenses, and Expulsion, severe offenses that require or permit specific consequences are listed. Any offense, however, may be serious enough to result in Removal from the Regular Educational Setting as detailed in that section.

### ***Disregard for Authority***

Students shall not:

- Fail to comply with directives given by school personnel (insubordination).
- Leave school grounds or school-sponsored events without permission.
- Disobey rules for conduct on school buses.
- Refuse to accept discipline management techniques assigned by a teacher or principal.

## ***Mistreatment of Others***

Students shall not:

- Use profanity or vulgar language or make obscene gestures.
- Fight or scuffle. (For assault see DAEP Placement and Expulsion.)
- Threaten a district student, employee, or volunteer, including off school property, if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Engage in bullying, harassment, or making hit lists. (See glossary for all three terms.)
- Engage in conduct that constitutes sexual harassment or sexual abuse, whether by word, gesture, or any other conduct, directed toward another person, including a district student, employee, or volunteer.
- Engage in conduct that constitutes dating violence. (See glossary.)
- Engage in inappropriate or indecent exposure of private body parts.
- Participate in hazing. (See glossary.)
- Cause an individual to act through the use of or threat of force (coercion).
- Commit extortion or blackmail (obtaining money or an object of value from an unwilling person).
- Engage in inappropriate verbal, physical, or sexual conduct directed toward another person, including a district student, employee, or volunteer.
- Record the voice or image of another without the prior consent of the individuals being recorded or in any way that disrupts the educational environment or invades the privacy of others.

## ***Property Offenses***

Students shall not:

- Damage or vandalize property owned by others. (For felony criminal mischief see DAEP Placement or Expulsion.)
- Deface or damage school property—including textbooks, lockers, furniture, and other equipment—with graffiti or by other means. 13
- Steal from students, staff, or the school.
- Commit or assist in a robbery or theft even if it does not constitute a felony according to the Texas Penal Code. (For felony robbery, aggravated robbery, and theft see DAEP Placement and Expulsion.)

## ***Possession of Prohibited Items***

Students shall not possess or use:

- Fireworks of any kind, smoke or stink bombs, or any other pyrotechnic device;



- A razor, box cutter, chain, or any other object used in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury to another person;
- A “look-alike” weapon;
- An air gun or BB gun;
- Ammunition;
- A stun gun;
- A pocketknife or any other small knife;
- Mace or pepper spray;
- Pornographic material;
- Tobacco products;
- Matches or a lighter;
- A laser pointer for other than an approved use; or
- Any articles not generally considered to be weapons, including school supplies, when the principal or designee determines that a danger exists. (For weapons and firearms see DAEP Placement and Expulsion.)

### ***Possession of Telecommunications or Other Electronic Devices***

Students shall not:

Use a telecommunications device, including a cellular telephone, or other electronic device in violation of district and campus rules.

### ***Illegal, Prescription, and Over-the-Counter Drugs***

Students shall not:

- Possess or sell seeds or pieces of marijuana in less than a usable amount. (For illegal drugs, alcohol, and inhalants see DAEP Placement and Expulsion.)
- Possess, use, give, or sell paraphernalia related to any prohibited substance. (See glossary for “paraphernalia.”)
- Possess or sell look-alike drugs or attempt to pass items off as drugs or contraband. Abuse the student’s own prescription drug, give a prescription drug to another student, or possess or be under the influence of another person’s prescription drug on school property or at a school-related event. (See glossary for “abuse.”)
- Abuse over-the-counter drugs. (See glossary for “abuse.”) Be under the influence of prescription or over-the-counter drugs that cause impairment of the physical or mental faculties. (See glossary for “under the influence.”)
- Have or take prescription drugs or over-the-counter drugs at school other than as provided by district policy.

## ***Misuse of Technology Resources and the Internet***

Students shall not:

- Violate policies, rules, or agreements signed by the student or the student's parent regarding the use of technology resources.
- Attempt to access or circumvent passwords or other security-related information of the district, students, or employees or upload or create computer viruses, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Attempt to alter, destroy, or disable district technology resources including but not limited to computers and related equipment, district data, the data of others, or other networks connected to the district's system, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Use the Internet or other electronic communications to threaten district students, employees, or volunteers, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Send, post, or possess electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal, including cyberbullying and "sexting," either on or off school property, if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Use e-mail or Web sites to engage in or encourage illegal behavior or threaten school safety, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

## ***Safety Transgressions***

Students shall not:

- Possess published or electronic material that is designed to promote or encourage illegal behavior or that could threaten school safety.
- Engage in verbal (oral or written) exchanges that threaten the safety of another student, a school employee, or school property.
- Make false accusations or perpetrate hoaxes regarding school safety.
- Engage in any conduct that school officials might reasonably believe will substantially disrupt the school program or incite violence.
- Throw objects that can cause bodily injury or property damage.
- Discharge a fire extinguisher without valid cause.

## ***Miscellaneous Offenses***

Students shall not:

- Violate dress and grooming standards as communicated in the student handbook.
- Cheat or copy the work of another.

- Gamble.
- Falsify records, passes, or other school-related documents.
- Engage in actions or demonstrations that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with school activities.
- Repeatedly violate other communicated campus or classroom standards of conduct.

The district may impose campus or classroom rules in addition to those found in the Code. These rules may be posted in classrooms or given to the student and may or may not constitute violations of the Code.

## **4. Discipline Management Techniques**

Discipline shall be designed to improve conduct and to encourage students to adhere to their responsibilities as members of the school community. Disciplinary action shall draw on the professional judgment of teachers and administrators and on a range of discipline management techniques. 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.

### ***Students with Disabilities***

The discipline of students with disabilities is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct. To the extent any conflict exists, state and/or federal law shall prevail.

In accordance with the Education Code, a student who is enrolled in a special education program may not be disciplined for conduct meeting the definition of bullying, harassment, or making hit lists (see glossary) until an ARD committee meeting has been held to review the conduct.

In deciding whether to order suspension, DAEP placement, or expulsion, regardless of whether the action is mandatory or discretionary, the district shall take into consideration a disability that substantially impairs the student’s capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student’s conduct.

### ***Techniques***

The following discipline management techniques may be used—alone or in combination—for behavior prohibited by the Student Code of Conduct or by campus or classroom rules:

- Verbal correction, oral or written.
- Cooling-off time or “time-out.”
- Seating changes within the classroom.
- Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process.

- Rewards or demerits.
- Behavioral contracts.
- Counseling by teachers, counselors, or administrative personnel.
- Parent-teacher conferences.
- Grade reductions for cheating, plagiarism, and as otherwise permitted by policy.
- Detention.
- Sending the student to the office or other assigned area, or to in-school suspension.
- Assignment of school duties such as cleaning or picking up litter.
- Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in extracurricular activities, eligibility for seeking and holding honorary offices, or membership in school-sponsored clubs and organizations.
- Penalties identified in individual student organizations' extracurricular standards of behavior.
- Withdrawal or restriction of bus privileges.
- School-assessed and school-administered probation.
- Corporal punishment, unless the student's parent or guardian has provided a signed statement prohibiting its use.
- Out-of-school suspension, as specified in the Out-of-School Suspension section of this Code.
- Placement in a DAEP, as specified in the DAEP section of this Code.
- Placement and/or expulsion in an alternative educational setting, as specified in the Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Serious Offenses section of this Code.
- Expulsion, as specified in the Expulsion section of this Code.
- Referral to an outside agency or legal authority for criminal prosecution in addition to disciplinary measures imposed by the district.
- Other strategies and consequences as determined by school officials.

### ***Notification***

The principal or appropriate administrator shall notify a student's parent by phone or in writing of any violation that may result in an out-of-school suspension, placement in a DAEP, or expulsion. Notification will be made within three school days after the administrator becomes aware of the violation.

### ***Appeals***

Questions from parents regarding disciplinary measures should be addressed to the teacher or campus administration, as appropriate. Appeals or complaints regarding the use of specific discipline management techniques should be addressed in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). A copy of the policy may be obtained from the principal's office or the central administration office or through policy online at the following address: [www.nataliaisd.net](http://www.nataliaisd.net).

**Consequences shall not be deferred pending the outcome of a grievance.**

## **5. Removal from the Regular Educational Setting**

In addition to other discipline management techniques, misconduct may result in removal from the regular educational setting in the form of a routine referral or a formal removal.

### ***Routine Referral***

A routine referral occurs when a teacher sends a student to the principal's office as a discipline management technique. The principal may then employ additional techniques.

### ***Formal Removal***

A teacher or administrator **may** remove a student from class for a behavior that violates this Code to maintain effective discipline in the classroom. A teacher **may** also initiate a formal removal from class if:

1. The student's behavior has been documented by the teacher as repeatedly interfering with the teacher's ability to teach his or her class or with the student's classmates' ability to learn; or
2. The behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that the teacher cannot teach, and the students in the classroom cannot learn.

A teacher or administrator **must** remove a student from class if the student engages in behavior that under the Education Code requires or permits the student to be placed in a DAEP or expelled. When removing for those reasons, the procedures in the subsequent sections on DAEP or expulsion will be followed. Otherwise, within three school days of the formal removal, the appropriate administrator shall schedule a conference with the student's parent; the student; the teacher, in the case of removal by a teacher; and any other administrator.

At the conference, the appropriate administrator shall inform the student of the misconduct for which he or she is charged and the consequences. The administrator shall give the student an opportunity to give his or her version of the incident.

When a student is removed from the regular classroom by a teacher and a conference is pending, the principal may place the student in:

- Another appropriate classroom.
- In-school suspension.
- Out-of-school suspension.
- DAEP.

### ***Returning Student to Classroom***

When a student has been formally removed from class by a teacher for conduct against the teacher containing the elements of assault, aggravated assault, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, murder, capital murder, or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder, the student may not be returned to the teacher's class without the teacher's consent.

When a student has been formally removed by a teacher for any other conduct, the student may be returned to the teacher's class without the teacher's consent, if the placement review committee determines that the teacher's class is the best or only alternative available.

## **6. Out-of-School Suspension**

### ***Misconduct***

Students may be suspended for any behavior listed in the Code as a general conduct violation, DAEP offense, or expellable offense.

In deciding whether to order out-of-school suspension, the district shall take into consideration:

1. Self-defense (see glossary),
2. Intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct, and
3. The student's disciplinary history.

### ***Process***

State law allows a student to be suspended for no more than three school days per behavior violation, with no limit on the number of times a student may be suspended in a semester or school year.

Before being suspended a student shall have an informal conference with the appropriate administrator, who shall advise the student of the conduct of which he or she is accused. The student shall be given the opportunity to explain his or her version of the incident before the administrator's decision is made.

The number of days of a student's suspension shall be determined by the appropriate administrator, but shall not exceed three school days.

The appropriate administrator shall determine any restrictions on participation in school-sponsored or school-related extracurricular and cocurricular activities.

## **7. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)**

### **Placement**

The DAEP shall be provided in a setting other than the student's regular classroom. An elementary school student may not be placed in a DAEP with a student who is not an elementary school student.

For purposes of DAEP, elementary classification shall be kindergarten–grade 5 and secondary classification shall be grades 6–12.

Summer programs provided by the district shall serve students assigned to a DAEP in conjunction with other students.

A student who is expelled for an offense that otherwise would have resulted in a DAEP placement does not have to be placed in a DAEP in addition to the expulsion.

In deciding whether to place a student in a DAEP, regardless of whether the action is mandatory or discretionary, the district shall take into consideration:

1. Self-defense (see glossary),
2. Intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct, and
3. The student's disciplinary history.

### ***Discretionary Placement: Misconduct That May Result in DAEP Placement***

A student may be placed in a DAEP for behaviors prohibited in the General Conduct Violations section of this Code.

### ***Misconduct Identified in State Law***

In accordance with state law, a student **may** be placed in a DAEP for any one of the following offenses:

- Involvement in a public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society, including participating as a member or pledge, or soliciting another person to become a pledge or member of a public school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang. (See glossary.)
- Involvement in criminal street gang activity. (See glossary.)
- Any criminal mischief, including a felony.

In accordance with state law, a student **may** be placed in a DAEP if the superintendent or the superintendent's designee has reasonable belief (see glossary) that the student has engaged in conduct punishable as a felony, other than aggravated robbery or those listed as offenses involving injury to a person in Title 5 (see glossary) of the Texas Penal Code, that occurs off school property and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event, if the student's presence in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students or teachers or will be detrimental to the educational process.

The appropriate administrator **may**, but is not required to, place a student in a DAEP for off-campus conduct for which DAEP placement is required by state law if the administrator does not have knowledge of the conduct before the first anniversary of the date the conduct occurred.

### ***Mandatory Placement: Misconduct That Requires DAEP Placement***

A student **must** be placed in a DAEP if the student:

- Engages in conduct relating to a false alarm or report (including a bomb threat) or a terroristic threat involving a public school. (See glossary.)
- Commits the following offenses on school property or within 300 feet of school property as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line, or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property:
  - Engages in conduct punishable as a felony.
  - Commits an assault (see glossary) under Texas Penal Code 22.01(a)(1).

- Sells, gives, or delivers to another person, or possesses, uses, or is under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, or a dangerous drug in an amount not constituting a felony offense. (School-related felony drug offenses are addressed in the Expulsion section.) (See glossary for “under the influence.”)
- Sells, gives, or delivers to another person an alcoholic beverage; commits a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol; or possesses, uses, or is under the influence of alcohol, if the conduct is not punishable as a felony offense. (School-related felony alcohol offenses are addressed in the Expulsion section.)
- Behaves in a manner that contains the elements of an offense relating to abusable volatile chemicals.
  - Behaves in a manner that contains the elements of the offense of public lewdness or indecent exposure.
- Engages in expellable conduct and is between six and nine years of age.
- Commits a federal firearms violation and is younger than six years of age.
- Engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of retaliation against any school employee or volunteer on or off school property. (Committing retaliation in combination with another expellable offense is addressed in the Expulsion section of this Code.)
- Engages in conduct punishable as aggravated robbery or a felony listed under Title 5 (see glossary) of the Texas Penal Code when the conduct occurs off school property and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event and:
  - a. The student receives deferred prosecution (see glossary),
  - b. A court or jury finds that the student has engaged in delinquent conduct (see glossary), or
  - c. The superintendent or designee has a reasonable belief (see glossary) that the student engaged in the conduct.

### ***Sexual Assault and Campus Assignments***

If a student has been convicted of continuous sexual abuse of a young child or children or convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault against another student on the same campus, and if the victim’s parent or another person with the authority to act on behalf of the victim requests that the board transfer the offending student to another campus, the offending student shall be transferred to another campus in the district. If there is no other campus in the district serving the grade level of the offending student, the offending student shall be transferred to a DAEP.

### ***Emergencies***

In an emergency, the principal or the principal’s designee may order the immediate placement of a student in a DAEP for any reason for which placement in a DAEP may be made on a nonemergency basis.



## ***Process***

Removals to a DAEP shall be made by the NISD DAEP Hearing Officer, Anna Lopez.

## **Conference**

When a student is removed from class for a DAEP offense, the appropriate administrator shall schedule a conference within three school days with the student's parent, the student, and the teacher, in the case of a teacher removal.

At the conference, the appropriate administrator shall inform the student, orally or in writing, of the reasons for the removal and shall give the student an explanation of the basis for the removal and an opportunity to respond to the reasons for the removal.

Following valid attempts to require attendance, the district may hold the conference and make a placement decision regardless of whether the student or the student's parents attend the conference.

## **Placement Order**

After the conference, if the student is placed in the DAEP, the appropriate administrator shall write a placement order. A copy of the DAEP placement order shall be sent to the student and the student's parent.

Not later than the second business day after the conference, the board's designee shall deliver to the juvenile court a copy of the placement order and all information required by Section 52.04 of the Family Code.

If the student is placed in the DAEP and the length of placement is inconsistent with the guidelines included in this Code, the placement order shall give notice of the inconsistency.

## **Coursework Notice**

The parent or guardian of a student placed in DAEP shall be given written notice of the student's opportunity to complete coursework required for graduation, at no cost to the student. The notice shall include information regarding all methods available for completing the coursework.

## ***Length of Placement***

The duration of a student's placement in a DAEP shall be determined by NISD DAEP Hearing Officer, Anna Lopez..

The duration of a student's placement shall be determined on a case-by-case basis. DAEP placement shall be correlated to the seriousness of the offense, the student's age and grade level, the frequency of misconduct, the student's attitude, and statutory requirements.

The maximum period of DAEP placement shall be one calendar year except as provided below.

The district shall administer the required pre- and post-assessments for students assigned to DAEP for a period of 90 days or longer in accordance with established district administrative procedures for administering other diagnostic or benchmark assessments.

## **Exceeds One Year**

Placement in a DAEP may exceed one year when a review by the district determines that:

1. The student is a threat to the safety of other students or to district employees, or
2. Extended placement is in the best interest of the student.

The statutory limitations on the length of a DAEP placement do not apply to a placement resulting from the board's decision to place a student who engaged in the sexual assault of another student so that the students are not assigned to the same campus.

## **Exceeds School Year**

Students who commit offenses requiring placement in a DAEP at the end of one school year may be required to continue that placement at the start of the next school year to complete the assigned term of placement.

For placement in a DAEP to extend beyond the end of the school year, the NISD DAEP Hearing Officer, Anna Lopez, must determine that:

1. The student's presence in the regular classroom or campus presents a danger of physical harm to the student or others, or
2. The student has engaged in serious or persistent misbehavior (see glossary) that violates the district's Code.

## **Exceeds 60 Days**

For placement in a DAEP to extend beyond 60 days or the end of the next grading period, whichever is sooner, a student's parent shall be given notice and the opportunity to participate in a proceeding before the board or the board's designee

## ***Appeals***

Questions from parents regarding disciplinary measures should be addressed to the campus administration. Appeals regarding the decision to place a student in a DAEP should be addressed to the Board or Board's Designee in accordance with policy FOC (LEGAL). All other appeals regarding a placement in a DAEP should be addressed in accordance with policy FNG (LOCAL). A copy of this policy may be obtained from the principal's office or the central administration office or through Policy On Line at the following address: [www.nataliaisd.net](http://www.nataliaisd.net).

Disciplinary consequences shall not be deferred pending the outcome of an appeal. The decision to place a student in a DAEP cannot be appealed beyond the board.

## ***Restrictions during Placement***

State law prohibits a student placed in a DAEP for reasons specified in state law from attending or participating in school-sponsored or school-related extracurricular activities.

The district does not permit a student who is placed in a DAEP to participate in any school-sponsored or school-related extracurricular or co-curricular activity, including seeking or holding honorary positions and/or membership in school-sponsored clubs and organizations.

A student placed in a DAEP shall not be provided transportation unless he or she is a student with a disability who has transportation designated as a related service in the student's IEP.

For seniors who are eligible to graduate and are assigned to a DAEP at the time of graduation, the placement in the program shall continue through graduation, and the student shall not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony and related graduation activities.

### ***Placement Review***

A student placed in a DAEP shall be provided a review of his or her status, including academic status, by the Superintendent or Superintendent's Designee at intervals not to exceed 120 days. In the case of a high school student, the student's progress toward graduation and the student's graduation plan shall also be reviewed. At the review, the student or the student's parent shall be given the opportunity to present arguments for the student's return to the regular classroom or campus. The student may not be returned to the classroom of a teacher who removed the student without that teacher's consent.

### ***Additional Misconduct***

If during the term of placement in a DAEP the student engages in additional conduct for which placement in a DAEP or expulsion is required or permitted, additional proceedings may be conducted, and the appropriate administrator may enter an additional disciplinary order as a result of those proceedings.

### ***Notice of Criminal Proceedings***

The office of the prosecuting attorney shall notify the district if a student was placed in a DAEP for certain offenses including any felony, unlawful restraint, indecent exposure, assault, deadly conduct, terroristic threats, organized crime, certain drug offenses, or possession of a weapon, and:

1. Prosecution of a student's case was refused for lack of prosecutorial merit or insufficient evidence and no formal proceedings, deferred adjudication (see glossary), or deferred prosecution will be initiated; or
2. The court or jury found a student not guilty, or made a finding that the student did not engage in delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision, and the case was dismissed with prejudice.

If a student was placed in a DAEP for such conduct, on receiving the notice from the prosecutor, the superintendent or designee shall review the student's placement and schedule a review with the student's parent not later than the third day after the superintendent or designee receives notice from the prosecutor. The student may not be returned to the regular classroom pending the review.

After reviewing the notice and receiving information from the student's parent, the superintendent or designee may continue the student's placement if there is reason to believe that the presence of the student in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students or teachers.

The student or the student's parent may appeal the superintendent's decision to the board. The student may not be returned to the regular classroom pending the appeal. In the case of an appeal, the board shall, at the next scheduled meeting, review the notice from the prosecutor and receive information from the student, the student's parent, and the superintendent or designee, and confirm or reverse the decision of the superintendent or designee. The board shall make a record of the proceedings.

If the board confirms the decision of the superintendent or designee, the student and the student's parent may appeal to the Commissioner of Education. The student may not be returned to the regular classroom pending the appeal.

### ***Withdrawal during Process***

When a student violates the district's Code in a way that requires or permits the student to be placed in a DAEP and the student withdraws from the district before a placement order is completed, the district may complete the proceedings and issue a placement order. If the student then reenrolls in the district during the same or a subsequent school year, the district may enforce the order at that time, less any period of the placement that has been served by the student during enrollment in another district. If the appropriate administrator or the board fails to issue a placement order after the student withdraws, the next district in which the student enrolls may complete the proceedings and issue a placement order.

### ***Newly Enrolled Students***

The district shall continue the DAEP placement of a student who enrolls in the district and was assigned to a DAEP in an open-enrollment charter school or another district.

A newly enrolled student with a DAEP placement from a district in another state shall be placed as any other newly enrolled student if the behavior committed is a reason for DAEP placement in the receiving district.

If the student was placed in a DAEP by a school district in another state for a period that exceeds one year, this district, by state law, shall reduce the period of the placement so that the total placement does not exceed one year. After a review, however, the placement may be extended beyond a year if the district determines that the student is a threat to the safety of other students or employees or the extended placement is in the best interest of the student.

### ***Emergency Placement Procedure***

When an emergency placement occurs, the student shall be given oral notice of the reason for the action. Not later than the tenth day after the date of the placement, the student shall be given the appropriate conference required for assignment to a DAEP.

## **8. Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Serious Offenses**

This section includes two categories of serious offenses for which the Education Code provides unique procedures and specific consequences.

## ***Registered Sex Offenders***

Upon receiving notification in accordance with state law that a student is currently required to register as a sex offender, the administration must remove the student from the regular classroom and determine appropriate placement unless the court orders JJAEP placement.

If the student is under any form of court supervision, including probation, community supervision, or parole, the placement shall be in either DAEP or JJAEP for at least one semester.

If the student is not under any form of court supervision, the placement may be in DAEP or JJAEP for one semester or the placement may be in a regular classroom. The placement may not be in the regular classroom if the board or its designee determines that the student's presence:

1. Threatens the safety of other students or teachers,
2. Will be detrimental to the educational process, or
3. Is not in the best interests of the district's students.

## **Review Committee**

At the end of the first semester of a student's placement in an alternative educational setting and before the beginning of each school year for which the student remains in an alternative placement, the district shall convene a committee, in accordance with state law, to review the student's placement. The committee shall recommend whether the student should return to the regular classroom or remain in the placement. Absent a special finding, the board or its designee must follow the committee's recommendation.

The placement review of a student with a disability who receives special education services must be made by the ARD committee.

## **Newly Enrolled Student**

If a student enrolls in the district during a mandatory placement as a registered sex offender, the district may count any time already spent by the student in a placement or may require an additional semester in an alternative placement without conducting a review of the placement.

## **Appeal**

A student or the student's parent may appeal the placement by requesting a conference between the board or its designee, the student, and the student's parent. The conference is limited to the factual question of whether the student is required to register as a sex offender. Any decision of the board or its designee under this section is final and may not be appealed.

## ***Certain Felonies***

Regardless of whether placement or expulsion is required or permitted by one of the reasons in the DAEP Placement or Expulsion sections, in accordance with Education Code 37.0081, a student may be expelled and placed in either DAEP or JJAEP if the board or its designee makes certain findings and the following circumstances exist in relation to aggravated robbery or a felony offense under Title 5 (see glossary) of the Texas Penal Code. The student must:

- Have received deferred prosecution for conduct defined as aggravated robbery or a Title 5 felony offense;
- Have been found by a court or jury to have engaged in delinquent conduct for conduct defined as aggravated robbery or a Title 5 felony offense;
- Have been charged with engaging in conduct defined as aggravated robbery or a Title 5 felony offense;
- Have been referred to a juvenile court for allegedly engaging in delinquent conduct for conduct defined as aggravated robbery or a Title 5 felony offense; or
- Have received probation or deferred adjudication or have been arrested for, charged with, or convicted of aggravated robbery or a Title 5 felony offense.

The district may expel the student and order placement under these circumstances regardless of:

1. The date on which the student's conduct occurred,
2. The location at which the conduct occurred,
3. Whether the conduct occurred while the student was enrolled in the district, or
4. Whether the student has successfully completed any court disposition requirements imposed in connection with the conduct.

### **Hearing and Required Findings**

The student must first have a hearing before the board or its designee, who must determine that in addition to the circumstances above that allow for the expulsion, the student's presence in the regular classroom:

1. Threatens the safety of other students or teachers,
2. Will be detrimental to the educational process, or
3. Is not in the best interest of the district's students.

Any decision of the board or the board's designee under this section is final and may not be appealed.

### **Length of Placement**

The student is subject to the placement until:

1. The student graduates from high school,
2. The charges are dismissed or reduced to a misdemeanor offense, or
3. The student completes the term of the placement or is assigned to another program.

### **Newly Enrolled Students**

A student who enrolls in the district before completing a placement under this section from another school district must complete the term of the placement.

## 9. Expulsion

In deciding whether to order expulsion, regardless of whether the action is mandatory or discretionary, the district will take into consideration:

1. Self-defense (see glossary),
2. Intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct, and
3. The student's disciplinary history.

### ***Discretionary Expulsion: Misconduct That May Result in Expulsion***

#### **Any Location**

A student **may** be expelled for:

- Engaging in the following, no matter where it takes place:
  - Conduct that contains the elements of assault under Penal Code 22.01(a)(1) in retaliation against a school employee or volunteer.
- Criminal mischief, if punishable as a felony.
- Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of one of the following offenses against another student, without regard to where the conduct occurs:
  - Aggravated assault.
  - Sexual assault.
  - Aggravated sexual assault.
  - Murder.
  - Capital murder.
  - Criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder.
  - Aggravated robbery.
  - Breach of computer security.
- Engaging in conduct relating to a false alarm or report (including a bomb threat) or a terroristic threat involving a public school.

#### **At School, Within 300 Feet, or at a School Event**

A student **may** be expelled for committing any of the following offenses on or within 300 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line, or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property:

- Selling, giving, or delivering to another person, or possessing, using, or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, or a dangerous drug, if the conduct is not punishable as a felony. (See glossary for "under the influence.")

- Selling, giving, or delivering to another person, or possessing, using, or being under the influence of alcohol; or committing a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol, if the conduct is not punishable as a felony.
- Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to abusable volatile chemicals.
- Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of assault under Section 22.01(a)(1) against an employee or a volunteer.
- Engaging in deadly conduct. (See glossary.)

### **Within 300 Feet of School**

A student may be expelled for engaging in the following conduct while within 300 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school’s real property boundary line:

- Aggravated assault, sexual assault, or aggravated sexual assault.
- Arson. (See glossary.)
- Murder, capital murder, or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder.
- Indecency with a child, aggravated kidnapping, manslaughter, criminally negligent homicide, or aggravated robbery.
- Continuous sexual abuse of a young child or children.
- Felony drug- or alcohol-related offense.
- Use, exhibition, or possession of a firearm (as defined by state law), an illegal knife, a club, or prohibited weapon, or possession of a firearm (as defined by federal law).

### **Property of Another District**

A student **may** be expelled for committing any offense that is a state-mandated expellable offense if the offense is committed on the property of another district in Texas or while the student is attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of a school in another district in Texas.

### **While in DAEP**

A student **may** be expelled for engaging in serious offenses or persistent misbehavior (see glossary) that violates the district’s Code, while placed in a DAEP.

### ***Mandatory Expulsion: Misconduct That Requires Expulsion***

#### **Federal Law**

A student **must** be expelled for bringing to school a firearm, as defined by federal law, when the offense occurs on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property. “Firearm” under federal law includes:

- Any weapon (including a starter gun) that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive.



- The frame or receiver of any such weapon.
- Any firearm muffler or firearm weapon.
- Any destructive device, such as any explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, or grenade.

### **Texas Penal Code**

A student **must** be expelled for any of the following offenses that occur on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property:

- Using, exhibiting, or possessing the following, as defined by the Texas Penal Code:
  - A firearm (any device designed, made, or adapted to expel a projectile through a barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance or any device readily convertible to that use), unless the use, exhibition, or possession of the firearm occurs at an off-campus approved target range facility while participating in or preparing for a school-sponsored shooting sports competition or a shooting sports educational activity that is sponsored or supported by the Parks and Wildlife Department or a shooting sports sanctioning organization working with the department.
  - An illegal knife, such as a knife with a blade over 5½ inches; hand instrument, designed to cut or stab another by being thrown; dagger, including but not limited to a dirk, stiletto, and poniard; bowie knife; sword; or spear.
  - A club (see glossary) such as an instrument specially designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with the instrument, including a blackjack, nightstick, mace, and tomahawk.
  - A prohibited weapon, such as an explosive weapon, a machine gun, a short-barrel firearm, a firearm silencer, a switchblade knife, knuckles, armor-piercing ammunition, a chemical dispensing device, a zip gun, or a tire deflation device. (See glossary.)
- Behaving in a manner that contains elements of the following offenses under the Texas Penal Code:
  - Aggravated assault, sexual assault, or aggravated sexual assault.
  - Arson. (See glossary.)
  - Murder, capital murder, or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder.
  - Indecency with a child.
  - Aggravated kidnapping.
  - Aggravated robbery.
  - Manslaughter.
  - Criminally negligent homicide.
  - Continuous sexual abuse of a young child or children.
  - Behavior punishable as a felony that involves selling, giving, or delivering to another person, or possessing, using, or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled

substance, a dangerous drug, or alcohol; or committing a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol.

- Engaging in retaliation against a school employee or volunteer combined with one of the above-listed mandatory expulsion offenses, with the exception of a federal firearm offense, on or off school property or at a school-related activity.

### ***Under Age Ten***

When a student under the age of ten engages in behavior that is expellable behavior, the student shall not be expelled, but shall be placed in a DAEP. A student under age six shall not be placed in a DAEP unless the student commits a federal firearm offense.

### ***Emergency***

In an emergency, the principal or the principal's designee **may** order the immediate expulsion of a student for any reason for which expulsion may be made on a nonemergency basis.

### ***Process***

If a student is believed to have committed an expellable offense, the principal or other appropriate administrator shall schedule a hearing within a reasonable time. The student's parent shall be invited in writing to attend the hearing.

Until a hearing can be held, the principal may place the student in:

- Another appropriate classroom.
- In-school suspension.
- Out-of-school suspension.
- DAEP.

### ***Hearing***

A student facing expulsion shall be given a hearing with appropriate due process. The student is entitled to:

1. Representation by the student's parent or another adult who can provide guidance to the student and who is not an employee of the district,
2. An opportunity to testify and to present evidence and witnesses in the student's defense, and
3. An opportunity to question the district's witnesses.

After providing notice to the student and parent of the hearing, the district may hold the hearing regardless of whether the student or the student's parent attends.

The board of trustees delegates to the Superintendent the authority to conduct hearings and expel students.

## **Board Review of Expulsion**

After the due process hearing, the expelled student may request that the board review the expulsion decisions. The student or parent must submit a written request to the superintendent within seven days after receipt of the written decision. The superintendent must provide the student or parent written notice of the date, time, and place of the meeting at which the board will review the decision.

The board shall review the record of the expulsion hearing in a closed meeting unless the parent requests in writing that the matter be held in an open meeting. The board may also hear a statement from the student or parent and from the board's designee.

The board shall hear statements made by the parties at the review and will base its decision on evidence reflected in the record and any statements made by the parties at the review. The board shall make and communicate its decision orally at the conclusion of the presentation. Consequences shall not be deferred pending the outcome of the hearing.

## **Expulsion Order**

After the due process hearing, if the student is expelled, the board or its designee shall deliver to the student and the student's parent a copy of the order expelling the student.

Not later than the second business day after the hearing, the Board or the Board's Designee shall deliver to the juvenile court a copy of the expulsion order and the information required by Section 52.04 of the Family Code.

If the length of the expulsion is inconsistent with the guidelines included in the Student Code of Conduct, the expulsion order shall give notice of the inconsistency.

## ***Length of Expulsion***

The length of an expulsion shall be correlated to the seriousness of the offense, the student's age and grade level, the frequency of misbehavior, the student's attitude, and statutory requirements.

The duration of a student's expulsion shall be determined on a case-by-case basis. The maximum period of expulsion is one calendar year except as provided below.

An expulsion may not exceed one year unless, after review, the district determines that:

1. The student is a threat to the safety of other students or to district employees, or
2. Extended expulsion is in the best interest of the student.

State and federal law require a student to be expelled from the regular classroom for a period of at least one calendar year for bringing a firearm, as defined by federal law, to school. However, the superintendent or other appropriate administrator may modify the length of the expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

Students who commit offenses that require expulsion at the end of one school year may be expelled into the next school year to complete the term of expulsion.

### ***Withdrawal during Process***

When a student has violated the district's Code in a way that requires or permits expulsion from the district and the student withdraws from the district before the expulsion hearing takes place, the district may conduct the hearing after sending written notice to the parent and student.

If the student then reenrolls in the district during the same or subsequent school year, the district may enforce the expulsion order at that time, less any expulsion period that has been served by the student during enrollment in another district.

If the appropriate administrator or the board fails to issue an expulsion order after the student withdraws, the next district in which the student enrolls may complete the proceedings.

### ***Additional Misconduct***

If during the expulsion, the student engages in additional conduct for which placement in a DAEP or expulsion is required or permitted, additional proceedings may be conducted, and the appropriate administrator or the board may issue an additional disciplinary order as a result of those proceedings.

### ***Restrictions during Expulsion***

Expelled students are prohibited from being on school grounds or attending school-sponsored or school-related activities during the period of expulsion.

No district academic credit shall be earned for work missed during the period of expulsion unless the student is enrolled in a JJAEP or another district-approved program.

### ***Newly Enrolled Students***

The district shall continue the expulsion of any newly enrolled student expelled from another district or an open-enrollment charter school until the period of the expulsion is completed.

If a student expelled in another state enrolls in the district, the district may continue the expulsion under the terms of the expulsion order, may place the student in a DAEP for the period specified in the order, or may allow the student to attend regular classes if:

1. The out-of-state district provides the district with a copy of the expulsion order, and
2. The offense resulting in the expulsion is also an expellable offense in the district in which the student is enrolling.

If a student is expelled by a district in another state for a period that exceeds one year and the district continues the expulsion or places the student in a DAEP, the district shall reduce the period of the expulsion or DAEP placement so that the entire period does not exceed one year, unless after a review it is determined that:

1. The student is a threat to the safety of other students or district employees, or
2. Extended placement is in the best interest of the student.

## ***Emergency Expulsion Procedures***

When an emergency expulsion occurs, the student shall be given verbal notice of the reason for the action. Within ten days after the date of the emergency expulsion, the student shall be given appropriate due process required for a student facing expulsion.

## ***DAEP Placement of Expelled Students***

The district may provide educational services to any expelled student in a DAEP; however, educational services in the DAEP must be provided if the student is less than ten years of age.

## **10. Glossary**

The glossary provides legal definitions and locally established definitions and is intended to assist in understanding terms related to the Student Code of Conduct.

**Abuse** is improper or excessive use.

**Aggravated robbery** is defined in part by Texas Penal Code 29.03(a) when a person commits robbery and:

1. Causes serious bodily injury to another;
2. Uses or exhibits a deadly weapon; or
3. Causes bodily injury to another person or threatens or places another person in fear of imminent bodily injury or death, if the other person is:
  - a. 65 years of age or older, or
  - b. A disabled person.

**Armor-piercing ammunition** is handgun ammunition used in pistols and revolvers and designed primarily for the purpose of penetrating metal or body armor.

**Arson** is:

1. A crime that involves starting a fire or causing an explosion with intent to destroy or damage:
  - a. Any vegetation, fence, or structure on open-space land; or
  - b. Any building, habitation, or vehicle:
    - 1) Knowing that it is within the limits of an incorporated city or town,
    - 2) Knowing that it is insured against damage or destruction,
    - 3) Knowing that it is subject to a mortgage or other security interest,
    - 4) Knowing that it is located on property belonging to another,
    - 5) Knowing that it has located within it property belonging to another, or
    - 6) When the person starting the fire is reckless about whether the burning or explosion will endanger the life of some individual or the safety of the property of another.

2. A crime that involves recklessly starting a fire or causing an explosion while manufacturing or attempting to manufacture a controlled substance and the fire or explosion damages any building, habitation, or vehicle; or
3. A crime that involves intentionally starting a fire or causing an explosion and in so doing:
  - a. Recklessly damages or destroys a building belonging to another, or
  - b. Recklessly causes another person to suffer bodily injury or death.

**Assault** is defined in part by Texas Penal Code 22.01(a)(1) as intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury to another.

**Bullying** is written or oral expression or physical conduct that a school district's board of trustees or the board's designee determines:

1. To have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or
2. To be sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

**Chemical dispensing device** is a device designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of causing an adverse psychological or physiological effect on a human being. A small chemical dispenser sold commercially for personal protection is not in this category.

**Club** is an instrument specially designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death. A blackjack, mace, and tomahawk are in the same category.

**Criminal street gang** is three or more persons having a common identifying sign or symbol or an identifiable leadership who continuously or regularly associate in the commission of criminal activities.

**Cyberbullying** is the use of any electronic communication device to engage in bullying or intimidation.

**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 another 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, as defined by Section 71.0021 of the Family Code.

**Deadly conduct** occurs when a person recklessly engages in conduct that places another in imminent danger of serious bodily injury, such as knowingly discharging a firearm in the direction of an individual, habitation, building, or vehicle.

**Deferred adjudication** is an alternative to seeking a conviction in court that may be offered to a juvenile for delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision.

**Deferred prosecution** may be offered to a juvenile as an alternative to seeking a conviction in court for delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision.

**Delinquent conduct** is conduct that violates either state or federal law and is punishable by imprisonment or confinement in jail. It includes conduct that violates certain juvenile court orders, including probation orders, but does not include violations of traffic laws.

**Discretionary** means that something is left to or regulated by a local decision maker.

**Explosive weapon** is any explosive or incendiary bomb, grenade, rocket, or mine and its delivery mechanism that is designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury, death, or substantial property damage, or for the principal purpose of causing such a loud report as to cause undue public alarm or terror.

**False Alarm or Report** occurs when a person knowingly initiates, communicates, or circulates a report of a present, past, or future bombing, fire, offense, or other emergency that he or she knows is false or baseless and that would ordinarily:

1. Cause action by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
2. Place a person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury; or
3. Prevent or interrupt the occupation of a building, room, or place of assembly.

**Firearm silencer** means any device designed, made, or adapted to muffle the report of a firearm.

**Graffiti** are markings with paint, an indelible pen or marker, or an etching or engraving device on tangible property without the effective consent of the owner. The markings may include inscriptions, slogans, drawings, or paintings.

**Harassment** is:

1. Conduct that meets the definition established in district policies DIA(LOCAL) and FFH(LOCAL); or
2. Conduct that threatens to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, is sexually intimidating, causes physical damage to the property of another student, subjects another student to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously and substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety.

**Hazing** is an intentional or reckless act, on or off campus, by one person alone or acting with others, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization.

**Hit list** is a list of people targeted to be harmed, using a firearm, a knife, or any other object to be used with intent to cause bodily harm.

**Knuckles** are any instrument consisting of finger rings or guards made of a hard substance and designed or adapted for inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with a fist enclosed in the knuckles.

**Machine gun** is any firearm that is capable of shooting more than two shots automatically, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger.

**Mandatory** means that something is obligatory or required because of an authority.

**Paraphernalia** are devices that can be used for inhaling, ingesting, injecting, or otherwise introducing a controlled substance into a human body.

**Persistent misbehavior** is two or more violations of the Code in general or repeated occurrences of the same violation.

**Possession** means to have an item on one's person or in one's personal property, including but not limited to clothing, purse, or backpack; a private vehicle used for transportation to or from school or school-related activities, including but not limited to an automobile, truck, motorcycle, or bicycle; telecommunications or electronic devices; or any other school property used by the student, including but not limited to a locker or desk.

**Public school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang** means an organization composed wholly or in part of students that seeks to perpetuate itself by taking additional members from the students enrolled in school based on a decision of its membership rather than on the free choice of a qualified student. Educational organizations listed in Section 37.121(d) of the Education Code are excepted from this definition.

**Reasonable belief** is a determination made by the superintendent or designee using all available information, including the information furnished under Article 15.27 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

**Self-defense** is the use of force against another to the degree a person reasonably believes the force is immediately necessary to protect himself or herself.

**Serious offenses** include but are not limited to:

- Murder.
- Vandalism.
- Robbery or theft.
- Extortion, coercion, or blackmail.
- Actions or demonstrations that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with school activities.
- Hazing.
- Insubordination.
- Profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures.
- Fighting, committing physical abuse, or threatening physical abuse.
- Possession or distribution of pornographic materials.
- Leaving school grounds without permission.
- Sexual harassment of a student or district employee.
- Possession of or conspiracy to possess any explosive or explosive device.
- Falsification of records, passes, or other school-related documents.
- Refusal to accept discipline assigned by the teacher or principal.



**Short-barrel firearm** is a rifle with a barrel length of less than 16 inches or a shotgun with a barrel length of less than 18 inches, or any weapon made from a rifle or shotgun that, as altered, has an overall length of less than 26 inches.

**Switchblade** is any knife with a blade that folds, closes, or retracts into the handle or sheath and that opens automatically by pressing a button or by the force of gravity or centrifugal force. The term does not include a knife that has a spring, detent, or other mechanism designed to create a bias toward closure and that requires exertion applied to the blade by hand, wrist, or arm to overcome the bias toward closure and open the knife.

**Terroristic threat** is a threat of violence to any person or property with intent to:

1. Cause a reaction of any type by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
2. Place any person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury;
3. Prevent or interrupt the occupation or use of a building; room, place of assembly, or place to which the public has access; place of employment or occupation; aircraft, automobile, or other form of conveyance; or other public place;
4. Cause impairment or interruption of public communications, public transportation, public water, gas, or power supply or other public service;
5. Place the public or a substantial group of the public in fear of serious bodily injury; or
6. Influence the conduct or activities of a branch or agency of the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision of the state (including the district).

**Tire deflation device** is defined in part by Section 46.01 of the Penal Code as a device, including a caltrop or spike strip, that, when driven over, impedes or stops the movement of a wheeled vehicle by puncturing one or more of the vehicle's tires.

**Title 5 offenses** are those that involve injury to a person and include murder; kidnapping; assault; aggravated assault; sexual assault; aggravated sexual assault; unlawful restraint; indecency with a child; injury to a child, an elderly person, or a disabled person; abandoning or endangering a child; deadly conduct; terroristic threat; aiding a person to commit suicide; and tampering with a consumer product. [See FOC (EXHIBIT)]

**Under the influence** means lacking the normal use of mental or physical faculties. Impairment of a person's physical or mental faculties may be evidenced by a pattern of abnormal or erratic behavior, the presence of physical symptoms of drug or alcohol use, or by admission. A student "under the influence" need not be legally intoxicated to trigger disciplinary action.

**Use** means voluntarily introducing into one's body, by any means, a prohibited substance.

**Zip gun** is a device or combination of devices, not originally a firearm, but adapted to expel a projectile through a smooth-bore or rifled-bore barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance.