

Executive Summary

Board of Trustees Meeting June 23, 2020

Student and Parent Handbook Report

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 leaders, the changes listed below were made to Denton ISD's 2020–2021 Student and Parent Handbook.

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

CONSENT TO CONDUCT A PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION	<p>Unless required under state or federal law, a district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, screening, or treatment, without obtaining prior written parental consent.</p> <p>The district will not provide a mental health care service to a student except as permitted by law.</p> <p>The district has established procedures for providing a parent with a recommendation for an intervention for a student with early warning signs of mental health concerns or substance abuse or who has been identified as at risk of attempting suicide. The district's mental health liaison or designee will notify the student's parent within a reasonable amount of time after the liaison or designee learns that a student has displayed early warning signs and a possible need for intervention and provide information about available counseling options.</p> <p>Students are identified through the Denton Multi-Tier Systems of Support (DMTSS) framework through which schools utilize a systematic identification process to develop and provide targeted support to struggling students. Through a "whole child" approach, DMTSS focuses on academic, behavior and social emotional wellness. When interventions are developed, parents will receive notification from the school regarding intervention strategies being provided for their child.</p> <p>The district has also established procedures for staff to notify the mental health liaison or designee regarding a student who may need intervention.</p> <p>The mental health liaison can be reached at 940-369-0000 and can provide further information regarding these procedures as well as educational materials on identifying risk factors, accessing resources for treatment or support on- and off-campus, and accessing available student accommodations provided on campus. For further information, see Mental Health Support.</p> <p>Note: An evaluation may be legally required under special education rules or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.</p>
SAFETY EDUCATION	<p>The Community Safety Education Act (TAC, §74.39) requires school districts and charter schools to provide instruction to students in grades 9-12 on proper interaction with peace officers during traffic stops and other in-person encounters. In Denton ISD beginning in 2020-2021, this instruction will be provided in the student's senior year through their Government or Economics class.</p>

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STUDENTS WHO HAVE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES OR WHO NEED SPECIAL EDUCATION OR SECTION 504 SERVICES	The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, also known as IDEA, is a federal law that gives eligible students with disabilities the right to receive special education services and assistance in school. To be eligible for special education services, a student with a disability must need instruction that is specially designed to meet the student's unique needs based on that disability. For more information, please click on the following link: https://www.dentonisd.org/Page/101971 .
GRADUATION FOUNDATION GRADUATION PROGRAM	School districts are required to notify parents of the role that Algebra II plays in graduation requirements and the potential consequences to a student of not completing an Algebra II course. In Texas, a student may only earn a "Distinguished Level of Achievement" and be eligible for automatic admission to a Texas public college or university as an undergraduate if the student successfully completes high school Algebra II. To earn an endorsement, students must successfully complete a fourth mathematics course; Algebra II is often the pre-requisite to the fourth math course and may be required specifically by an endorsement. The TEXAS Grant program and the Texas Educational Opportunity Grant program may require the completion of Algebra II as a pathway to earn initial eligibility. Although to graduate under the "Foundation High School Program," a student is not required to complete an Algebra II course, the Foundation plan is not recommended for most students.
STANDARDIZED TESTING LOCALLY ADOPTED ASSESSMENTS	Kindergarten will be assessed through TX-KEA as required by Texas Education Agency. (TEA). Locally adopted assessments include the ELI (Early Literacy Inventory) and SELI (Spanish Early Literacy Inventory) in 1 st and 2 nd grades, Primary Numeracy Assessment in K-2, and school ability test offered to selected grades also during the fall. The locally-adopted assessments are used to provide data for placement in and evaluation of special programs when the state mandated tests are not appropriate or available. These assessments are given throughout the year and the results are shared with parents after each administration.
CREDIT BY EXAM ADVANCEMENT/ ACCELERATION IF A STUDENT HAS NOT TAKEN THE COURSE/SUBJECT	The Exam for Acceleration (EA) provides an opportunity to earn grade level or course credit in which no prior formal instruction was completed. The EA is designed for learners who have both the academic and emotional need to advance a course. The EA is for those who display an extremely advanced level of understanding of the learning objectives assessed. EA is not designed for grade level recovery when a student is retained in a previous grade level.
HEALTH SCREENINGS/PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS	For certain extracurricular activities, a student must submit certification from an authorized health-care provider. The certification must state that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate in the relevant program, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A district athletics program.

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<p>ATHLETES PARTICIPATION (SECONDARY GRADE LEVELS ONLY)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District marching band. ▪ Any district extracurricular program identified by the superintendent. <p>This examination is required in the first year of middle school competition and the first and third years of high school competition. During alternate years, the student must complete a medical appraisal form, and the results of this appraisal may prompt the district to require a physical examination. Students should be aware of the rare possibility of sudden cardiac arrest, which in athletes is usually caused by a previously unsuspected heart disease or disorder. A student may request an electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) to screen for such disorders, in addition to his or her required physical examination.</p> <p>See the UIL's explanation of <u>sudden cardiac arrest</u> for more information.</p>
<p>MEDICINE AT SCHOOL</p>	<p>In accordance with the Nurse Practice Act, Texas Code, Section 217.11, the school nurse has the responsibility and authority to clarify any order or treatment regimen that the nurse has reason to believe is inaccurate, non-efficacious or contraindicated by consulting with the appropriate licensed practitioner. The school nurse also has the right to refuse to administer medications that, in the nurse's professional judgement, are not in the best interest of the student.</p>
<p>MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT (ALL GRADE LEVELS)</p>	<p>The district has implemented programs to address the following mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health promotion and early intervention; • Building skills to manage emotions, establish and maintain positive relationships, and engage in responsible decision-making; • Substance abuse prevention and intervention; • Suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention (interventions after a suicide in a community); • Grief, trauma, and trauma-informed care; • Positive behavior interventions and supports; • Positive youth development; and • Safe, supportive, and positive school climates. <p>In Denton ISD we employ a Multi-Tier Systems of Support framework to address the needs of the whole child to include social and emotional wellbeing. Specific programs utilized to support students' mental health include Signs of Suicide, an evidenced based suicide prevention program; Mental Health First Aid, a national program to teach the skills to respond to the signs of mental illness and substance abuse; Trust-Based Relational Intervention, an attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention educational program; National Educators for Restorative Practices, a relationship building and positive behavior response program;</p>

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	<p>SafeSchools, an anonymous bullying and incident reporting system; and The Essential Eight, a guidance character development program.</p> <p>If a student has been hospitalized or placed in residential treatment for a mental health condition or substance abuse, the district has procedures to support the student's return to school. Please contact the district's mental health liaison for further information.</p> <p>Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication that is intended to alter perception, emotion, mood, or behavior.</p> <p>A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate. [See policy FFEB for more information.]</p> <p>If you are concerned about your child or have concerns for friends or associates of your child, please visit https://texassuicideprevention.org/, or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.</p> <p>The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) maintains information regarding children's mental health and substance abuse intervention services on its website: https://hhs.texas.gov/services/mental-health-substance-use.</p>
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAINING CPR AND STOP THE BLEED	<p>The district will annually offer instruction in CPR at least once to students enrolled in in grades 7–12. The instruction can be provided as part of any course and is not required to result in CPR certification.</p> <p>The district will annually offer students in grades 7–12 instruction on the use of bleeding control stations to respond to traumatic injury. For more information, see Homeland Security's Stop the Bleed and Stop the Bleed Texas.</p>
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL & VOLUNTEERS	<p>Note: In collaboration with local and state health officials, Denton ISD may limit school visitors and or volunteers to help ensure that students and staff have a safe and healthy learning environment. If a visit is necessary, visitors and or volunteers must adhere to CDC, State of Texas, and Denton ISD guidance regarding safety protocols and social distancing. Please contact the school principal to determine if your visit is deemed "necessary" prior to traveling to the campus.</p>

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CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE, TRAFFICKING, AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN (ALL GRADE LEVELS)	<p>The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at https://www.dentonisd.org/. Trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking.</p> <p>Child trafficking of any sort is prohibited by the Penal Code. Sex trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, into sexual abuse, assault, indecency, prostitution, or pornography. Labor trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, to engage in forced labor or services.</p> <p>Traffickers are often trusted members of a child's community, such as friends, romantic partners, family members, mentors, and coaches, although traffickers frequently make contact with victims online.</p> <p>Possible warning signs of sexual trafficking in children include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Changes in school attendance, habits, friend groups, vocabulary, demeanor, and attitude;▪ Sudden appearance of expensive items (for example, manicures, designer clothes, purses, technology);▪ Tattoos or branding;▪ Refillable gift cards;▪ Frequent runaway episodes;▪ Multiple phones or social media accounts;▪ Provocative pictures posted online or stored on the phone;▪ Unexplained injuries;▪ Isolation from family, friends, and community; and▪ Older boyfriends or girlfriends. <p>Additional warning signs of labor trafficking in children include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Being unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips;▪ Being employed but not having a school-authorized work permit;▪ Being employed and having a work permit but clearly working outside the permitted hours for students;▪ Owning a large debt and being unable to pay it off;▪ Not being allowed breaks at work or being subjected to excessively long work hours;▪ Being overly concerned with pleasing an employer and/or deferring personal or educational decisions to a boss;▪ Not being in control of his or her own money;▪ Living with an employer or having an employer listed as a student's caregiver; and▪ A desire to quit a job but not being allowed to do so.
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	<p>Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused, trafficked, or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, to report the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).</p> <p>A child who has experienced sexual abuse or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Children may be more reluctant to disclose sexual abuse than physical abuse and neglect and may only disclose sexual abuse indirectly. As a parent or trusted adult, 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.</p> <p>If your child is a victim of sexual abuse, trafficking, or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information on counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. [To find out what services may be available in your county, see <u>Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County.</u>]</p> <p>The following websites might help you become more aware of child abuse and neglect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <u>Child Welfare Information Gateway Factsheet</u>▪ <u>KidsHealth, For Parents, Child Abuse</u>▪ <u>Office of the Texas Governor’s Child Sex Trafficking Team</u>▪ <u>Human Trafficking of School-aged Children</u>▪ <u>Child Sexual Abuse: A Parental Guide from the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault</u>▪ <u>National Center of Safe Supportive Learning Environments: Child Labor Trafficking</u>
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The following information was **DELETED** from the 2020-2021 Denton ISD Student and Parent Handbook:

CONVERSION OF UNIVERSITY LETTER GRADES	Students entering grade 9 in the 2014–15 school year will be under a different graduation program than previous school years. Therefore, class-ranking procedures may be adjusted by the district based on the new graduation plan. As these decisions are made, the district will make the information available to the students affected by these changes.
COURSE CREDIT (SECONDARY GRADE LEVELS ONLY)	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 (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.
MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTION/SUICIDE PREVENTION	The district is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its students. If you are concerned about your child or have concerns for friends or associates of your child, please visit https://texassuicideprevention.org/ . You may also contact your campus counselor for information related to suicide prevention and other mental health services in your area. When a counselor receives a report that a student is possibly in need of mental health intervention or at risk of committing suicide, s/he shall notify the student's parent and provide information about available community-based counseling options. S/he is also required to report the concern to the District's Mental Health Services Liaison. You may also contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.
SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION	If you are worried that your child may be using or is in danger of experimenting, using, or abusing illegal drugs or other prohibited substances, please contact the school counselor. The school counselor can provide you with a list of community resources that may be of assistance to you. The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) maintains information regarding children's mental health and substance abuse intervention services on its website: https://hhs.texas.gov/services/mental-health-substance-use .

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