



PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK AND STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Promesa Public Schools Charter System Offices
5800 E. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78721
(512) 287-5050

www.promesapublicschools.org

Parent/Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct

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Welcome to Promesa Public Schools

A special message to your family from Superintendent Dr. Salvador Cavazos

Dear Parents,

We are excited about the **new** school year. We look forward to this academic year with our continued commitment to cultivating academic excellence in an environment of high expectations for all students.

On behalf of the Promesa Public Schools Board of Trustees, we welcome you to the Promesa Schools family for the school year. Everyone at Promesa Schools plays a vital role in the education of our students. We invite you to join us to bring about the success we envision for our students through your ongoing involvement in your son's/daughter's education. We will continue to work diligently to prepare your son/daughter to graduate from high school prepared for enrollment in the college or university of their choice.

We are excited about the future of Promesa Schools and ask you to join us in our commitment to our mission of achieving academic excellence for all students.

Sincerely,

Salvador Cavazos, PhD
Superintendent of School

INTRODUCTION

Promesa Public Schools is proud to welcome you on board our ongoing mission of providing all students with the skills and experience necessary to succeed in higher education. This handbook has been supplied as a guide and will serve as your primary resource for all policies and procedures relevant to students and parents. Please note that although the student/parent handbook is not designed as a contract, and is subject to change, violation of the policies listed in these pages is considered a breach in the student code of conduct and will result in the appropriate corrective action. Promesa Schools thank you for sharing in our vision and for selecting our Charter School as your provider of a quality, college ready education. We look forward to demonstrating our commitment to excellence to you throughout the school year.

ABOUT PROMESA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Promesa Public Schools (“Promesa Schools”) is an innovative, tuition-free charter school open to all students. The vision and mission of Promesa Schools is to serve as a model school that successfully prepares all students, regardless of economic background, for a rigorous high school curriculum, graduation, and ultimately success in college and their chosen careers.

The key principle of Promesa Schools is all students will experience success.

Promesa Public School Campuses are as follows:

East Austin College Prep Elementary School
5800 E. MLK, Jr. Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78721 (512) 287-5050

East Austin College Prep Secondary School at MLK
5800 E. MLK, Jr. Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78721 (512) 287-5050

Promesa College Prep-Brownsville
1944 East Alton Gloor Blvd.
Brownsville, Texas 78526 (956) 295-7778

Promesa College Prep-West Corpus Christi
3102 Baldwin Blvd.
Corpus Christi, Texas 78405 (361) 400-8293

HOME/SCHOOL COMPACT

The environment of Promesa Schools, the dedication of our students, and the support of their parents all play a vital role in student success and that of the campus at large. For this reason, the home/school compact provides a list of commitments that all three parties promise to adhere to as part of their devotion to college readiness.

COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Promesa Schools is not just a Charter school. Promesa Schools is a way of life. Every minute of every day is designed to ensure every student completes college and is committed to improving disadvantaged communities.

The Commitment to College Completion is shared by all. Promesa Schools staff, family members, and students, defines the “whatever it takes spirit” that all of us are expected to demonstrate in the daily pursuit of this goal. Yearly we create a formal Home/School Compact as required by Title I, Part A which is created in cooperation with our parents and staff. This will be created at each campus and individualized to the needs of the students, parents, and educators.

Student’s Commitments:

- Be punctual to class.
- Come prepared to work and complete my assignments on time.
- Seek help and advice from teachers, advisors, and qualified school personnel in order to meet my educational goals. ▪ Maintain communication between my teachers, fellow students, and parents for academic support.
- Spend time at home and at school to complete assignments which include reading, investigating, studying regularly and focusing my abilities and time to obtain my educational goals.
- Obey all discipline rules, adhere to the dress code, respect myself and the rights of others, be responsible for my actions, and abide by the expectations of the Promesa Schools handbook.
- Commit to the work required to be accepted to and graduate from a college or university.

Parents’/Guardians’ Commitments:

- Provide a learning environment with adequate food and rest to enable my child to study, read, and utilize technology and encourage him/her to contact the teacher with homework questions.
- Establish a mutual dialogue with my child regarding education, scholarships, financial aid, employment, and how to avoid drugs and violence.
- Facilitate the expectations of the Promesa Schools handbook, uphold the dress code, and ensure that my child arrives and leaves school at the correct times.
- Show respect and positive support towards academic plans and school policy while acknowledging that we, not the school, are ultimately responsible for the behavior and actions of my child.
- Attend parent/teacher conferences, school functions, school activities, and participate as a volunteer whenever possible.
- Communicate regularly with school personnel regarding attendance, behavior, and academic performance. ▪ Participate in Parental Involvement Programs such as meetings and workshops.
- Support the work required of me and my child in order for him/her to be accepted to, and graduate from, a college or university.

Teachers’ Commitments:

- Respect and value all students and parents.
- Offer a safe and welcoming learning environment.
- Uphold the Promesa Schools handbook and expectations.
- Maintain positive communication with all students.
- Communicate with parents through conferences or telephone and seek parent support concerning grades, absences, student behavior, missing assignments, supplies and/or homework.
- Provide information at meetings, parent conferences, and mail regarding academics and financial aid.
- Modify and enhance instruction in a way that will motivate and encourage students to facilitate their learning and prepare them to be accepted to, and graduate from, a college or university.

Food and Nutrition Complaint Procedures

Complaints may be filed by completing the Complaint Form on our website at austin.promesapublicschools.org or by picking up a Complaint Form from the receptionist at each school site. Once completed, please return it to the Principal's Office. You may also submit the Form directly to the United States Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW. Washington, DC 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. You may also submit the Complaint Form to the Texas Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Division PO Box 12847 Austin, Texas 78711 Fax (888) 237-5226.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Promesa Schools' board of trustees is appointed to be legally responsible for educating the students of Promesa Schools. The board is the policy-making body within the campus and has overall responsibility for curriculum, annual budget, employment of the Superintendent, facilities and expansions. The board has complete and final control over school matters within the limits established by law and State Board of Education rules. The trustees serve three-year terms, without pay.

The board of trustees regularly meets once per month. School board meetings are generally held at 5800 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Austin, Texas 78721, 1944 East Alton Gloor Blvd, Brownsville, Texas or 3102 Baldwin Blvd, Corpus Christi, Texas 78405. Written notices of regular and special meetings are posted in accordance with state law. Generally, notices of meetings are posted at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting time, however, in emergencies, a meeting may be held with a two-hour notice. Although board meetings are generally open to the public, Texas law permits the board of trustees to convene in closed session for discussion of certain matters.

ACADEMICS

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

Philosophy: Promesa Schools believes that students can take responsibility for establishing and maintaining standards for their own behavior. Honesty, integrity, and respect for each other are expected at Promesa Schools. Actions or attempted actions that do not uphold these ideals violate the Promesa Schools HonorCode.

- A student's word is expected to be complete truth; therefore, lying and forgery are violations of the Honor Code.
- A student's work is expected to be entirely his/her own, unless properly credited; therefore, plagiarism and cheating are academic violations of the Honor Code.
- The property of others is to be respected; therefore, stealing – no matter how minor – is a violation of the Honor Code.

Students who witness an Honor Code violation must report the action to administration. Working together, we can ALL create a community of learners that value hard work, creativity, and commitment to college success.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

At Promesa Schools, it is our vision to prepare all students for success in college. In order to achieve this vision, we recognize that it will be necessary to overcome educational gaps for many of our students. We believe it is

imperative to do everything necessary for our students to reach levels that exceed the statistical averages. Our goal is for Promesa Schools students to be competitive as college applicants and successful as college students; and in order to do that, our rigor and expectations must be high.

Promesa Schools will provide students with the support and appropriate interventions to make it possible for each of our students to succeed academically. Support and interventions include group and individual tutorial and enrichment sessions; opportunities to contact the teacher for help after school hours; and frequent feedback to both students and parents about progress in class.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE/CLASS RANK

The purpose of the class rank policy is to promote rigorous academic standards and readiness for college, career, and life. Class ranking shall be used to determine honors and awards and will be submitted to colleges. Promesa Public Schools shall include in the calculation of class rank grades earned in grades 9–12 for high school credit and only in the following subjects:

- Core subjects: English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies
- College/dual credit courses
- Languages other than English
- High school core subject/language courses taken in middle school
- Core subject/language credit by exam with or without prior instruction
- Failing grades in these courses shall also be included

The following courses shall not be included in the calculation of class rank:

- Local credit courses
- Non-core subject electives
- Pass/Fail courses
- Correspondence/Independent Study courses
- Courses that are repeated for which credit has previously been earned

Promesa Schools uses a weighted numerical grading system. In calculating GPA, only core courses in the following subject areas will be calculated: English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and languages other than English.

Promesa Schools shall assign weights to semester grades and shall calculate a weighted numerical grade point average in accordance with the following scale:

Category Weight (points added)

Advanced Placement/Dual Credit plus 10
Pre-AP plus 5
Standard plus 0

No weighted credit points shall be added for grades lower than 70. Weighted grading shall be reflected in the student's GPA and not numerically per course on either the student's report card or transcript.

Unofficial preliminary grade point averages and class ranks will be calculated and determined at the end of the junior year during the month of June. These unofficial GPAs and ranks will be used for transcripts sent in the summer. Unofficial grade point averages and class ranks will be calculated in September for transcripts sent in the Fall semester.

Summer school grades and grade corrections made after June of each year will be included in the calculations. Official grade point averages and class ranks will be determined at the end of the final senior year grading period.

The valedictorian and salutatorian shall be the eligible students with the highest and second highest ranking, respectively. To be eligible for such recognition, a student must:

1. Have completed the Distinguished Achievement Program;
2. Have been continuously enrolled in the Promesa Schools high school for the four regular (fall and spring) semesters immediately preceding graduation; and
3. Be enrolled at the time of the graduation ceremony.

In case of a tie in weighted averages, the school shall compute the weighted numerical grade point averages to a sufficient number of decimal places until the tie is broken.

If the tie is not broken after applying this method, Promesa Schools shall recognize all students involved in the tie as sharing the honor and title.

COURSE CREDIT

A student in grades 9-12 will earn credit for a semester only if the final grade is 70 or above. The student will be required to retake the semester in which he or she failed. Credits are issued on a semester basis. A student will be required to retake the semester in which he/she failed in order to gain credit for the course. Semester courses retaken may be cumulatively averaged with a previously passed semester in order to gain full credit for the course.

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, be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject. Below are circumstances in which a student may be eligible for credit by exam:

- Enrollment in a nonaccredited public, private, parochial school, or homeschooling program, as verified by an official school transcript/record; or as evidenced by a student work portfolio that may include: course syllabus, work samples, completed culminating exam, and list of resources (textbooks, web sites, etc.);
- For a semester course (18 weeks), proof of at least nine weeks of classroom instruction; or • Proof of completion of half of the required lessons of a correspondence course.

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.

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 or subject area for which the student has had no prior instruction or to accelerate to the next grade level.

A student will earn course credit with a passing score of at least 90 on the exam. Depending on the student's grade level and course for which the student seeks to earn credit by exam, an end-of-course assessment (EOC) may be required for graduation.

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 end of school. The student's parents will be responsible for the cost of the exam.

CREDIT BY EXAM—With Prior Instruction in a Foreign Language [Language Other Than English (LOTE)]

Students entering the District with prior instruction in a foreign language that is documented by a grade report or documentation from a school of record, but have not had the actual course, may take a CBE for that foreign language and pass with a score of 70 or higher if they desire high school credit for that course. The 70 percent passing standard would also still apply to those students missing a semester of a LOTE course in which they have had prior instruction. Eligibility to test for acceleration or with prior instruction must be verified by the campus registrar and indicated on the CBE registration form.

CREDIT BY EXAM—Without Prior Instruction in a Foreign Language [Language Other Than English (LOTE)]

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for a Language Other Than English course for which the student has had no prior instruction.

A student will earn course credit with a passing score of at least 90 on the exam. The student will be able to continue on with the sequence of the LOTE when credit is granted for the exam.

DISPLAYING A STUDENT'S ARTWORK, PROJECTS, PHOTOS, AND OTHER ORIGINAL WORK

Teachers may display students' work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Promesa Schools provide instructional and language support programs tailored to meet the needs of its students to ensure that they all enter college with the skills necessary to be successful. The goal of our program is to enable limited English proficient students to become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and composition of the English language through the integrated use of second language methods and to enable limited English proficient students to participate equitably in school.

In addition to providing a strong core instructional program, Promesa Schools provides support services, including various intervention opportunities such as tutorials and small group instructional support. These services are coordinated by the campus ELL staff with the collaboration of the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) which is responsible for recommendations regarding the identification, program placement, academic intervention, and reclassification of limited English proficient (LEP) students.

The campus ELL staff is the designated person on each campus to contact regarding questions for an ELL student experiencing learning difficulties or to volunteer to serve on the LPAC.

GRADE CLASSIFICATION

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

Promotion, grade-level advancement, and course credit shall be based on mastery of the curriculum. Grade-level advancement **for students in** grades 9-12 shall be determined by course credits and the number of years completed in high school.

Students are classified according to the following criteria:

9th grade (Freshman) requires promotion and completion of 8th grade and 0 - 5.5 credits.

10th grade (Sophomore) requires completion of one year of highschool and 6-11.5 credits

11th grade (Junior)requires completion of two years of high school 12-17.5 credits.

12th grade (Senior) requires completion of three years of high school and 18 and above credits

Additionally, the following considerations are adhered to for determination of credit totals for promotion and grade-level placement.

- Denied credit(s) (due to excessive absences as determined by the principal, the attendance committee, and state or local statute) are not included when factoring **credit totals**;
- Credit totals are based on all awarded credits, including local credits and repeated credits.

In addition, at certain grade levels a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR).

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

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.

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.

GRADING GUIDELINES

Grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated and distributed to students and their

parents by the campus principal. These guidelines have been reviewed and approved by the campus principal and district personnel. 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. Procedures for a student to follow after an absence will also be addressed.

In some cases, a student that has been identified with a disability and served in Special Education may require that instruction and/or curriculum is modified or includes accommodations as outlined in the student with disabilities Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Classroom teachers must adhere to the decisions of the student's IEP as required by state and federal guidelines. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to know and follow the student's IEP. If it is the opinion of the classroom teacher assigning grades and/or designing instruction that the modifications and/or accommodations are not appropriate, they must notify the Special Education department and request a new ARD meeting to address those concerns prior to changing any required modification or accommodation.

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GRADUATION

Requirements for a Diploma Beginning with the 2014–15 School Year

Beginning with students who enter grade 9 in the 2014–15 school year, as well as any currently enrolled high school student who decides to graduate under the new foundation graduation program, a student must meet the following requirements to receive a high school diploma from the district:

- Complete the required number of credits established by the state and any additional credits required by the district;
- Complete any locally required courses in addition to the courses mandated by the state;
- Achieve passing scores on certain end-of-course (EOC) assessments or approved substitute assessments, unless specifically waived as permitted by state law; and
- Demonstrate proficiency, as determined by the district, in the specific communication skills required by the State Board of Education.

Testing Requirements for Graduation

Students are required, with limited exceptions and regardless of graduation program, to perform satisfactorily on the following EOC assessments: English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and United States History. A student who has not achieved sufficient scores on the EOC assessments to graduate will have opportunities to retake the assessments. State law and state rules also provide for certain scores on norm-referenced national standardized assessments to substitute for the requirement to meet satisfactory performance on an applicable EOC assessment should a student choose this option. Decisions related to EOC and graduation requirements for students with disabilities served in Special Education will be made by the ARD committee in the IEP. See the school counselor for more information on the state testing requirements for graduation.

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. This may require participation of the student before or after normal school hours or at times of the year outside normal school operations.

If a student continues to not perform satisfactorily on an EOC assessment, he or she will enter the process of the individual graduation committee. The individual graduation committee process will begin after the

December EOC administration of the student’s senior year.

Foundation Graduation Program

Every student in a Texas public school who enters grade 9 in the 2014–15 school year and thereafter will graduate under a new program called the “foundation graduation program.” Within the foundation graduation program are “endorsements,” which are paths of interest that include Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); Business and Industry; Public Services; Arts and Humanities; and Multidisciplinary Studies. Endorsements earned by a student will be noted on the student’s transcript and diploma. The foundation graduation program also involves the term “distinguished level of achievement,” which reflects the completion of at least one endorsement and Algebra II as one of the required advanced mathematics credits. A personal graduation plan will be completed for each high school student. State law and rules prohibit a student from graduating solely under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement unless, after the student’s sophomore year, the student and student’s parent are advised of the specific benefits of graduating with an endorsement and submit written permission to the school counselor for the student to graduate without an endorsement. A student who anticipates graduating under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement and who wishes to attend a four-year university or college after graduation must carefully consider whether this will satisfy the admission requirements of the student’s desired college or university.

Graduating under the foundation graduation program will also provide opportunities to earn “performance acknowledgments” that will be acknowledged on a student’s transcript and diploma. Performance acknowledgments are available for outstanding performance in bilingualism and biliteracy; in a dual credit course; on an AP or IB exam; on the PSAT, ACT-Plan, SAT, or ACT exam, which are national exams; or for earning a nationally or internationally recognized license or certificate. The criteria for earning these performance acknowledgments are prescribed by state rules, and the school counselor can provide more information about these acknowledgments.

A student enrolled in high school prior to the 2014–15 school year has the option of graduating under the foundation graduation program rather than the programs identified above that would otherwise be applicable to that student. See the school principal for additional information.

The foundation graduation program requires completion of the following credits:

Course Area	Number of credits Foundation Graduation Program	Number of credits Foundation Graduation Program with an Endorsement
English/Language Arts	4	4
Mathematics	3	4*
Science	3	4
Social Studies, including Economics	3	4
Physical Education**	1	1

Language other than English***	2	2
Fine Arts	1	1
Electives	5	6
Miscellaneous		Available Endorsements****: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Business and Industry Public Services Arts and Humanities Multidisciplinary
TOTAL	22 credits	26 credits

* In order to obtain the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program, which will be denoted on a student’s transcript and diploma and is a requirement to be considered for automatic admission purposes to a Texas four-year college or university, a student must complete an endorsement and take Algebra II as one of the four mathematics credits.

** A student who is unable to participate in physical activity due to a disability or illness may be able to substitute a course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, or another locally determined credit-bearing course for the required credit of physical education. This determination will be made by the student’s ARD committee, Section 504 committee, or other campus committee, as applicable. *** Students are required to earn two credits in the same language other than English to graduate. Any student may substitute computer programming languages for these credits. In limited circumstances, a student may be able to substitute this requirement with other courses, as determined by a district committee authorized by law to make these decisions for the student.

**** A student must specify upon entering grade 9 the endorsement he or she wishes to pursue.

Personal Graduation Plans for Students Under the Foundation Graduation Program A personal graduation plan will be developed for each high school student who is subject to the requirements of the foundation graduation program. The district encourages all students to pursue a personal graduation plan that includes the completion of at least one endorsement and to graduate with the distinguished level of achievement. Attainment of the distinguished level of achievement entitles a student to be considered for automatic admission to a public four-year college or university in Texas, depending on his or her rank in class. The school will review personal graduation plan options with each student entering grade 9 and his or her parent. Before the end of grade 9, a student and his or her parent will be required to sign off on a personal graduation plan that includes a course of study that promotes college and workforce readiness and career placement and advancement, as well as facilitates the transition from secondary to postsecondary education. The student’s personal graduation plan will denote an appropriate course sequence based on the student’s choice of endorsement. A student may, with parental permission, amend his or her personal graduation plan after the initial confirmation.

Available Course Options for all Graduation Programs

Information regarding specific courses required or offered in each curriculum area will be distributed to

students each spring in order to enroll in courses for the upcoming school year.

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.

HOMEWORK

Homework is assigned to give students additional practice using skills learned in the classroom as well as to extend information taught during the school day. Research indicates that homework can make a positive difference in student success.

Promesa Schools' students are expected to complete homework every night. Parents and guardians are encouraged to help their child by providing time, space, and materials to complete assignments. Homework provides parents and guardians with an opportunity to observe the concepts and skills their child is learning.

If a student experiences difficulty with homework, he or she is expected to contact the teacher by phone up until 9:00 pm for assistance. Parents and guardians are also encouraged to contact the teacher or principal if their student is consistently having difficulty with their homework.

In addition to providing after school tutorials, Promesa Schools students will be given a student planner to encourage and inform parents and students of their weekly homework assignments.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

Grading Policies. Promesa Schools courses are generally organized on a yearly basis. Most core academic courses span the entire school year, while many elective courses are one semester long. Student grades for each semester are determined by averaging the grades from three six-week grading cycles. Student grades for yearlong classes are determined by averaging the grades from all grading cycles for the year.

Progress Reports. After three weeks grading cycles, every student will receive a written progress report to notify parents/guardians of academic progress to date. Students with grades below 70 in any class will be required to attend tutoring after school, in lieu of extracurricular club and athletic activities.

Report Cards. Report cards will be provided to parents/guardians at the end of each six-week grading cycles. Report cards should be signed by the student's parent or guardian and returned to the school within two days. Students will receive numerical grades that convert to letter grades in the following manner:

90 – 100 A
80 – 89 B
75 – 79 C
70 – 74 D
Below 70 F

Students with grades below 70 in any class will be required to attend tutoring after school, in lieu of extracurricular club and athletic activities, and on Saturday. Students will not receive credit for a class if the final grade for the year is below 70.

Grade Conferences and Questions. Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal and designed to reflect each student's academic achievement for that grading period, semester or class.

A test or class grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the superintendent determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher failed to follow Promesa Schools grading policy.

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.

Exams. An exam may be given at the conclusion of each grading period. Final exams will be included in curricular areas as required by the classroom teacher. Teachers will communicate the inclusion of final exams clearly at the beginning of each semester. Parents and students are encouraged to communicate with teachers on a regular basis related to upcoming examinations and the various requirements.

Awarding Credit from Other Schools. Promesa Schools will award credit from courses earned at other public schools. Students seeking to have credit awarded from institutions other than Texas public schools must present a report card or transcript indicating the credits earned at the previous institution. When discussing promotion from another campus, it is possible that Promesa Schools may give a state assessment and will analyze student performance in combination with documented information when determining student placement.

Scholastic Honor Recognition. Promesa Schools recognize the academic achievements of its students. Each grading period, A Honor Roll and A/B Honor Roll students receive special recognition for their achievements. Students are eligible for the A Honor Roll if they receive a grade of 90 or above in all subject areas. Students shall be eligible for the A/B Honor Roll if they receive a grade of 80 or above in all subject areas.

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 Promesa Schools. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course level or grade-level standards. See Campus Grading Guidelines

REMOVING A STUDENT FROM HUMAN SEXUALITY INSTRUCTION As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality. State law requires that any instruction related to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immune deficiency syndrome must (AIDS):

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

As a parent, you are entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, you may remove your child from any part of the human sexuality instruction with no academic, disciplinary, or other penalties. You may also choose to become more involved with the development of curriculum used for this purpose by becoming more involved with your campus and district. Please see the campus principal for additional information.

RETENTION/SUCCESS INITIATIVE (SSI)

Promesa Schools will provide accelerated instruction to all students who do not demonstrate proficiency on STAAR or in a given academic core class. Students who do not meet the standard on STAAR must receive appropriate instructional intervention so that they will be able to make the academic progress necessary to do on grade-level work at the next grade. Accelerated instruction may require participation by the student before or after normal school hours and may include participation at times of the year outside normal school operations. TEA is currently restructuring the SSI requirements for all grade levels. Promesa Schools will communicate all requirements to parents as they become available from TEA.

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 school 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 Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and ACT-Plan are the corresponding preparatory and readiness assessments for the SAT and ACT.

Beginning in April 2014, the ACT-Plan has been replaced by the ACT-Aspire, and more information can be obtained on these assessments from the school counselor. Limited accommodations as outlined by the test publisher are available for students diagnosed with a disability and served through Special Education. Should a parent or student wish to access these limited accommodations, they must make the request through the student's ARD prior to the Spring semester before the test will be administered.

Note that participation in these assessments may qualify a student to receive a performance acknowledgment on his or her transcript and diploma under the foundation graduation program and may qualify as a substitute for an end-of-course testing requirement in certain circumstances.

STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness)

Grades 3–8

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state mandated assessments, such as the STAAR, in the following subjects:

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

Successful performance on the reading and math assessments in grades 5 and 8 is required by law, unless the student is enrolled in a reading or math course intended for students above the student's current grade level, in order for the student to be promoted to the next grade level.

STAAR Alternate 2, for students receiving Special Education services who meet certain state-established

criteria, will be available for eligible students, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

Decisions related to assessment requirements for students with disabilities served in Special Education will be made by the ARD committee in the IEP.

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

STAAR end-of-course (EOC) assessments are administered for the following courses:

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

Satisfactory performance on the applicable assessments will be required for graduation, unless otherwise waived or substituted as allowed by state law and rules.

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

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are provided to students by the State of Texas free of charge, and students are encouraged to take good care of all books assigned to them. A student who is issued a damaged textbook should immediately report the damaged item to his or her teacher.

ATTENDANCE

The academic day at Promesa Schools is dependent on the students enrolled grade level. Students involved in athletics and other after school activities may need to stay later than the times outlined below in order to participate in practices, performances, and/or games. Attendance is taken during second period for state

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attendance reporting purposes. Any student who arrives after the first ten minutes of class will be marked absent.

Absences. On any day a student is absent, his or her parent or guardian must call their student's campus before second period and report the absence. Upon returning to school following an absence, students must report to the front office and provide a written excuse signed by a parent/guardian in order to receive a pass to re-enter class. Failure to bring this note will result in the absence being unexcused. These written notes become a part of the student's attendance record. Based on the documentation provided, the school will determine whether the absence is excused or unexcused. Absences of three days or more will require a doctor's note or other official documentation.

The final grade a student receives in any class may reflect absenteeism. All students are expected to maintain regular attendance. Excessive tardiness or a pattern of unwarranted absenteeism is considered a violation of the Parent/Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct.

Excused Absences. Promesa Schools defines an EXCUSED ABSENCE as an absence due to one or more of the following:

- Illness (with medical documentation)
- Health care appointments if a note from the health care provider is provided
- School-sanctioned activities
- Absences related to the legal system
- Family emergency
- Bereavement/Funeral for immediate family members, which includes the student's parents, siblings, and grandparents
- Religious observances
- Short-term suspensions or other disciplinary actions resulting in an absence

All of these listed absences require written documentation signed by the parent/guardian upon student's return to school.

Unexcused Absences/Truancy. Promesa Schools define an UNEXCUSED ABSENCE as an absence that does not meet the criteria categorized as an excused absence, an absence of three days or longer and a doctor's note or other official documentation is not provided, or if a signed note is not submitted by the parent/guardian **within 3 days of returning to school.** This type of absence is also defined as truancy. Unexcused Absence/Truancy is considered a major violation of the Student Code of Conduct. In an effort to deter students from missing school, all unexcused absences/truancy violations are CUMULATIVE for one school year. The school will take into account extenuating circumstances before applying any disciplinary action.

The parent/guardian will be notified in writing and/or by phone if a student receives an unexcused absence. The parent/guardian may be required to have a conference with the school administrator.

Opportunities for Make-up Work.

A student will be given the opportunity to make up work missed due to an excused/unexcused absence. However, it is the responsibility of the student, immediately upon his or her return to class from an absence, to request and complete an absence form with any assignments or tests missed because of the absence. Teachers will have policies already in place, and students should be aware of those requirements. Remember that make-up work is the responsibility of the student. It is not the teacher's responsibility to track down students to administer make up tests and collect homework.

Attendance Committee. An attendance committee composed of teachers, an administrator, and other campus staff will convene to consider appeals for students with excessive absences. The student may be required to make up hours or any requirements set by the campus attendance committee to earn credit lost.

Pre-Arranged Absences. If a student anticipates an absence of three days or more, the student must complete an absentee form. This form is available from the registrar. A written note signed by the parent/guardian indicating the dates the student will be absent must accompany the request. Please note that absences have a detrimental effect on a student's accomplishments and progress, and this should be considered prior to requesting an absentee form. These absences could result in loss of credit for the class if student exceeds the number of days allowed and/or student fails to pass the course.

Tardy to Class. A student is considered tardy to class if he/she arrives to class after the bell has rung without a note from a teacher or administrator. Being more than ten minutes late to class without a pass will result in an unexcused absence. See Campus Tardy Procedures

After School. Students are not allowed to stay after school unless they have teacher approval or are

staying for a school-sponsored activity. All students must be off campus an hour after the end of the academic day unless prior permission to remain on campus after this time has been granted by a Promesa Schools staff member who will remain with the student until they are picked up. Students who remain afterschool for study hall, tutorials or other meetings are required to be in a supervised area at all times. If a student is waiting for a ride, they need to remain in the space designated by Promesa Schools staff until their ride arrives. Students staying after school with the Boys & Girls Club must have the appropriate bracelet and be with Boys & Girls Club staff at all times. Per campus procedures, all students must have a current Boys & Girls Club application on file. Students are absolutely prohibited from wandering the campus or being in a classroom unsupervised.

Closed Campus Policy and Early Dismissal. Providing a safe and orderly campus environment is important. Therefore, all students are required to stay on campus upon arrival. Early dismissals for appointments or illness must be arranged prior to departure. All students leaving school early for such appointments must be signed out in the front office prior to departing campus. Also, the adult picking up the student must show proper identification to front office staff and must appear on the student's emergency contact card authorized by the student's legal guardian. Students leaving campus without being signed out by a parent/guardian will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Homebound Students. If a student has a medical or psychological condition that necessitates being absent for a total of four weeks, not necessarily consecutively, a homebound referral will be initiated. Once the school receives confirmation from a physician that there is a medical necessity for the student to receive homebound services, a committee will meet to determine an educational program to meet the individual student's needs. The school will develop a quarterly curricular calendar with any needed adaptations. A case manager will be assigned, and a weekly schedule developed for in-home instruction. Students are responsible for meeting the requirements of grade-level curriculum and will be required to take all standardized tests when possible. These assessments may be taken in the home environment or in a specially designed school environment.

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 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 parent/guardian 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.**

For a student younger than 12 years of age, the student's parent could be charged with a criminal offense based on the student's failure to attend school.

If a student **ages** 12 through age 17 violates the compulsory attendance law, both the parent and student could be charged with a criminal offense.

Driver License Attendance Verification. For a student between the ages of 16 and 18 to obtain a driver license, written parental permission must be provided for the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to access the student's attendance records and, in certain circumstances, for a school administrator to provide the student's attendance information to DPS. A verification of enrollment may be obtained from the office, which the student will need to submit to DPS upon application for a driver license. If a student is driving/parking a vehicle on school premises, he/she must comply with the student parking permit requirements and rules.

CAMPUS CULTURE INFORMATION

Since its beginning, Promesa Schools has embraced a culture of support and a “whatever it takes” attitude. At Promesa Schools, whatever it takes means working as hard as necessary to achieve the goal of college success. This includes long hours, Saturday school, service learning, homework each night, and much more. Reaching for such high expectations is not easy for anyone, and so we endeavor for Promesa Schools to feel like a family oriented school. Promesa Schools teachers, staff members, and administrators are all dedicated to caring for a student during all the years he or she attends Promesa Schools, and even afterward. The rules and policies that we enforce are often stricter than at other schools, but it is because we believe our students can and should be held to a higher standard. We are what we do every day, and excellence is a habit.

CELL PHONES & PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES

During school hours, all student cell phones and/or any portable electronic devices (including earpieces), unless being used for instructional purposes in a classroom, must be turned off and put away. If at any time during the school day a cell phone is out or in use, the cell phone will be confiscated. The first incident will result in the parent /guardian picking up the cell phone and paying Promesa Schools \$5 in order for the phone to be returned. The second incident will result in the parent/guardian picking up the cell phone and paying Promesa Schools \$10 in order for the phone to be returned. With a third incident, the parent/guardian must pick up the cell phone and pay Promesa Schools \$15. In the event this becomes excessive, further disciplinary action may occur. All funds collected through this policy will be deposited in Promesa Schools activity fund. Parents/guardians are encouraged to call the school’s office number if an emergency arises. Refusal to comply with policy will result in immediate disciplinary action, which may include suspension.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN

Promesa Schools has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children. As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child’s mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

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

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

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment, the campus counselor and/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.

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>).

COUNSELING

Academic Counseling

Students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a school student advisor, counselor, teacher, or principal to learn more about course offerings, graduation requirements, early graduation procedures and ways to assist their child to be successful in school overall. Each year, high school students 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 opportunities, as well as information on the importance of postsecondary education.

The school counselor and student advisor can also provide information about entrance exams and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission, financial aid, housing, and scholarships as these relate to state colleges and universities. The school counselor and student advisor can also provide information about workforce opportunities after graduation or technical and trade school opportunities, including opportunities to earn industry-recognized certificates and licenses.

At the elementary level, students will begin to explore the world of work and college by participating in various activities that **allow them** to familiarize themselves in different colleges and career choices. The school counselor will provide students with academic counseling that will help them become successful lifelong learners. Parents are always welcomed to discuss academic concerns about their child's education with the teacher, school counselor, and administration. The goal is to ensure that students are prepared to learn and to maximize their educational opportunity while in school.

Personal Counseling

The school counselor and student advisor are available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, emotional or mental health issues, and substance abuse. A student who wishes to meet with the school counselor should request time to see the school counselor or student advisor through their teacher, principal, or directly with the counselor or student advisor. As a parent, if you are concerned about your child's mental and/or emotional health, please speak with the school counselor or student advisor for a list of resources that may be of assistance. Personal counseling at school is limited to issues that impact education and/or of short-term duration. Referrals are available for more intensive or long-term counseling needs. Please contact the school counselor or student advisor for this information. Students' overall well-being is important for overall success.

DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT

Discrimination Definition. Discrimination is any conduct that negatively affects a student on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender or disability.

Harassment Definition. Harassment is conduct that: (1) affects the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from a program or activity; (2) creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment; or (3) substantially interferes with a student's performance

Notice of Non-Discrimination. Promesa Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs. Promesa Schools does not discriminate on the basis of disability by denying access to the benefits of Promesa Schools services, programs or activities. Questions or concerns about Promesa Schools policy of non-discrimination should be directed to the principal or superintendent.

Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment. Promesa Schools does not allow harassment of any student on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender or disability. It is Promesa Schools expectation that all members of the Promesa Schools family feel welcomed and appreciated. No person or group has the right to engage in an activity that can be defined as discrimination or harassment. This holds true for all students who are participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities. Inquiries regarding compliance procedures may be directed to the principal.

A substantiated complaint against a student will result in appropriate disciplinary action. Questions or concerns about the discrimination or harassment of students on any **basis should** be directed to the principal or superintendent.

DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS

School Materials

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with prior approval from the superintendent, 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.

Non-school Materials...from students

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

A student may appeal a decision to the superintendent. Any student who sells, posts, circulates, or distributes non-school material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

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. To be considered for distribution, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization and be submitted to the principal for prior review. The principal will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection to the superintendent.

The front office area of the school has been designated as the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection by students with preapproval of the school principal.

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 or a **non curriculum-related** student group meeting held on the school campus with

principal approval.

- 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 CODE

In support of promoting a safe and professional college preparatory environment, a uniform has been adopted for all Promesa Schools students. The uniform promotes the concept of teamwork on campus, reduces competition based on current styles, and ingrains the habits of appropriate dress in all Promesa Schools students. Students should maintain a neat, clean appearance throughout the school day. Do not purchase or expect to wear clothing that is ill fitted or extremely tight. A professional appearance is expected at **all times**.

Faculty and **staff strictly** enforce the dress code. The dress code is in effect anytime students are on school grounds, and at most school functions. Campus administration reserves the right to appraise any fashion, hair, make-up, or accessory article as inappropriate for school wear or disruptive to the learning environment. Nothing worn may be distracting or interfere with the educational process or raise a health/safety concern as determined by campus **administrators**. Random, unannounced dress code checks will be done throughout the day/year. Students out of dress code will be assigned discipline by campus administration as appropriate for the infraction.

1. Hygiene

- (a) Cologne, perfume, and scented lotions are allowed, but may only be applied in bathrooms or locker/changing rooms.

2. Backpacks

- (a) Backpacks may not be distracting, interfere with the educational process, or raise any safety concerns. (b) A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, backpack, etc.) may be searched when school authorities have reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized items.

3. Gym Clothes

(a) SWK Campus/West Corpus Christi Campus/Brownsville Campus

- i. No gym clothes are required for PE.
- ii. Students enrolled in athletics will dress appropriately for the sports as assigned by the sports coach/campus administration.

(b) MLK Campus

- i. All students are required to wear the appropriate attire in gym class each day. Failure to dress in appropriate attire will result in a zero for the day and students will not be allowed to participate in class.
- ii. Black shorts, tennis shoes with socks, and any Promesa Schools shirt make up the gym class uniform. Shirts are available for purchase at Promesa Schools.
- iii. A black sweatshirt and black sweatpants are allowed to be worn over the uniform when there is inclement weather. No other outerwear is permitted during gym class.

4. ID Badges.

- (a) MLK campus students will be required to wear ID badges at all times. Administration can issue consequences for non compliance.
- (b) The first ID badge will be issued to the student at no charge. There will be a \$5.00 fee charged for each lost or damaged ID badge.
- (c) Lanyards will be available for students to purchase.
- (d) Badges are considered a part of the student dress code.

Please refer to the appendices at the end of this handbook for campus specific dress codes.

Alternative Dress Code Days

1. Dress Down Days

- (a) Dress down days may be approved throughout the school year by permission of the district/campus administration only.
- (b) Students with excessive absences and/or discipline issues may not qualify for dress down days at the stipulation of the district/campus administration.

2. Winter months

- (a) Coats, non-school sweatshirts, or any other outerwear are not permitted to be worn in school or during school related activities anywhere in the building.

3. Athletic Teams/Orchestra/ Special School Organizations

- (a) By assignment of the organization lead, students in the approved athletic team may wear buttoned shirts and ties and/or uniforms as approved by the campus administration.

4. Service Learning and Field Trips

- (a) Students must come in dress code unless approved by campus administration prior to the event.

5. Saturday and Special Event Dress

- (a) Some events will not require students to be in uniform. Dress requirements will be given prior to the event on those occasions.
- (b) Students will always be expected to be in clothes appropriate for the situation, and those clothes should fit properly.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Promesa Schools offers a variety of extracurricular activities to eligible students. However, if a student receives a grade below 70 in any class for an evaluation period, the student shall be suspended from participation in any extracurricular activity sponsored or sanctioned by Promesa Schools or the University Interscholastic League. The suspension will continue for 3 weeks and will not be removed during the school year until the student's grade in each class is equal to or greater than 70. A suspension will not last beyond the end of the school year.

All students participating in **extracurricular** activities are required to conduct themselves as role models, to demonstrate good citizenship, and comply with all rules and regulations of Promesa Schools or be subject to suspension or expulsion from school and/or the activity involved. Coaches or advisors may apply additional, reasonable, and necessary rules unique to the particular activity for which they have responsibility, and which have been approved by the school administration in advance. All competition activities will follow the eligibility rules outlined by the sponsoring entity.

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege. Students must have appropriate behavior as well as passing grades prior to any event/activity. Grades, behavior and discipline will be taken into consideration prior to every event/activity and may result in ineligibility to participate.

GUM

Students are not allowed to chew gum at any time while on campus or any school-sponsored activity. Excessive incidents of gum chewing will result in further disciplinary action.

OUTSIDE FOOD/DRINK

The school must be in compliance with the USDA National School Lunch Program policies. Your child is permitted to bring his/her lunch. The United States Department of Agriculture recommends that a healthy lunch be provided. For our Elementary School campuses, if you would like to bring outside food for your child, you must make plans to eat with your child at a designated area in our cafeteria/school. Under no circumstance are parents allowed to bring outside food for anyone other than their child.

Non-school sponsored food sales are not allowed unless approved by the administration in writing. The school may offer food sales in conjunction with a school supported and approved fundraiser only with written consent of the administration.

Food in the classroom may only be used in conjunction with an educational objective or award with the prior written approval of the campus administration. Parents who wish to provide a light snack item to celebrate their child's birthday must gain prior approval from the campus administration at least three days prior to the event. It may not be served or interfere with the school lunch time. These opportunities may be limited and are based on the principal's decision.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Parental Involvement Program at Promesa Schools was developed to promote a learning environment for parents so they can have a greater impact on their child's education. The Parental Involvement program provides parents with information about available resources, such as support groups and other community programs.

Promesa Schools has both a Parental Involvement Policy and a Home-School Compact which is created in cooperation with our parents. It outlines various expectations of the home and school aligned to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and Title I, Part A requirements. Parents are encouraged to participate in the education of their child to maximize the services they receive.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Communication between parents and teachers is essential for each student's progress. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled as needed, and parents are encouraged to schedule parent/teacher conferences when desired. At conferences, teachers and parents discuss a child's strengths and areas of need and teachers review class work, school-based assessments, and teacher observations. Together, parents and teachers develop action plans for the child and record the plan. In the event that a parent is unable to attend a conference, the parent may request a telephone conference at a mutually agreeable time. If you have any concerns or questions regarding your student's performance, please contact your child's teacher to schedule additional conferences.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Each student is expected to behave in a manner that exemplifies dedication, discipline, desire, honesty, loyalty, and respect. Students will be held responsible and accountable for behavior that conveys these principles. Proper behavior is expected at all school-sponsored activities both during and after the regular school day. Students who consistently or repeatedly fail to uphold the Promesa Schools standards of conduct will be required to attend a discipline meeting with a parent/guardian.

Students must follow the campus discipline program. Parents will receive training/information during orientations and upon enrollment for students beginning after the start of the school year.

Discipline Authority. School rules and the authority of Promesa Schools to administer discipline apply whenever the interest of the school is involved. Any Promesa Schools student who attends a school related activity, on or off school grounds, must adhere to the Promesa Schools Code of Conduct.

Promesa Schools has disciplinary authority over a student:

- During the regular school day, when the student is within 1000 feet of the school's real property boundary line, and while the student is going to and from school on Promesa Schools transportation.
- While the student is in attendance at any school-related activity, including summer school, regardless of time or location.
- When criminal mischief is committed on or off school property or at a school-related event.
- When retaliation against a school employee or volunteer occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location.
- When the student commits a felony offense in the community, as provided by the Texas Education Code.
- Pursuant to any code of conduct adopted at the campus level relating to participation in a student club, organization, or extracurricular activity.
- For any mandatory expulsion offense committed while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of another district.

Note: In addition to disciplinary consequences, misdemeanor and felony offenses committed on campus will be reported to, and handled by, the appropriate law enforcement agency.

General Guidelines for Student Conduct. Students are prohibited from engaging in conduct that violates the Parent/Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct while at school or at Promesa Schools sponsored activities, whether on or off-campus. Examples of such violations include:

- 1) damaging or vandalizing property;
- 2) stealing;
- 3) using profanity, vulgar language or obscene gestures;
- 4) name calling;
- 5) insubordination;
- 6) behaving in any way that disrupts the school environment or educational process;
- 7) leaving school grounds without permission;
- 8) inappropriate touching;
- 9) violating the dress code;
- 10) wearing or possessing clothing, jewelry, shoes, bandanas, or other items associated with gang activity;
- 11) being late to school/class;
- 12) fighting or attempting to instigate a fight;
- 13) bullying;
- 14) threatening other students, teachers, or staff members;
- 15) inappropriate internet use;
- 16) inappropriate use of any school electronic system, including thermostats and fire alarms;
- 17) possessing or using alcohol, drugs, or tobacco (including e-cigarettes and vape devices);
- 18) selling alcohol, drugs, or tobacco (including e-cigarettes and vape devices);
- 19) cheating or allowing others to cheat;
- 20) copying work or allowing others to copy work;
- 21) plagiarism;
- 22) lying to teachers, administrators, or staff members;
- 23) forging signatures or other documents;
- 24) being in a gang or participating in gang activity; and

25) possessing a weapon.

The above list of prohibited behaviors is offered by way of example only. Disciplinary action may result for other types of school-related misconduct or violations of the Parent/Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct.

Firearm Violations. Federal law mandates that a student be expelled from the regular classroom for a period of at least one calendar year for bringing a firearm to school. However, the superintendent or designee may modify the length of the expulsion or assess another comparable penalty that results in the student's exclusion from the regular school program on a case-by-case basis.

Serious Offenses. A student may be disciplined and/or expelled for committing a serious offense listed in § 37.07 of the Texas Education Code.

Consequences. Students will be treated fairly and equitably. Discipline will be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case. Factors to consider will include:

- The seriousness of the offense;
- The student's age;
- The frequency of misconduct;
- The student's attitude;
- The potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment; and
- The Student Code of Conduct adopted by the board of trustees.

Teachers initially handle all discipline issues within their classrooms and administer consequences ranging from a simple warning to removal from the classroom. For violations of the Student Code of Conduct that can be handled by the teacher, the following discipline management techniques may be used alone or in combination.

- 1) Oral correction;
- 2) Cooling off or time-out;
- 3) Phone calls to parents/guardians;
- 4) Parent-teacher conferences;
- 5) Confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process;
- 6) Grade reductions for academic violations such as cheating, copying, allowing others to copy work, or plagiarism;
- 7) Sending the student to the office or other assigned area;

¹ Firearm, as defined by 18 U.S.C. § 921, means:

- A. Any weapon (including starter gun) which will, or is designed to, or which may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
 - B. The frame or receiver of any such weapon;
 - C. Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer;
 - D. Any destructive device, as defined by 18 U.S.C. § 921.
- 8) After school and/or lunch detention; and
 - 9) Saturday detentions.

Suspension and Expulsion as Consequences for Serious and/or Persistent Misbehaviors. A student may be suspended and/or expelled for serious infractions. Misbehaviors in violation of the Student Code of Conduct not otherwise constituting an expellable offense may become a serious infraction subject to expulsion and/or suspension when the misbehavior is so persistent that, in cumulative effect, it is significantly disruptive of the educational process. The decision to expel shall be based on an assessment of the facts and circumstances of

each case.

In-School Suspension (ISS). In-school suspension involves the assignment of a student to a specific room on campus for a period of time to be determined by campus administration. The school shall notify the parent/guardian when a student is assigned to ISS. A student assigned to ISS will receive assignments from each classroom teacher and will be expected to complete all work assigned. Students assigned to ISS will not be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities until the ISS assignment has been completed. The student cannot be assigned for more than 30 cumulative days in one school year.

Suspension Process. In addition to the above list of serious violations, the principal or designee has the authority to suspend a student for a period of up to three (3) school days for any of the following additional reasons:

- 1) If there is need to further investigate an incident;
- 2) After a recommendation to expel the student;
- 3) Severe or persistent violations of the Student Code of Conduct; or
- 4) In the event there is an emergency constituting endangerment to health or safety.

Prerequisites to Suspension. Prior to suspending a student, the principal or designee must hold an informal conference with the student to:

- 1) Notify the student of the accusations against him/her;
- 2) Allow the student to relate his/her version of the incident; and
- 3) Determine whether the student's conduct warrants suspension.

Notification to Parents/Guardians. If the principal or designee determines the student's conduct warrants suspension during the school day, the principal or designee must notify the student's parents/guardians that the student has been suspended before the student is sent home on the day the suspension occurs. The Principal or designee will notify a suspended student's parents/guardians of the period of suspension, the grounds for the suspension, and the time and place for an opportunity to confer with the Principal.

Emergency Actions. In an emergency, the principal or designee may order the immediate suspension of a student for up to three days if the student's presence threatens the health, safety, or welfare of himself/herself or other students or faculty.

If a student is suspended in an "emergency" situation without the opportunity for notice of the allegations against him/her, the principal must notify the student of the allegations and provide the student with an opportunity to present his/her version of the incident within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed three days.

Expulsion Process. Only the superintendent has the authority to expel a student, for any period up to one calendar year. The principal may recommend expulsion of a student to the superintendent. The principal's recommendation must specify the reasons, identified in the Student Code of Conduct, for a particular student's expulsion.

A. **Due Process.** When the superintendent determines that a student's conduct warrants expulsion, but prior to taking any expulsion action, the superintendent will provide the student's parents/guardians written notice of:

- a. The reasons for the proposed expulsion, and

- b. The date and location for a hearing before the superintendent, within three days after the date of the notice, unless the parents/guardians and the superintendent agree in writing to an alternate time.
- c. The notice shall further state that the student may:
 - i. Be present at the hearing;
 - ii. Have an opportunity to present evidence;
 - iii. Have an opportunity examine/question the school's evidence and witnesses;
 - iv. Be accompanied by his/her parents/guardians; and
 - v. Be represented by an attorney.

B. Hearing Before Superintendent. The school will make a good faith effort to provide the student and the student's parents/guardians with written notice, as described above, and the school will hold the hearing regardless of whether the student, the student's parents/guardians, or another adult representing the student attends.

At the hearing, the superintendent will determine whether the student's conduct warrants expulsion. The student will be given the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. The student may be given the opportunity to question witnesses presented by the school, as required by law.

Immediately following the hearing on expulsion, the Superintendent will notify the student and student's parents/guardians in writing of his/her decision. The decision will specify:

- a. The length of the expulsion, if any;
- b. The procedures for re-admittance at the end of the expulsion period; and
- c. The right to appeal the superintendent's decision to the board of trustees.

C. Appeal to the Board of Trustees

- a. The student or his/her parents/guardians may appeal the superintendent's decision by notifying the superintendent within seven days of receipt of the superintendent's decision. The board will review the audio or transcribed record from the hearing before the superintendent at the next regularly scheduled board meeting, or at the discretion of the board, at a specially called meeting. The board will notify the student and his/her parents/guardians of its decision in writing within five calendar days of the hearing.
- b. Consequences will not be deferred pending the outcome of an appeal of an expulsion by the board. Except when required by law, students will not earn academic credit during a period of expulsion.

Suspension and Expulsion of Special Education Students. A disabled student may be suspended and/or expelled for any acts of misconduct that would warrant suspension and/or expulsion of a non-disabled student. Once the administration determines that a student served in Special Education has committed an act that will result in suspension and/or expulsion, they will notify the Special Education Lead Teacher. The school will hold a Manifest Determination meeting in conjunction with an Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) meeting as outlined by IDEA Reauthorization 2004 and Special Education Policy and Procedures. The Manifest Determination committee/ARD committee will determine, as subscribed by law, if the behavior/action is a direct result of the disability or the lack of Special Education programming and complete a Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan. If the behavior/action or lack of programming is deemed the result of the behavior/action, the ARD will consider this in designing a new Individualized Education Program (IEP) to address this issue. If the behavior/action is not deemed the result of the behavior/action, students with disabilities may be suspended and/or expelled in the same manner as regular education students.

Procedures regarding expulsion and the appeal of an expulsion shall be the same as those for regular education students. The ARD/IEP Committee will determine the instructional and related services necessary to ensure continued progress related to the student's IEP during the expulsion. All decisions of the ARD/IEP Committee can be appealed through the Special Education due process procedures. The disabled student's placement during such appeal is governed by IDEA Reauthorization 2004, which maintains the disciplinary placement during the appeal, unless the parties agree otherwise. Students who are being expelled for any offense related to drugs, weapons, or serious bodily injury offense result in 45-day expulsion even if the determination is made that the behavior/action was a manifestation of the behavior or the programming.

Expulsion of Students served under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Should EACP initiate a disciplinary removal of a §504-eligible student from his/her educational placement for a term of more than ten consecutive school days, the §504 Committee must first conduct an evaluation, which shall include a manifestation determination, and provide the parent with a copy of the Notice of §504 Rights. Prior to the evaluation, EACP shall give the parents written notice of the time and place of the evaluation meeting, inviting the Parent to attend.

The Committee's evaluation should determine: (1) was the conduct in question caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student's disabilities; and (2) was the conduct in question the direct result of the school's failure to implement the student's §504 plan? If a link is found, a disciplinary removal of longer than ten consecutive school days cannot occur. If the determination is that the behavior is not linked to disability, the disciplinary removal may proceed under regular procedures. The Committee may proceed, in the evaluation meeting, to revise the student's §504 plan, as appropriate.

Disciplinary removals of less than ten consecutive days (short-term removals) can be affected without §504 Committee action, subject to the "pattern of exclusion" rule. A series of short removals over the course of the school year that exceeds ten total school days may constitute a pattern of exclusion that triggers applicable §504 procedural safeguards (a manifestation determination evaluation and a right to §504 due process hearing), and requires the school to provide the parent with a copy of the Notice of §504 Rights. The Committee will meet to conduct an evaluation prior to the eleventh cumulative day of short-term removals during a school year, to determine: (1) was the conduct in question caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student's disabilities? and (2) was the conduct in question the direct result of the school's failure to implement the student's §504 plan? Prior to the evaluation, EACP shall give the parents notice of the time and place of the evaluation meeting, inviting the parent to attend. If at the evaluation meeting a link is determined, the recommended disciplinary removal cannot occur. If the determination is that the behavior is not linked to disability, the disciplinary removal may proceed under regular procedures. The Committee may proceed, in the evaluation meeting, to revise the student's §504 plan, as appropriate.

A §504-eligible student who is determined to be currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs or alcohol may be removed from his educational placement for a drug or alcohol offense that violates this Handbook's provisions to the same extent that such disciplinary action is taken against similarly situated nondisabled students. Further, no §504 Evaluation is required prior to the removal and no §504 due process hearing is available.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

BULLYING, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, AND DATING VIOLENCE No one should be subjected to harassment or bullying on campus for any reason. Therefore, it is the policy of Promesa Schools that all employees, volunteers, parents, and students deal with all persons in ways that convey respect and consideration for individuals regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, family situation, religion or political affiliation. Acts of harassment, bullying, hostility or defamation, whether verbal, written, or physical will not be tolerated.

Bullying. Bullying of students is prohibited. 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 to the student's property, places a student in fear of harm to the student or the student's property, or is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive environment.

Bullying can include, but is not limited to, physical (hitting, kicking, pushing, choking), verbal (threatening, taunting, teasing, starting rumors, hate speech), electronic (e-mail, text messaging, blogging, chat rooms, social networking pages, etc.), or written threats.

Additionally, Promesa Schools recognizes that bullying may take the form of social and/or relational aggression. Relational aggression is behavior that is intended to harm someone by damaging or manipulating his or her relationships with others through direct and indirect methods which include, but are not limited to, social isolation and/or excluding, blatant acts of aggression that can be physical and verbal, and harm through damage or threat of damage to another's physical wellbeing. Students who engage in this behavior toward another Promesa Schools student/staff member will be subject to the same disciplinary actions outlined for other forms of bullying.

If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and the student who engaged in bullying. A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action.

Sexual Harassment. Sexual harassment of students, teachers, and staff is prohibited. Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature by a school employee, another student, or by a third party. All students are expected to treat other students and Promesa Schools employees with courtesy and respect, avoid any behaviors known to be offensive, and stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop.

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical contact that is sexual in nature;
- Sexual advances;
- Jokes or conversations of a sexual nature;
- Romantic or inappropriate relationships between students and Promesa Schools employees or volunteers, even if consensual (which does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature);
- Any other sexually-motivated conduct, contact or communication.

Questions, concerns or complaints of sexual harassment should be made to the principal or superintendent.

Dating Violence. Acts of dating violence are prohibited. Dating violence includes the intentional use of physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse by a person to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person in a dating relationship. It is a pattern of coercive behavior that one partner exerts over the other for the purpose of establishing and maintaining power and control. Dating violence can include, but is not limited to:

1. Physical abuse (hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, etc.)
2. Control of daily activities, choices, and access to resources
3. Isolation from family, friends, religious activities, school, community, etc.
4. Emotional Abuse (put-downs, public humiliation, etc.)
5. Sabotage
6. Technological abuse and stalking
7. Sexual coercion
8. Suicide or homicide threats, attempts or completions

Retaliation. Promesa Schools prohibits retaliation by a student or school employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, sexual harassment, dating violence, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

Timely Reporting. Reports of bullying, sexual harassment, and dating violence shall be made immediately after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. Failure to make a report may impair Promesa Schools' ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct. To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying, sexual harassment, dating violence, or believes that another student has experienced bullying, sexual harassment, or dating violence should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor or Principal.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

Bad Weather/Emergency Closing. The closing of a Promesa Schools campus may occur when bad weather or emergency conditions exist. Promesa Schools may close for a full day or part of a day during inclement weather. In the event of inclement weather, Promesa Schools will generally follow the "closing schedule" of the corresponding school district where the school is located. School closures or late starts will be reported on the Promesa Schools website, Promesa Schools social media outlets, local television news channels and radio.

Evacuations. If public safety officials require that a Promesa Schools' building be evacuated, students and staff will be safely transported to a designated parent-student reunification center. Parents will be informed of the reunification location via local media. At the reunification center, employees may release students to their parents upon presentation of proper identification. Employees may only release children to individuals who are authorized on the student's emergency contact form or who have written parent authorization. All employees must make every effort to ensure the safety of students and assist them in returning to their homes.

FITNESSGRAM ASSESSMENTS

Promesa Schools will conduct a physical fitness assessment of all students. Students will be assessed on their body compositions, aerobic endurance, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility. Modifications will be provided for students with various restrictions. Students shall not be graded on their fitness assessments. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

HEALTH INFORMATION

Illness. Students should not report to school if they are experiencing the following:

- Fever above 100.4° F
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Irritating or frequent cough
- Chickenpox
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Any other contagious illness

Additionally, if a parent or guardian suspects that his or her child may have a contagious illness, the parent should contact the principal so that other students and staff who may have been exposed to the illness can be alerted. A student who is ill should be kept home until the student is without fever or other symptoms (vomiting, diarrhea, cough, etc.), without the use of medications, for 24 hours. If a student has been hospitalized, a note from the student's physician stating the date the student is allowed to return to school will be required.

Illness or Injury at Promesa Schools. Students who become ill or are injured at school will report to Promesa Schools' front office. If the student is too ill or injured to remain in school, a parent or guardian will be contacted to pick up the student. Parents/guardians must keep emergency contact information updated. Promesa Schools will only release students to individuals listed as an emergency contact. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing care and paying all costs associated with any illness or injury to their student. Families are encouraged to seek medical insurance to cover potential illness or injury.

Medication. Students requiring medication (prescription or over-the-counter) during school hours must have the medication brought to the front office by a parent or guardian. The parent or guardian must also sign a medication consent form and provide instructions for administration of the medication. Any medication to be dispensed must be in its original container and properly labeled. Promesa Schools will not accept prescription medication dispensed outside the State of Texas or nonprescription medications dispensed outside the United States.

Students are forbidden from administering their own medication at Promesa Schools during school hours or at a Promesa Schools-sponsored event. Students should not be given medication to self-administer. Self-administered medicine is not allowed and may result in a suspension or expulsion. The only exception to this rule is that a student with asthma or severe allergies may be permitted to possess and use prescribed asthma and/or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent or guardian and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. Campus administration will make the determination of who will be responsible for the administration of medication on an individual basis. We encourage families to administer medication at home as much as possible. Questions about medication may be directed to the principal.

Immunizations. All students must be current on their immunizations, or provide written documentation that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, the student will not be immunized. Parents seeking an exemption for immunization requirements should contact the principal. You can find a complete list of required immunizations for Texas schools by logging onto www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize or by contacting the principal.

Acceptable evidence of immunizations includes:

- Documentation of vaccines administered that include the signature or stamp of a physician or his or her designee, or public health personnel.
- An official immunization record generated from a state or local health authority.
- An official record received from school officials.

Lice. Lice infestations are common occurrences among school children and are not reflective of the hygiene standards of students or their families. To prevent the spread of lice, a parent should contact the principal if they suspect their child has lice or has been exposed to lice. Any student found with head lice will be sent home for treatment. Students will not be allowed to return to campus until they no longer have lice.

Emergency Medical Treatment. If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, Promesa Schools needs to have a written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment as well as other emergency care information. Parents should be sure to update emergency contact forms as needed.

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

Bacterial Meningitis.

What is meningitis? Meningitis is an inflammation of the membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord. People sometimes refer to it as spinal meningitis. Meningitis is usually caused by a viral or bacterial infection. Viral meningitis is generally less severe and clears up without specific treatment, however, bacterial meningitis can be quite severe with the potential for serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease but requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

What are the signs and symptoms of meningitis? Someone with meningitis will become very ill. High fever, headache, and stiff neck are common symptoms of meningitis in anyone over the age of 2 years. These symptoms can develop over several hours or may take 1 to 2 days to appear. Other symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, discomfort when looking into bright lights, confusion, and sleepiness. As the disease progresses, patients of any age may have seizures.

How is bacterial meningitis spread? The bacteria are mainly spread from person to person through the exchange of respiratory and throat secretions. This can occur through coughing, kissing, and sneezing. Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as things like the common cold or the flu. Also, the bacteria are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been.

How can bacterial meningitis be prevented? Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices(ACIP) recommends routine vaccination of all persons 11-18 years of age with 1 dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine at the earliest opportunity. Pre-teens who are 11-12 years old should be routinely vaccinated at the 11- 12 year old check-upas recommended by ACIP.

For more information, contact your doctor or local/regional health department. Additional information may also be found at the website for **Center of Disease Control and Prevention** (www.cdc.gov) and **TexasDepartment of State Health Services** (www.tdh.state.tx.us).

If you suspect someone may have bacterial meningitis seek immediate medical attention

SAFETY

Student expectations. Safety at Promesa Schools and at Promesa Schools events is a top priority of Promesa Schools and requires the cooperation of all students. Students are expected to:

- Avoid behavior that is likely to put the student or others at risk of injury.
- Follow all rules of this handbook as well as any rules or instructions given by the principal, teachers or other staff.
- Remain alert and report to a teacher or the principal any safety dangers, including intruders at Promesa Schools or threats made by any person.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.

TOBACCO, DRUG AND ALCOHOL-FREE SCHOOL

Promesa Schools' goal is to have a tobacco, drug, and alcohol-free school population. Students are prohibited from possessing or using tobacco (including the use of e cigarettes or vape devices), drugs, or alcohol at school related or school sanctioned activities, whether on or off school property.

TRANSFER OF VICTIMS

On the request of a parent or other person with authority to act on behalf of a student who is a victim of a violent crime, Promesa Schools shall provide an opportunity for the transfer of the victim to another safe public school. Student victims are not required to transfer but will be offered the opportunity to do so.

OPERATIONS

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Parents/guardians must give the registrar written notification of a student's change of address or phone number with five days of the change.

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

Promesa Schools strives to provide superior service to all students and parents. Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be resolved through a phone call or a meeting with the teacher. However, Promesa Schools recognizes that at times a parent or student may find it necessary to lodge a complaint with Promesa Schools and has created the following complaint procedure for parents and students.

Step 1 – Raise Concern with the Teacher. If you have a complaint about a teacher, you should bring the complaint to the student’s teacher via phone call, email, or conference, as soon as possible. The longer you wait to make a complaint, the harder it will be for the school to address your complaint or concern.

Step 2 - Raise Concern or Complaint with Principal. If your complaint or concern is not resolved by the teacher, you may bring your complaint to the principal. The principal will take the steps he or she finds necessary to timely and adequately address your complaint.

Step 3 – File Formal, Written Complaint with Superintendent. If your complaint is not resolved by the principal, you may file a formal, written complaint with the superintendent. The complaint must be filed within ten school days of your most recent contact with the campus principal about the issue. Written complaints must be specific and, if possible, suggest a resolution. The superintendent will attempt to respond, in writing, within 15 school days of receipt of a written complaint.

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Step 4 – File Formal, Written Complaint with Promesa Schools’ Board Chair. If your complaint is not resolved by the superintendent, you may file a written complaint to the Chair of Promesa Schools’ Board of Trustees. The complaint must be filed within ten school days of the superintendent’s decision, or within 30 days of the date you filed the complaint with the superintendent, whichever is earlier.

The Chair of Promesa Schools’ Board of Trustees will provide a copy of the complaint record to all members of the board as well as the superintendent at the next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. Any action of the Board of Trustees regarding the complaint shall be taken in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. Failure of the Board of Trustees to act on a complaint has the effect of upholding the superintendent’s decision.

FUND-RAISING

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the principal at least ten days before the event. The principal holds authority to approve fundraising. Decisions may be appealed to the superintendent.

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

LIBRARY RESOURCES

Promesa Schools is fortunate to have a library available for use by its students. Use of all Promesa Schools library materials are limited to students working under staff supervision for approved purposes. Various library materials are allowed to be checked out; however, students are responsible to return them by the due date in good condition or they will be liable for full replacement cost. Final decisions related to library materials are at the discretion of the library staff and administration.

Inappropriate use of Promesa Schools' library, and its materials, may result in appropriate action against the student. Students are expected to comply with all Promesa Schools rules and policies regarding library use by students. Any inappropriate actions involving library resources including vandalism, breakage, misuse, unauthorized use, and neglectful behavior may result in a disciplinary consequence including financial compensation for said actions.

LIBRARY POLICIES

• GENERAL RULES

- o Students are responsible for any books they check out from the library. If a book is lost or damaged, it must be paid for before they can check out new books. Book replacement costs range from \$5-\$20.
- o Promesa Public Schools Libraries **DO NOT** charge overdue fines.

• CHECKING OUT LIBRARY BOOKS

- o To check out library books, the student must take them to the librarian to be scanned.
- o Students are allowed to check out 2 books at a time.
- o Check out time for each book is 2 weeks with the option to renew if needed. Students should see the librarian about renewing books.
- o Students will not be allowed to check out books if they have outstanding overdue books on their account.

• RETURNING LIBRARY BOOKS

- o Students may return library books during their regular class visit or anytime during library hours.
- o MLK campus has a book drop which is located in the front of the main building. Students can return materials to the book drop during regular school hours. **Only items checked out from the library should be placed in the book drop.**

For library inquiries please contact the District Librarian at 512-287-5087

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Technology Resources

Promesa Schools is fortunate to have computer labs, laptops, tablets, and other technology devices available for use by its students. Each student will have a personal computer account that they will use to login to any Promesa Schools computer. Use of the computers is limited to students working under staff supervision for approved purposes. Students are expected to comply with all Promesa Schools' rules and/or policies regarding computer and technology use. Any use of a Promesa Schools computer, including any emails sent and/or received, on a Promesa Schools computer is not private and may be monitored by Promesa Schools staff.

Disciplinary Procedures

Proper behavior is expected when using Promesa Public Schools technology resources and personal devices at all school-sponsored activities both during and after the regular school day. Students who repeatedly fail to uphold the Promesa Schools standards of conduct and behavior will be held responsible for their actions and may be banned from using Promesa Schools computers and/or other technology resources. Any student damaging or defacing Promesa Schools technology will be required to pay for the damage or loss.

TITLE I PARENTAL NOTICE

As a parent of a student in a Title I school, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child, and the Federal law requires Promesa Schools to provide you with this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have a right to request the following information about your child's classroom teachers:

- 1) Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subject he or she teaches.
- 2) Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances.
- 3)

The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.

4) Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child, and, if so, their qualifications.

5) If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact the principal.

As a parent of a Promesa Schools student, you have the right to participate in the education of your child. As Promesa Schools receives Title I funds, the school is required by statute to yearly create and update their Parental Involvement Policy and Home/School Compact with input from all stakeholders. Parents are encouraged to actively participate in this process. For more information, please contact your campus principal.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

Promesa Schools survey students and parents annually through the Student Residency Questionnaire to determine if their living situation is transitional as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence are considered homeless and may be eligible for services. Families will be contacted by Promesa Schools to determine the type of services the student may be eligible for during the school year. If during the year, a family's living situation changes due to economic hardship, the family should contact the campus to update their Student Residency Questionnaire to determine if they are eligible for services.

Questions concerning services to homeless students should be directed to the campus principal.

MEALS AND CAFETERIA

Promesa Schools offers students nutritionally balanced breakfasts and lunches daily.

We are pleased to inform you that Promesa Schools will be implementing the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) under the in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs for schools. In CEP schools, applications are no longer required.

Schools that participate in CEP provide healthy breakfasts and lunches each day at no charge for ALL students enrolled in that CEP school during the school year.

Students are not permitted to share any food brought from home or from outside the school. Please contact the principal if you have any questions about the meals provided by Promesa Schools or the NSLP.

Food and drink will be allowed only in the cafeteria area, and not in any academic area without the consent of the principal. Students should dispose of all trash in the appropriate place.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Any employee may, within the scope of the employee's duties, use and apply physical restraint to a student if the employee reasonably believes restraint is necessary in order to:

- 1) Protect a person, including the person using physical restraint, from physical injury.
- 2) Obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object.
- 3) Protect property from serious damage.
- 4) Remove a student refusing a lawful command of a school employee from a specific location, including a classroom or other school property, in order to restore order or to impose disciplinary measures.
- 5) Restrain an irrational student.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas Flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. One minute of silence will follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, mediate, or engage in other silent activity during the minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others.

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.

PROPERTY GUIDELINES

School Property. All students and parents are expected to respect and care for all property of Promesa Schools including building facilities, desks, dry erase boards, books, restroom facilities, lockers, etc. Any student damaging or defacing school property will be required to pay for the damage or loss. Willful destruction or defacement of school property at any time is prohibited.

At the end of each school year, all students are required to return all school-issued materials (textbooks, novels, athletics uniforms, calculators, etc.) in good condition. Students who fail to do so will have to reimburse the school the replacement cost of these items.

Student Property. Promesa Schools assumes no responsibility for any loss to students' personal property or for items such as (but not limited to) MP3 players, radios, cameras, cellular phones, CD players, iPods, camcorders, hand held game systems, toys, and cards.

The school is not responsible at any point for items that are prohibited on campus. This includes cell phones.

The following items will be immediately confiscated if brought to campus: skateboards, skates, roller blades, televisions, personal electronic game systems, flat irons, curling irons, or aerosol cans (hair spray, deodorant, etc.) This is not an exhaustive list. Inappropriate items will be returned to parents at the discretion of the principal.

Student property that is traditionally considered confidential (journals, purses, etc.) will be turned over to the school administrator if it is found to pose a risk to its owner or anyone else

Theft. Committing an act of theft is prohibited. The student will also be required to pay for or replace the item(s) stolen. Proper outside authorities may be contacted.

Search and Seizure. School authorities may seize any contraband, substance, material, object, or illegal possession that violates a school rule, or poses a hazard to the safety and good order of the school. Students are not to bring these items to school or to any school-sponsored function.

- 1) Authority to Conduct a Search – Promesa Schools officials may search a student's locker, motor vehicle, or personal property when they have reasonable suspicion that a particular student is in possession of something prohibited by law or Promesa Schools' policy.
- 2) General Inspection – School authorities reserve the right to make general inspections of lockers for

purposes including, but not limited to, safety, cleanliness, retrieval of school material, and maintenance. Such general inspections shall not include searching personal items stored in lockers such as clothing, bags, or purses unless reasonable and specific suspicion exists.

- 3) Locker/Desk/Storage Area Inspections – All lockers and other storage areas provided for student use on school premises remain the property of the school and are subject to inspection and search. Students shall be responsible for any prohibited items found in their lockers or in vehicles parked on school property.
- 4) Personal Searches – A student’s person and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, backpack, etc.) may be searched when school authorities have reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized items. Prior to conducting a personal search of a student, other than to obtain possession of a weapon, dangerous object, or other contraband such as illegal drugs or alcohol, a reasonable effort shall be made to inform the student’s parent/guardian.

Any student who refuses to submit to a reasonable search by school authorities will be subject to disciplinary action. School authorities may detain the student pending the notification and arrival of the student’s parent/guardian and/or law officials as appropriate. The student’s parent/guardian shall be notified if any prohibited articles or materials are found in a student’s locker or vehicle parked on school property, or on the student’s person as a result of a search conducted in accordance with this policy.

Selling Items at School. Conducting private business or selling unauthorized items is prohibited. Items will be confiscated from the student(s), and disciplinary action will be taken. School clubs and organizations may sell items before, after, and during school hours only after they have received permission from the principal.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

The inappropriate public display of affection is embarrassing to the staff, visitors, and students of Promesa Schools. Students are expected to exercise self-control and respect for the reputation of others. Specifically, kissing, handholding, and other inappropriate displays of affection are violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

Promesa Schools holds dances and other school-sponsored activities for the enjoyment of Promesa Schools students. There are parameters for school-sponsored activities.

1. Rules: All campus rules are in effect at all school-sponsored activities (on or off-campus).
2. Re-entering the Activity: Students leaving prior to the end of the activity for any reason may not re-enter the activity.
3. Conduct: Promesa Schools students and their guests may be forced to leave an activity if they conduct themselves in an inappropriate manner or violate the Handbook. No money will be refunded.
4. Dress code: Dress code for each event will be determined by the school administration. Students and guests who do not meet the dress code expectations will not be allowed to attend the event.
5. Same-day absences: Students who are absent from school are not allowed to attend or participate in any school-sponsored events (athletics competitions, school dances, theater performances, etc.) held on the day they were absent.

School Trips. Each school trip is a privilege for Promesa Schools students, not a right. Trip sponsors and school administrators have the discretion to determine eligibility criteria for trips.

STUDENT RECORDS & NOTICE OF PARENT AND STUDENT RIGHTS A record on each student is maintained by Promesa Schools. The record includes factual information about the student, report cards, attendance records, achievement test results, and health records.

Federal and state laws protect student records from unauthorized review or use and provide certain privacy rights to parents and eligible students. For purposes of student records, an “eligible student” is one who is 18 or older or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education. Promesa Schools will verify the identity of any requestor before releasing personally identifiable information from a student’s record. Promesa Schools will adhere to all laws regarding the confidentiality of student records.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, safeguards student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provides parents and eligible students certain rights. Certain information about Promesa Schools students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows the procedures for requesting the information unless the parent or guardian objects to the release of the directory information about the student. **If you do not want Promesa Schools to disclose directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you must notify Promesa Schools in writing within the first 30 calendar days of the school year.** Promesa Schools has designated the following information as directory information: student’s name, photograph, dates of attendance, grade level, student academic standing, and participation in officially recognized activities and sports.

Virtually all information pertaining to student performance, including grades, test results, and disciplinary records, is considered as a confidential education record. 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 educational records. Federal law requires that, as soon as a student becomes 18 or is emancipated by a court, control of the records goes to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes.
- Promesa Schools school officials who have a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records. “Legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records includes working with the student, considering disciplinary or academic actions, compiling statistical data, or investigating or evaluating programs. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel), or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of Personally Identifiable Information from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- Other schools to which a student is transferring.
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes.
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student.
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school.
- Accrediting organizations.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law. • A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she subsequently enrolls.

Releases to any other person or agency, such as a prospective employer or for a scholarship application, will occur only with parental or eligible student permission.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the principal. Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe Promesa Schools is not in compliance with the law regarding student records.

TELEPHONES

All office and classroom telephones are reserved for school business purposes. Students will not be called out of class to receive telephone calls or messages. Students will be allowed to use the telephone of any Promesa Schools staff member if given permission. Please do not encourage your student to use their personal cell phones during the day by texting or calling them.

TRANSPORTATION/BUS INFORMATION

Students are encouraged to appreciate and take full advantage of the free transportation provided by Promesa Schools. Free transportation is a privilege, NOT a right. It is important for all bus riders to accept and acknowledge that this privilege will only continue if their behavior on the bus is reasonable and safe. Students who choose to engage in unacceptable behaviors on a school bus create a risk for themselves as well as other students, the bus driver, the motoring public, and pedestrians. In addition to the consequences listed below, students who violate any of the policies included in the Parent/Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct while on school buses may be subject to discipline.

Students missing their bus must make every effort to get to school by their own means. Punctual transportation to and from school is both a student's and a parent's responsibility.

Students living more than two miles from Promesa Schools are eligible for free bus service. Students riding the bus must adhere to the student code of conduct and follow these rules:

- Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner.
- Stay in your seat while the vehicle is moving.
- Keep your head, hands and feet inside the bus.
- Do not throw objects inside the bus or out of the window.
- Do not deface the bus or its equipment.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Be courteous.
- Cooperate with the bus driver.

SCHOOL BUS OFFENSES

Level I Offenses

1. Spitting
2. Excessive noise or loud music
3. Horseplay/mischief
4. Eating/drinking/chewing gum
5. Littering on bus

6. Leaving seat/standing without permission
7. Profanity, verbal abuse, harassment, inappropriate gestures or possession of inappropriate materials
8. Riding an unassigned bus or using an unassigned stop
9. Refusing to properly identify yourself to bus driver
10. Disobedience to bus driver

Level II Offenses

1. Hanging out the windows with any part of the body
2. Throwing or shooting an object in or out of bus
3. Bullying, threatening, or harassment of anyone on bus
4. Profanity or threat toward bus driver
5. Possession or use of any controlled substance
6. Vandalism to bus
7. Pushing, shoving or rushing the bus at a stop
8. Unauthorized entering/leaving the bus through emergency exit
9. Possession or threats of possession of a weapon
10. Other offenses that would seriously jeopardize the safety of the bus community

CONSEQUENCES FOR SCHOOL BUS OFFENSES

Offense Level	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense
Level 1	warning	1-5 day bus suspension	5-10 day bus suspension, parent conf	loss of bus privilege
Level 2	1-5 day bus suspension	5-10 day bus suspension, parent conf	10-15 day bus suspension, parent conf	loss of bus privilege

Please note that any behavior that results in the destruction of bus components may lead to loss of bus privileges. Additionally, loss of bus privileges is at the discretion of the campus principal depending on the severity of the offense.

VIDEO CAMERAS

For safety purposes, video and audio recording equipment is used to monitor student behavior, including on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used. The principal will review the video and audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Video footage is considered an educational record and is thus protected by FERPA.

VISITORS

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit Promesa Schools. For the safety of our students and staff and to minimize disruption, all visitors, including parents, are required to register at the school office and wear nametags during school visits.

Visits to classrooms during instructional time are only allowed if approved by the principal and teacher, and only so long as the visit is not disruptive. **All parent visits to the classroom require a 24-hour notice to the principal.**

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

A student withdrawing from school must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. The family must meet with a school administrator prior to withdrawing. Parents/guardians must give the registrar 24 hours to complete all necessary withdrawal paper work.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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

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

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

Special Education Referrals:

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the Special Education Lead Teacher or an administrative employee of the school district or open enrollment charter school, the district or charter school must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district or charter school must give the parent a prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If the school district or charter school agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

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

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

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

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

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

Contact Person for Special Education Referrals:

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

Contact Person: Campus Principal (See Phone Numbers for each Principal on Page 2)

Section 504 Referrals: Campus Principal (See Phone Numbers for each Principal on Page 2)

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

Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals:

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

Contact Person: Campus Principal (See Phone Numbers for each Principal on Page 2)

Additional Information:

The following websites provide information and resources for students with disabilities and their families.

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

DYSLEXIA SERVICES

Promesa Schools strives to identify and provide required services to all students with dyslexia. The procedures Promesa Schools will follow include:

- a. Promesa Schools will notify parents or guardians of any proposal to assess student for dyslexia as required;
- b. Promesa Schools will inform parents or guardians of their rights under the applicable law; c.

Promesa Schools will obtain parent permission to assess the student for dyslexia; and d. Promesa Schools will administer measures only by individuals/professionals who are trained in assessments to evaluate students for dyslexia and related disorders (19 TAC §74.28).

A team or committee will determine if the student has dyslexia. If the student has dyslexia, the committee will also determine whether the student has a disability under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, §504. Students with additional factors that complicate their dyslexia may require additional support or referral to Special Education.

SECTION 504/CHILD FIND NOTICE

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights law designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. Promesa Schools has a duty to identify, refer, evaluate, and if eligible, provide a free, appropriate public education to all students with disabilities. Students who qualify to receive services under Section 504 will receive accommodations based on their Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP) that will provide them with accommodations deemed necessary for them to be successful in the classroom. Students receiving services under Section 504 are responsible for all content standards for their enrolled grade level and must meet all promotion standards in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

It is the intention of Promesa Schools to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity. Section 504 support focuses on support in three areas: academics, facilities, and employment. Additional information may be found in Promesa Schools' Section 504 policies and procedures manual available upon request.

Academics. Promesa Schools will provide free appropriate education (regular or Special Education and related aids and services) to students who qualify under Section 504. Instruction will be individually designed to meet the student's needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students.

Before the child can be placed and receive special services, the parents will be notified, and the student will be evaluated using validated tests by trained personnel. While parental notice is required before a child is tested and/or placed, their consent is not required under Section 504. Only if the child is suspected of having a disabling condition under IDEA would parental consent be necessary. Placement decisions must be made by a group of persons knowledgeable about the child, the evaluation dates, and placement options, and the child must be placed in the least restrictive environment appropriate.

Periodic reevaluations will be conducted, including before any significant change in placement. No qualified disabled person shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to, discrimination under any program or activity. Referrals for services are made through the Student Support Team process.

Facilities. No qualified disabled person shall, because facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by disabled persons, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or otherwise be subjected to, discrimination under any program or activity to which this part applies. Request for support should be made directly to the appropriate Section 504 Coordinator.

Promesa Schools Section 504 Coordinator for Academic and Facilities Issues: Campus Counselor and/or Campus Administration

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Promesa Schools has a duty to identify, refer, evaluate, and if eligible, provide a free, appropriate public education to all students with disabilities. It is the policy of Promesa Schools to ensure that all eligible children with disabilities who are within Promesa Schools' jurisdiction have a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) available in accordance with its procedures as reflected in the Legal Framework Child Centered Special Education Process located at: <http://framework.esc18.net/>

Promesa Schools ensures that an individualized education plan (IEP) is developed, reviewed, and revised for each child with a disability in accordance with its procedures. Promesa Schools ensures that each of its students with disabilities receives all of the Special Education related services and supplementary aids identified in the child's IEP.

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

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Please note that a request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education services. However, a verbal request does not require the charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline. Promesa Schools must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date Promesa Schools receives the written consent. Promesa Schools must give a copy of the evaluation report to the parent.

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

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

- Texas Project First
- Partners Resource Network

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for Special Education services is:

Contact: Campus Principal

East Austin College Prep 512.287.5050

East Austin College Prep at MLK 512.287.5050

Promesa College Prep Brownsville 956.295.7778

Promesa College Prep West Corpus Christi 361.400.829

ITEM	ACCEPTABLE DRESS	SPECIAL COMMENTS AND INTERPRETATIONS
SHIRT	<p>Unaltered school uniform shirt daily in the following colors per grade levels noted (The school uniform shirt is available for purchase from each school)</p> <p>PK - 5th = Blue 6th - 8th = Gray 9th - 12th = Black</p> <p>School approved spirit shirts can only be worn on Fridays (College and School Spirit Shirts)</p> <p>Shirts that are oversized must be tucked in. "Oversized" refers to a shirt being longer than the bottom of regular pant pockets.</p>	<p>On school approved dress down days, students are prohibited from wearing shirts that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are oversized or immodestly undersized • Expose the midriff when the arms are raised • Depict or reference alcohol, drugs, tobacco, weapons, nudity, gang affiliation, violence, vulgar or obscene language or images, and/or insults to race, religion, gender, or ethnicity, or other emblems or writing that may be expected to cause a material or substantial disruption of or interference with normal school operations
SLACKS PANTS JEANS SKIRTS DRESSES	<p>Any style slacks/pants that have no more than 5 pockets (khaki, black, blue [non denim] or gray) for all Elementary Grades</p> <p>Standard 5 pocket blue denim jeans can be worn on for Secondary School students</p> <p>Slacks, pants, or jeans must be fitted at the natural waist</p> <p>Short pants (with the exception of shorts that do not have belt loops), skirts, or dresses will be allowed as long as they are at the knee (horizontal dollar bill) (khaki, black, blue [non-denim] or gray)</p>	<p>Students are prohibited from wearing slacks, pants, shorts, skirts, jeans, or dresses that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are torn or have holes on any part of them that expose the skin and/or undergarment(s). • Are oversized or baggy • Have pockets on the pant legs or loops (cargopants or shorts/carpenter pants or shorts) • Are made of spandex or other form-fitting material • Are strapless or have spaghetti straps • Depict or reference alcohol, drugs, tobacco, weapons, nudity, gang affiliation, violence, vulgar or obscene language or images, and/or insults to race, religion, gender, or ethnicity, or other emblems or writing that may be expected to cause a material or substantial disruption of or interference with normal school operations
SWEATERS JACKETS COATS	<p>Sweaters, jackets, and coats must be appropriate for school. College or School insignia is allowed on the sweaters, jackets or coats.</p>	<p>Students are prohibited from wearing sweaters, jackets, or coats that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are oversized or immodestly undersized • Depict or reference alcohol, drugs, tobacco, weapons, nudity, gang affiliation, violence, vulgar or obscene language or images, and/or insults to race, religion, gender, or ethnicity, or other emblems or writing that may be expected to cause a material or substantial disruption of or interference with normal school operations
SHOES	<p>Shoes must be worn at all times.</p>	<p>Students are prohibited from wearing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steel-toe boots • Flip-flops • Stilettos, stacks, platform shoes • Shoes with wheels
BELTS	<p>Belts are mandatory if pants aren't worn or stay at the waist.</p>	<p>Belts must fit the waist appropriately and be secured properly through the belt loops. Excess belt must not be longer than three inches in length.</p>

GENERAL	For special events and/or incentives the campus administration may establish event-specific dress code requirements.	Hats, caps, headbands, bandanas, scarves or hoods shall not be worn in the building. No article of apparel shall be worn that will in any way damage school property, create a safety hazard, or create a material or substantial disruption to the school environment.
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ALL CAMPUSES

Student Dress Code (Continued)

UNALLOWABLES

The following will not be allowed...

- Shorts that do not have belt loops
- Pajamas
- Sweat Pants/Wind Pants/Warm Up Bottoms
- Hairstyle covering the eye area
- Facial hair that is not groomed
- Attire of any type (belt buckles, hats, or caps, etc.) with advertisement of alcohol, tobacco, and/or derogatory nature on campus or school related activities
- Spiked bracelets, anklets, chains, mouth grills, spiked collars, studded belts and oversized accessories • Wearing of clothing that is identifiable with gang attire
- Display of undergarments
- Unnatural hair color—natural highlights are acceptable. (Hair may not be dyed in any of the basic color(s) ie. red, blue, green, etc.)
- Spiked hair and/or Mohawk styled hair
- Body piercing jewelry (tongue rings, lip rings, eyebrow rings, nose rings, belly rings, or other unnatural area rings that are visible)
- Ear Gauges or ear spikes
- Sunglasses, non-prescriptive dark glasses, hats/caps, bandanas, scarves, beanies, or hoods worn in the building or classrooms
- Tattoos that depict or reference alcohol, drugs, tobacco, weapons, nudity, gang affiliation, violence, vulgar or obscene language or images, and/or insults to race, religion, gender, or ethnicity, or other emblems or writing that may be expected to cause a material or substantial disruption of or interference with normal school operations
- Wallet chains
- Trench coats
- Overalls or coveralls
- Earrings that hang lower than 2 inches from the ear lobe

Please Note: If students continue to disregard the standards set by the student dress code, they may lose their privilege of wearing certain types of clothing or apparel on special occasions. If a campus administrator determines that a student’s grooming violates the dress code, the student shall be given the opportunity to correct the problem at school. If not corrected, the student may be assigned a disciplinary consequence. A parent or parent designee may bring an acceptable change of clothing to the school. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action. Appropriate discipline procedures will be followed in all cases. Students’ appearance should reflect a pride in themselves and their school. Appearance and conduct shall be that of young ladies and young gentlemen who are ready for college and ready for life!