

# Executive Summary

## Board of Trustees Meeting June 25, 2019

### Student and Parent Handbook Report

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#### **Board Goals:**

##### Domain 1 – **Teaching & Learning**

- establish high expectations with a curriculum fostering inquiry, critical thinking, civic responsibility and exemplary citizenship

##### Domain 2 – **Culture & Climate**

- foster a positive, welcoming environment encouraging parent and community partnerships
- promote health, wellness and emotional well-being

##### Domain 3 – **Growth & Management**

- remain committed to providing equitable and outstanding opportunities for every student on every campus

##### Domain 4 – **Opportunities for Students**

- develop academic skills and interpersonal relationships necessary for student success in college, the workplace, and for life.

#### **Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of this report is to provide Denton ISD's response to the requirements for Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code. This report will also provide Denton ISD's plan for a unified, district wide set of rules and regulations that will ensure the best learning environment for our students.

#### **Objective:**

The objective is to provide Denton ISD students and their parents with a resource that will guide their understanding of general rules and guidelines for attending and receiving an education in our district. It will also communicate behavioral expectations that reflect our community's values and standards. Finally, this handbook will be a review of basic information available to administration, faculty and staff to assist them with related board policies and administrative procedures.

#### **Operational Impact:**

When provided with accurate information, ALL students and parents can make sound judgements related to the interests of themselves, others and the district. In addition, students and parents will be encouraged to assume responsibility for maintaining an environment where they can get the most out of their education and will play a key role in maintaining Denton ISD's high standards for expectations.

#### **Results:**

Using recommendations provided in the *Model Student Handbook* developed by the Texas Association of School Boards, and in collaboration with district administrators, the changes listed below were made to Denton ISD's 2019–2020 Student and Parent Handbook.

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The following information was **ADDED** to the Denton ISD Student and Parent Handbook:

GRADUATION CREDITS REQUIRED	<p>The foundation graduation program requires completion of the following credits:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin: 10px 0;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">Course Area</th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Number of Credits: Foundation Graduation Program</th> <th style="width: 30%; text-align: center;">Number of Credits: Foundation Graduation Program with an Endorsement</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>English/Language Arts</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mathematics</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Science</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Social Studies, including Economics</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Physical Education</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Languages other than English</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fine Arts</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Professional Communication</td> <td style="text-align: center;">.5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Electives</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4.5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Total</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>22 credits</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>26 credits</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Additional considerations apply in some course areas, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mathematics.</b> To obtain the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program, which will be included on a student’s transcript and is a requirement to be considered for automatic admission to a Texas four-year college or university, a student must complete an endorsement and take Algebra II as one of the 4 mathematics credits.</li> <li>• <b>Physical education.</b> 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</li> </ul>	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	3	Physical Education	1	1	Languages other than English	2	2	Fine Arts	1	1	Professional Communication	.5	.5	Electives	4.5	6.5	<b>Total</b>	<b>22 credits</b>	<b>26 credits</b>
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	<p>ARD committee, Section 504 committee, or other campus committee, as applicable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Languages other than English.</b> Students are required to earn 2 credits in the same language other than English to graduate. Any student may substitute computer programming languages for these credits. A student may satisfy one of the two required credits by successfully completing a dual language immersion program in elementary school. 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.</li> </ul> <p><b>Available Endorsements</b></p> <p>A student must specify upon entering grade 9 which endorsement he or she wishes to pursue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM),</li> <li>• Business and industry,</li> <li>• Public services,</li> <li>• Arts and humanities, or</li> <li>• Multidisciplinary studies.</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Local school districts have the authority to require specific courses beyond that of what the state requires.</p>
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<p>PARTICIPATION IN FEDERALLY REQUIRED, STATE MANDATED, AND DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS</p> <p>(ALL GRADE LEVELS)</p>	<p>The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) does not include a federal right to opt-out of standardized assessments. Because an opt-out policy is not applicable in the state of Texas, it is not necessary for school districts in Texas to provide parents with information regarding an opt-out policy. Districts must, however, provide parents with information regarding their child’s participation in the assessment.</p> <p>Texas Education Code 26.010 addresses the fact that students may not opt-out of standardized or any other tests.</p> <p>All eligible students present at school on a testing date must be included in the test administration. Campus officials must return a test booklet for every student, in accordance with TEA test administration guidelines.</p>
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	<p><b>NOTE:</b> It is important to note that missing school on a single designated test date will not necessarily cause the student to have missed his or her testing opportunity. Most tests are administered from a testing window set by TEA. If a student who has been absent returns to school during the testing window, he or she may be asked to sit for the exam at that time. Makeup test dates that extend beyond the test window are in place for most STAAR tests.</p> <p>In accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a parent may request information regarding any federal, state, or district policy related to his or her child’s participation in required assessments. Contact the campus principal for more information.</p>
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<p><b>UNEXCUSED ABSENCES</b></p>	<p>Unexcused absences can be defined by, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being absent without parental consent or knowledge</li> <li>• Leaving campus during class or a lunch period without official permission</li> <li>• Being in an unauthorized area of the school or campus without permission</li> <li>• Willfully failing or refusing to attend school</li> <li>• Being absent without written notification from a parent or legal guardian</li> <li>• Religious festivals, ceremonies or other events not recognized as a Religious Holy Day</li> <li>• Loss of Significant Instructional Time (LOSIT) without an accompanying note from a health care provider (this includes arriving late or leaving early)</li> <li>• Weddings</li> <li>• Graduations</li> <li>• Vacations/Trips</li> <li>• Any other absence that is not covered under district policy or state law</li> </ul>
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<p><b>COURSE CREDIT (SECONDARY GRADE LEVELS ONLY)</b></p>	<p>A student in grades 9–12, or in a lower grade when a student is enrolled in a high school credit-bearing course, will earn credit for a course only if the final grade is 70 or above. For a two-semester</p>
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	(1 credit) course, the student’s grades from both semesters will be averaged and credit will be awarded if the combined average is 70 or above. Should the student’s combined average be less than 70, the student will be required to retake the semester in which he or she failed.
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<b>STUDENT WELLNESS POLICY/WELLNESS PLAN (ALL GRADE LEVELS)</b>	Denton ISD is committed to encouraging healthy students and therefore has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement the policy. You are encouraged to contact the district’s coordinator of health services at 940-369-0200 with questions about the content or implementation of the district’s wellness policy and plan.
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<b>SPINAL SCREENING PROGRAM</b>	<p>School-based spinal screening helps identify adolescents with abnormal spinal curvature and refer them for appropriate follow-up by their physician. Screening can detect scoliosis at an early stage, when the curve is mild and may go unnoticed. Early detection is key to controlling spinal deformities.</p> <p>All students who meet the Texas Department of State Health Services criteria will be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. For information on spinal screening by an outside professional or exemption from spinal screening based on religious beliefs, see policy FFAA(LEGAL) or contact the superintendent. Spinal screening is non-invasive and conducted following the most recent, nationally accepted and peer-reviewed standards for spinal screening.</p>
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<b>NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT (ALL GRADE LEVELS)</b>	<p>In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, Denton ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law, in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following district representatives have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment or gender-based harassment: Contact the district’s Title IX coordinator, at (940) 369- 0079.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Contact the district’s ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, at (940) 369- 0000</li> <li>• All other concerns regarding discrimination: Contact the superintendent’s office at 940-369-0002. [See policies FB, FFH, and GKD.]</li> </ul>
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HALLWAY USE DURING CLASS TIME	Loitering or standing in the halls during class is not permitted. During class time, a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.
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DELIVERIES	Except in emergencies, delivery of messages or packages to students will not be allowed during instructional time. A parent may leave a message or a package, such as a forgotten lunch, for the student to pick up from the front office during a passing period or lunch.
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FIGHTING MUTUAL COMBAT PHYSICAL CONTACT	Physical contact with the implied intent to harm will not be tolerated on school property or while attending a school sponsored or school-related event, on or off school property. If an individual is physically confronted by another student, the student should avoid striking back and alert an adult or administrator who can handle the situation. Regardless of who starts a fight, if both students participate, both students will be disciplined according to the student code of conduct. While administrators may consider whether a student acted in self-defense, a claim of self-defense is not a complete defense to avoid disciplinary action unless there is documented evidence that the student could not flee. Any time one person makes physical contact with another with the implied intent to harm, the act, depending on the severity, may be considered physical contact, assault by contact, or assault with bodily injury. However, at the point when the receiver of the physical contact retaliates, the infraction then becomes mutual combat/fighting for both students. School administration may issue consequences according to the student code of conduct for either or both students.
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PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION	In order to maintain a mature and respectful atmosphere, students are reminded that public displays of affection are considered unsuitable in an educational setting. These displays include, but are not limited to, kissing, embracing, and/or other forms of physical fraternization.
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<p><b>HOMELESS STUDENTS</b></p>	<p>Parents are encouraged to inform the district if you or your child are experiencing homelessness. District staff can share resources with you that may be able to assist you and your family. For more information on services for homeless students, contact the campus principal. Children who are homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain district provisions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of residency requirements;</li> <li>• Immunization requirements;</li> <li>• Educational program placement (if the student is unable to provide previous academic records or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness);</li> <li>• Credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year (if the student enrolled in the district after the beginning of the school year), per State Board of Education (SBOE) rules;</li> <li>• Awarding partial credit when a student passes only one semester of a two-semester course;</li> <li>• Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities;</li> <li>• Graduation requirements.</li> </ul> <p>Federal law allows a homeless student to remain enrolled in the “school of origin” or to enroll in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing.</p> <p>If a homeless student in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, state law allows the student to request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.</p> <p>A student or parent who is dissatisfied by the district’s eligibility, school selection, or enrollment decision may appeal through policy FNG(LOCAL). The district will expedite local timelines, when possible, for prompt dispute resolution.</p>
<p><b>SCHOOL SPONSORED FIELD TRIPS (ALL GRADE LEVELS)</b></p>	<p>The district periodically takes students on field trips for educational purposes. A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip.</p>

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	<p>The district may ask the parent to provide information about a student’s medical provider and insurance coverage, and may also ask the parent to sign a waiver allowing for emergency medical treatment in the case of a student accident or illness during the field trip.</p> <p>The district may require a fee for student participation in a field trip to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and meals; however, a student will not be denied participation because of financial need.</p>
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The following information was **DELETED** from the 2019-2020 Denton ISD Student and Parent Handbook:

READ 180	<p>READ 180 is an intensive reading intervention program that uses whole-group direct instruction and small-group direct instruction. In addition, READ 180 software uses an independent reading and whole-group wrap-up to serve students whose reading achievement is below the proficient level. The program directly addresses individual needs through adaptive and instructional software, high interest literature, and direct instruction in reading, writing, and vocabulary skills.</p> <p>The READ 180 Software continually adjusts the level of instruction based on student performance. Diagnostic reports and periodic checkpoints alert teachers to students' needs and direct them to resources for individualizing instruction. This program serves reluctant and struggling readers in grades 6 through 12, as identified by the campus.</p>
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NURSES	<p>Licensed nurses provide many health services for Denton ISD students including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency first aid, safety awareness &amp; accident prevention</li><li>• Assessment of individual health concerns, with appropriate nursing intervention and referral</li><li>• Vision screening, hearing screening, risk assessment for diabetes type 2, and spinal screening required by the state</li><li>• Serving as a health resource for students, parents, and staff, including health counseling individually and classroom education program</li></ul> <p>In the event of injury or illness at school, the campus nurse, campus principal or designee will be responsible for following emergency procedures established by the District.</p>
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