

Closing High School Campus for Students

School Board Policy:

School Board Policy 501.11, Student Release during School Hours, does not allow for students leaving the buildings. The policy states the following:

“Students will be allowed to leave the school district facilities during school hours only with prior authorization from their parents, unless the parent appears personally at the student's attendance center to arrange for the release of the student during school hours, or with the permission of the principal.

“Approved reasons for release of a student during the school day will include, but not be limited to, illness, family emergencies, medical appointments, religious instruction, classes outside the student's attendance center, employment for which the student has been issued a work permit and other reasons determined appropriate by the principal.

“It is the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principal, to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.”

Student Handbook: Open Campus Privileges

The following section appears in the high school student handbook:

“The Junior/Senior High (7-12) is a closed campus with the exception of juniors or seniors who may earn open campus privileges during study hall periods. Juniors or seniors earn open campus privileges if they meet all of the criteria:

1. A student has a C+ in all classes. Grades will be checked weekly on Mondays or the first day of student attendance for that week.
2. Students cannot receive a student referral, removal from the classroom, detentions, or suspensions.
3. Students have a parental permission form signed by the parent/guardian and turned in to the office.
4. Excessive tardies, as determined by the building principal, or designee, may also disqualify a student from an open campus.
5. Seniors receive open campus privileges after the first quarter mid-term and the juniors will receive open campus privileges after the 1st semester is completed.
(Returns to pre-covid language)

“The loss of privilege will be for a minimum period at the sole discretion of the Principal, and all grades and attendance must meet the minimum requirement. Parents assume full responsibility for their students once they leave school property. When one of the criteria is not met, the junior/senior will lose his/her open campus privileges until all the criteria are again met. Students leaving the building without permission or without Open Campus

privileges will be considered truant and will face disciplinary consequences including loss of open campus privileges or further disciplinary action.”

Background:

In actuality, open campus has grown even more open during the pandemic. As an option to increase the safe space between individuals and reduce the number of students in school, students have been allowed to come and go from campus during lunch period.

Students have also been allowed to leave campus to work on dual credit college classes. This may have contributed to a significant increase in students failing college classes this year.

Security Concerns:

With the tragedy of Robb Elementary in Uvalde, Texas, only 23 days old, we all know too well the risks of allowing open access to a school building.

Recommended Action:

I recommend the board decide to consider this as an action item at the July 21 school board meeting.