

Community Assessment Update
Denton ISD Head Start Program
(October-December 2022)
Executive Summary

Our Comprehensive Community Assessment was conducted December 2018. For the 2022-2023 school year, each Program Manager reviewed their areas and provided updates during the months of October-December 2022. The most significant change noted in our community since our last update, has continued to be the aftereffects of the pandemic COVID-19. This event has affected many aspects of our community, including but not limited to, health & well-being, safety measures, availability of community resources, financial hardship with inflation in cost-of-living, scarce affordable housing, unemployment rates, modes of communication, homelessness, foster care, adverse experiences for our families, a greater need for mental health support, staff shortage in the workforce, and an increase in need for early care for working families. As you read through the categories below, you will be able to see the changes/trends that were found to have the greatest impact on our community and service area.

DEMOGRAPHICS & SERVICE AREA DATA:

The city population has increased by approximately 12,000 since we conducted the baseline Community Assessment back in 2018. The comparison of data noted from last year's Community Assessment update compared to this year's update show: Families considered to be within or below the poverty line has decreased from 15.7% to 15.3%. Single female head of household with children under 18 continue to experience the highest rates of poverty in Denton County at 18.9%. According to the latest United Way report, the race most likely to be in poverty in Denton is Asian, with 26.8% at the poverty level. The race least likely to be in poverty is American Indian or Alaskan Native, with 8.7% at the poverty level. Hispanic poverty rate is 15.3%, Black poverty rate is 21.4%, Islander shows a 22% poverty rate, and White shows a 14.6% poverty rate. There was a slight increase in persons under 5 years of age from 5.7% to 5.8%. DISD currently has 320 students that qualify under McKinney Vento (Pre-K to 12th students). This is a decrease from last year's count of 574. There has been a significant decrease in percentage of students in Foster Care from 176 last year to 72 this year. Our campus currently serves 11 students that are McKinney Vento and 1 student that is in a Foster Care placement. The percentage of Denton residents that speak only English is 77.23% while 22.77% speak other languages. The non-English language spoken by the

largest group is Spanish, which is spoken by 16.7% of the population. There are a total of 57 different languages spoken across Denton ISD.

The global pandemic caused unemployment rates to increase which negatively affected the market. By January of 2021, the unemployment rate in Denton County was 5.8%. We then saw a decrease in these percentages by April 2022 at 2.7%. According to Zonda Demographics, new home sales have dropped 36% in Denton County. There are currently 2,513 units under construction and approximately 6,970 future multi-family units in the planning stages that are zoned for Denton ISD. Roughly 1,986 units have been completed in the last 12 months. The district has 67 actively building subdivisions. Within Denton ISD there are 38 future subdivisions. Of these, groundwork is underway on 4,034 within the 23 subdivisions. The district posted its enrollment as starting out with 32,016 students which was a slight decrease compared to the start of last school year. The K-8 virtual school continued this school year to accommodate the parents that were not comfortable sending their students to school for face-to-face instruction due to the pandemic. The Virtual Academy enrollment is currently 120 which is a decrease from last year's enrollment of 307 students. Denton ISD had 15,626 students, which is 47.95% of the enrollment, that qualified for the free/reduced lunch program. The Denton High Zone, where our Head Start center is currently located, continues to show the highest rates of students falling in this category of Economically Disadvantaged at 61.84%. The Ryan High zone next to us is at 60.05%. Braswell High zone located down in the corridor is at 44.67%. This section of our service area increased from 37.76% in 2018 to 44.67% in 2022. The Guyer zone is at 25.17%. All these zones fall within our current service area.

EDUCATION:

The percentage of Denton County students not reading on grade level by 3rd grade continues to increase. Denton County United Way 2022 community assessment reported in the 2020-21 school year, 46% of economically disadvantaged third graders in Denton County are not reading at a third-grade level. 32% of all third graders, regardless of household income, in Denton County are not reading at a third-grade level. (Texas Education Agency, Texas Academic Performance Report). In 2019, the number of economically disadvantaged third graders not at grade level was 23%. This is important because "Students who do not read proficiently by third grade are four times more likely to leave high school without a diploma than proficient readers." (2022 The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, 3rd Grade Reading Success Matters.)

We continue to see a rise in our ESL enrollment numbers when compared to Bilingual numbers. To accommodate for this, our flex class was slated to serve as an English Class with ESL supports for this current school year.

Another trend that we are seeing in our community is a rise in Social-Emotional & Behavior issues in the children that we serve. We feel that the pandemic has contributed to the lack of social-emotional skills in children. More efforts, resources, and supports are needed for this area of concern across the community.

Due to a staff shortage, our partnership with Denton City County Day School (DCCDS) has had to decrease the number of students they can provide wrap-around services for. We currently have 19 Head Start students enrolled in the program with DCCDS.

The topic of staff shortages in educational facilities has been in the media. We have heard that Head Start facilities around the nation are also struggling with this shortage. To help with this, programs have been allowed to use American Rescue Plan funds to give retention and hiring bonuses to try to help with hiring quality staff and retaining them. While our community has had some areas of staff shortages, we have been able to maintain our program by utilizing substitutes as needed to cover open slots. While there has been a shortage of substitutes as well, our program has been able to stay fully open and operational. We currently are fully staffed.

From March 2020 to September 2021, Denton County-based childcare capacity dropped 24.5%. In September 2021 in Denton County there were 645 operating childcare centers, of which 373 are in-home providers and 272 childcare centers. Only 420 of those serve infants and toddlers.

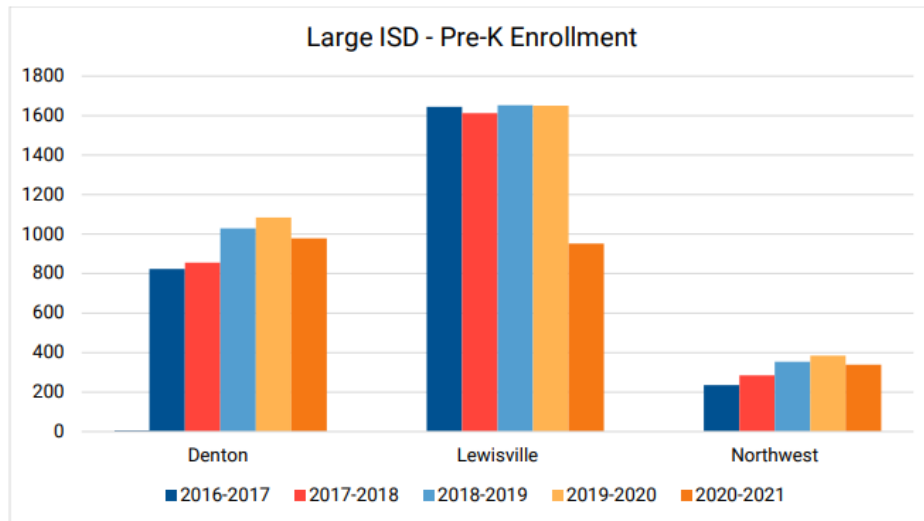
In September 2021 the following Denton County Zip Codes qualify as “childcare deserts”: 76208, 76209, 76258, 75057. These zip codes cover Denton, Corinth, Lewisville, Shady Shores, and Pilot Point.

In school year 2020-21, Pre-K enrollment across Denton County is on a four-year upward trend but still lagging overall. 5,777 Denton County children entering Kindergarten for the 2020-21 school year did not attend a school district pre-K the previous year (Texas Education Agency, Texas Academic Performance Report).

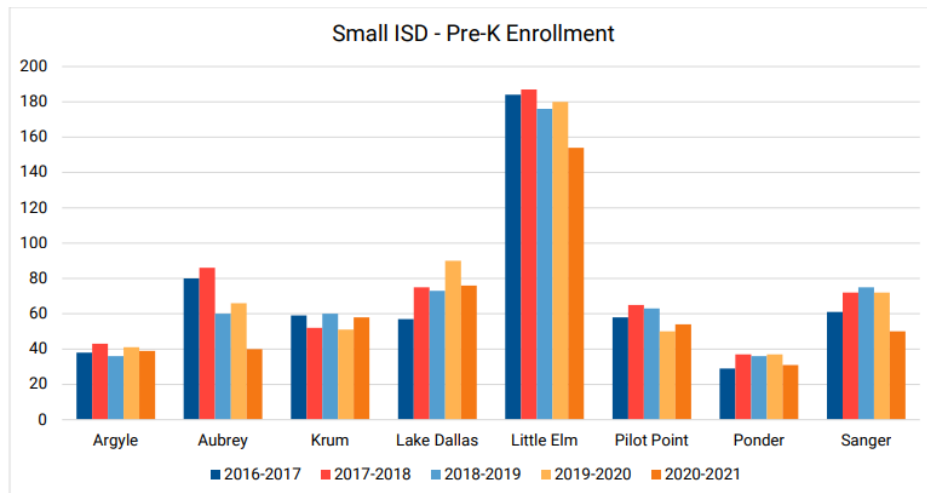
In Texas, \$3,631 is invested into Pre-K per child which is \$2,300 below the national average. This is compared to \$10,456 that is invested annually in children

K-12 in Texas. This places Texas 34th in the country as rated by the National Institute for Early Education Research based on an accredited rating scale.

Our district still sees the benefits of early childhood education and continues to increase and strengthen services to preschool children in our area.



(Texas Education Agency, Texas Academic Performance Report)



(Texas Education Agency, Texas Academic Performance Report)

During the Spring and Summer of 2021, United Way of Denton County conducted listening sessions and online surveys with local service providers and community members to gauge what the community believes are the primary needs across

Denton County. Below are the findings (ranked according to frequency of mention) from the listening sessions and surveys. Top 5 issues/concerns in Denton County: 1 – Mental Health Services 2 – Affordable Housing 3 – Childcare/Support for At-Risk children 4 – Access to youth programs

Most significant concerns in education: 1 – Entry level positions (experience needed vs. pay scale) 2 – English Language Learning 3 – Need more Vocational/Trade Programs 4 – Financial Education 5 – Remote Learning (internet access, technology needs, parent/teacher availability) 6 – Affordable early childhood education/childcare.

Our current program enrollment data shows that 46 parents responded that they have children that fall in the Early Head Start age range. Our Head Start program receives phone calls on a regular basis asking if we care for infants/toddlers. We are aware that there is a need in our community for these services. The lack of affordable childcare has added additional stressors to our families. The City of Denton has a non-profit, childcare center that we refer our families to called Denton City County Day School. We also refer them to another non-profit center that Denton ISD has recently absorbed called Fred Moore Day Nursery school.

FAMILY SOCIAL SERVICES/ERSEA:

Life after the pandemic and inflation has hit our community hard, with many of our vulnerabilities exposed. Affordable housing and homelessness remain a strong need. As the population continues to increase in a 13-year trend, housing has become even more difficult for the middle-income household. In Denton, 67 properties are classified as affordable housing, and more is needed. About 50% of residents in Denton are renters, and the average rent is \$1,300.

The United Way of Denton used **ALICE** (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employment). ALICE is a way of defining and understanding the struggles of households that earn above the federal poverty level but do not have enough to afford the household budget.

Results from this assessment found Blacks and Hispanics have similar poverty levels, earning 40% below the survival wage. Community survey results from the spring and summer of 2021 ranked listed affordable houses 2nd in the top five issues/concerns in Denton County. In the Health Services of North Texas community need survey, safe and stable houses ranked third as a barrier to improving quality of life.

Like other parts of the country, investors are attracted to this area. They are buying to rent out the homes to gain a profit by driving up housing prices.

There has been a steep increase of 54% in homelessness in our county from January 2020 to January 2022. Many of this population have not ever seen themselves living in the parks, out of their cars, or sleeping under bridge/overpasses. Hotels and motels have become Denton's new affordable housing due to the lack of landlord requirements for tenants to make 3 times the rent.

Our city poverty rate of 15% exceeds the national average, with single female households exercising homelessness at a higher rate. The top 5 reported causes of homelessness: family or personal issues, inability to pay rent and utilities, unemployment, a lack of assistance and resources, and physical/mental disabilities.

During the 2021 school year, Denton ISD Homeless Liaison identified 899 students experiencing homelessness in the school district. This is an increase of 388 students from the previous year. The Head Start program enrolled 21 students identified as experiencing homelessness in the 2021-22 school year.

Texas unemployment dropped from a record high of 12.6 to 3.8%. Texas created training programs for new and current employees. New job positions were created in the areas of leisure and hospitality, trade, transportation, and utilities. The city of Denton's unemployment dropped to 3.1%.

Denton ISD added 3 new pre-k campuses this year bringing the total to 25. It is an ongoing project and the district plans to open more classes in the upcoming year. We are seeing a decline in the number of children on our priority list. The Head Start Director and the ERSEA specialist have increased recruitment events and strategies.

Our district/service area has seen a decline in daily attendance rates this school year. Texas is experiencing a surge in respiratory viruses and other illnesses. A combination of COVID, Flu, Strep, and RSV has hit our community hard.

All those restrictions that were in place over the past 2 or 3 years not only cut back on the spread of COVID but on the spread of other viruses such as flu, strep, and RSV. This made for a very mild flu season because of the safety measures in place. In October, Texas started seeing a surge in illnesses. According to the Texas Hospital Association, 88% of the pediatric beds are occupied. President Biden has been called to issue a national state of emergency.

This tri-demic hit our community and school district hard. Our school nurse is sending children home with respiratory symptoms. Attendance has decreased over the past year. The Head Start Director and ERSEA specialist have increased efforts focusing on improving attendance. Health precautions are in place. We are asking parents to encourage their child to cover their cough, and practice handwashing. When kids are symptomatic, we ask them to keep them at home. Classroom disinfection is done when many students are absent due to illness.

PARENT, FAMILY, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

During our major enrollment period for the 2022-23 school year, it was the family service staff's experience that more families were coming in to enroll their child in Head Start, but their income was just over the federal poverty line. These were some of the many families who fall in an area the United Way has dubbed "ALICE" or Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed - they fall above the federal poverty level, but earn less than the basic cost of living for the area. Approximately one in three households in Denton County earn below the survival threshold, with the City of Denton at an even steeper rate of 45% of households.

From United Way, "The ALICE Survival Wage for a family of four with two adults (both working for a total of \$27.43/hour), and two children (not including childcare costs) is \$54,852 in Denton County. With childcare included, the adults must earn at least... \$64,512 annually." A few things to consider based on this "survival wage":

- This would assume a cost of \$9660 per year for childcare for two children. Breaking that math down farther, you would get a childcare cost of \$92.88 (rounded) per week per child. The cost of childcare for a two-year-old at three "income based" childcare centers in Denton hovers around \$100 per week. Most cost more than that.
- If a parent were to work a job getting paid the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year - their gross income would be \$15,080. If both parents in a household worked for \$15 per hour, 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year - their combined gross income would be \$62,400. That's still not enough to meet the ALICE wage when childcare is factored in.
- The median household income in the City of Denton is \$62,542 per year. That means the average household in Denton would not be able to meet the ALICE threshold for a two-parent, two-child household.

The abundance of low-paying jobs for adults trickles down to impact the city's children whose only job should be going to school. In Denton ISD specifically, 47.8% of the student body are economically-disadvantaged. This continues the trend of the number of economically disadvantaged students increasing each year for the thirteenth consecutive year in Denton County.

The family service team's data comparing SY 21/22 to SY 22/23 shows a marked increase in parents reporting they are a single parent household. That percentage went up from 49% single parents to 63% single parents. The ALICE Survival Wage for a family of four with only one working adult is even harder to achieve. In the city of Denton, many job opportunities readily available are low-wage jobs. Retail, fast food and restaurants, hotels, hourly positions within Denton ISD and the City of Denton, and many more do not pay enough to meet this wage requirement.

Being in such a cyclical situation where single parent households can't afford childcare so the parent can go to work and yet can't go to work because they don't have childcare is one potential explanation for why the number of parents who reported they don't go to work, school, or job training has increased for SY 22/23 despite the City of Denton unemployment rate continuing to drop from the previous year. It will be interesting to see if more parents report having obtained employment or furthering their education during spring data collection since their child is now enrolled in Head Start. According to United Way, Denton County-based childcare capacity dropped 24.5% between March 2020 and September 2021." Not only that, four zip codes in Denton County qualify as "childcare deserts" - including the zip code of our Head Start campus.

In contrast to our families' lack of childcare options, their options for early education have continued to increase. Denton ISD added two English and one Bilingual PreK program for SY 22/23. The school district now has English Pre-K options on 22 campuses and Spanish Pre-K options on 11 campuses, with future plans to expand Pre-K to all new District elementary campuses in the future. Many families expressed interest in Head Start at the beginning of this school year and then made the decision to move to their "home" campus instead.

Compared to SY 21/22, incoming Head Start families are less likely to have children at home that are too young to attend the program this school year. 51.3% of incoming families last year reported having children that were not yet three-years-old by September 1, 2021 (Denton ISD's cutoff date for school enrollment).

So far this year, only 29.3% of incoming families have a child who was too young to enroll in Head Start. The number of mothers who were currently pregnant remained nearly the same last year and this year, right around the 5% mark.

Another community factor impacting our families pertains to transportation. For Denton ISD, neither Pre-K nor Head Start children receive bussing to or from school (except for students who qualify for special education transportation or are enrolled in Denton City County Day School that we have an MOU with for wrap-around care services). Since the previous Community Assessment, many of the City of Denton bus stops have also been closed, including the one near our Head Start campus. The city had decided to opt for a pilot program called “GoZone” which works similar to Uber and other ridesharing apps. Currently, all GoZone rides cost 75¢ one-way. Community members have shared that many issues make GoZone impractical, if not nearly unusable. Those included: wait times that can be upwards of an hour, unsafe driving habits of GoZone workers, lack of handicap accessible vehicles, and more. Effective January 1, 2023, there will be even further changes to the city’s bus and GoZone services. Three more bus routes will be closed in January. The GoZone base fare will increase to \$1.50 and a 50¢ per mile charge will be added to trips over four miles. The fare will be capped at \$5.00 within city limits. Multi-use bus passes (weekly, monthly, annual) will no longer be accepted by GoZone either. GoZone specific passes will only be available to a few select groups, not the general public it seems.

The top five parent goals from SY 21/22 and SY 22/23 shared many similarities. English as a second language classes for adults, nutrition, and financial literacy continue to be common goals for our families. Last year’s “help child learn” goal has changed to “child behavior management” and “obtain job training and/or GED” gave way to “pursue college”. That’s not to say those needs are not still there, only that our parents are prioritizing differently.

As United Way notes, “Denton County continues to be one of the fastest growing counties in the country which creates a challenge for nonprofits.” This has impacted setting up classes and activities for parents - because there is an increased demand for resources and help, along with staff shortages, options for days and times for parent classes are much more limited. New partnerships with community businesses and nonprofits continue to be explored and developed in efforts to provide more options.

The City of Denton has the awesome resource of multiple college campuses. University of North Texas, Texas Women's University, and North Central Texas College are all located within our service area. UNT and TWU have partnered for SY 22/23 and beyond to provide our Head Start classes with many health and nutrition resources as part of a research project. Beyond this research partnership, there remains potential for more resource exchange with the colleges.

“Child behavior management” appearing as one of parents' top goals, as well as “family counseling” and “mental health counseling” being some of the top needs they asked for help with, gives a good grasp on how Covid-19 impacted babies and their parents. For children who just turned three in time for school this year, the majority of their life has been lived in lockdown. They have spent more time at home with parents who may not have the skills or understanding of early childhood development which also leads to less socialization among their peer group. Not only does that affect children's development, but it also weighs on the mental health of their parents. Denton County MHMR remains a large player in the City of Denton's mental health service providers. Even though the need for mental healthcare is increasing, the most recent available data shows MHMR's funding per capita has actually decreased. This could be in part due to the city's rapid growth out-pacing available funding.

Mental health is not the only area which has been strained due to the Covid-19 pandemic and its fallout. Another effect of people staying at home during the pandemic was decreased exposure to germs which hasn't enabled young children to develop as hearty an immune system. Now that children are in school and exposed to new people and new germs, the rates of all illnesses have been increasing. The rate of influenza-like illnesses (this includes Covid, flu, RSV, and any other illness presenting with at least fever and cough or sore throat) has already reached levels in the 22/23 season that represent peak levels from 2017 through 2021. Our SY 22/23 data collection did a much better job at capturing how many families receive Medicaid benefits for their children, but the number of providers who accept Medicaid continue to dwindle in the city of Denton. Add to this the change in Denton ISD medical insurance which only one provider in the city accepts, and you're looking at lots of sick students and school staff who are unable to see a doctor.

Many parents turned in papers to be a class representative for Policy Council, Parent Committee, or both, but few have followed through with their role.

Volunteer hour submission has also slowed, significantly this school year. A known area of need is increasing father/male involvement. This continues to prove difficult, in no small part because of the lack of father figures reported during enrollment. We have increased our community presence by attending Denton ISD early childhood education outreach events as well as activities hosted by the city Parks and Recreation Department at the MLK Jr. Rec Center near our campus.

HEALTH/NUTRITION:

Post pandemic has been difficult for everyone physically, mentally, and financially. Our families have had difficulties with inflation and their mental health. Inflation is at 9.2% in DFW September 2022 according to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This increase in the cost of living with minimal wage increases has made it difficult for our families to afford food and clothes for their children let alone health or dental care. We try to help our families by creating partnerships within the community, offering discounted or free services/goods. However, this still doesn't completely ease the burden when they have sick children, which we have seen an increase in. For these families, missing work frequently can cause loss of income or in their job entirely. These are the main issues we have seen in the clinic this year.

One of the partnerships we have created is "Food for Kids" which sends food home to families in need. These students also received Thanksgiving meals and gift cards from Moms on Mission. Another resource we have is a clothes closet, that has donated clothes from the community to help children in need. To help our families get doctors' appointments, our staff reach out to the local Health Department and other small clinics in the area to help families obtain appointments for their children. We also have an M.O.U. with Nuby Pediatric clinic for our students to receive their annual physical for free or discounted rate (non-Medicaid receive discounted rate). For dental services, we have a verbal partnership with T.W.U.'s dental program to offer certain free dental services to students who sign up. We also host classes at the school and via Zoom to educate our families about general health, mental health, and nutritional needs. Through these actions we collaborated to help our community and assist our families in obtaining and maintaining with their basic needs such as food, clothing, preventive care, acute care, immunizations, and dental care.

To also help with good routine and practice we have resumed daily teeth brushing with all students. We have been unable to do this for the past two years due to COVID restrictions so being able to start this process again for the students is

highly beneficial. Each Head Start student brushes their teeth daily at school. Teachers work with the students to help them brush their teeth properly and show good habits. Every student was also sent home with a brand-new toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste as part of a dental health kit donated by Denton Kiwanis. We hope with these good practices we might start to see less children with significant tooth decay at this young age.

In good news, our campus B.M.I. rate has been trending down since the pandemic. Starting in 2019-2020 our obesity rate was 14%, 2020-2021 the obesity rate was 27%. In 2021-2022 the obesity rate was 31%, the highest it has ever been at this school. This year, 2022-2023, our current obesity rate is 22%, 9% less than the year before. We still do have a higher obesity rate than the average preschooler in the state of Texas, at 16%. However, we are making strides to lower our rate. We have worked to promote healthy food habits and have also had this supported through a partnership with U.N.T. and T.W.U., which provide fitness classes for every student every two weeks. These universities also provide an assortment of health and nutrition activities and classes for parents and children. They also include wearing pedometers to meet daily step goals and hosting parent information sessions. The students will be reading books about nutrition as well. With these classes, consistency in exercise, and resources our families will slowly become healthier, reducing their overall risk for commodities.

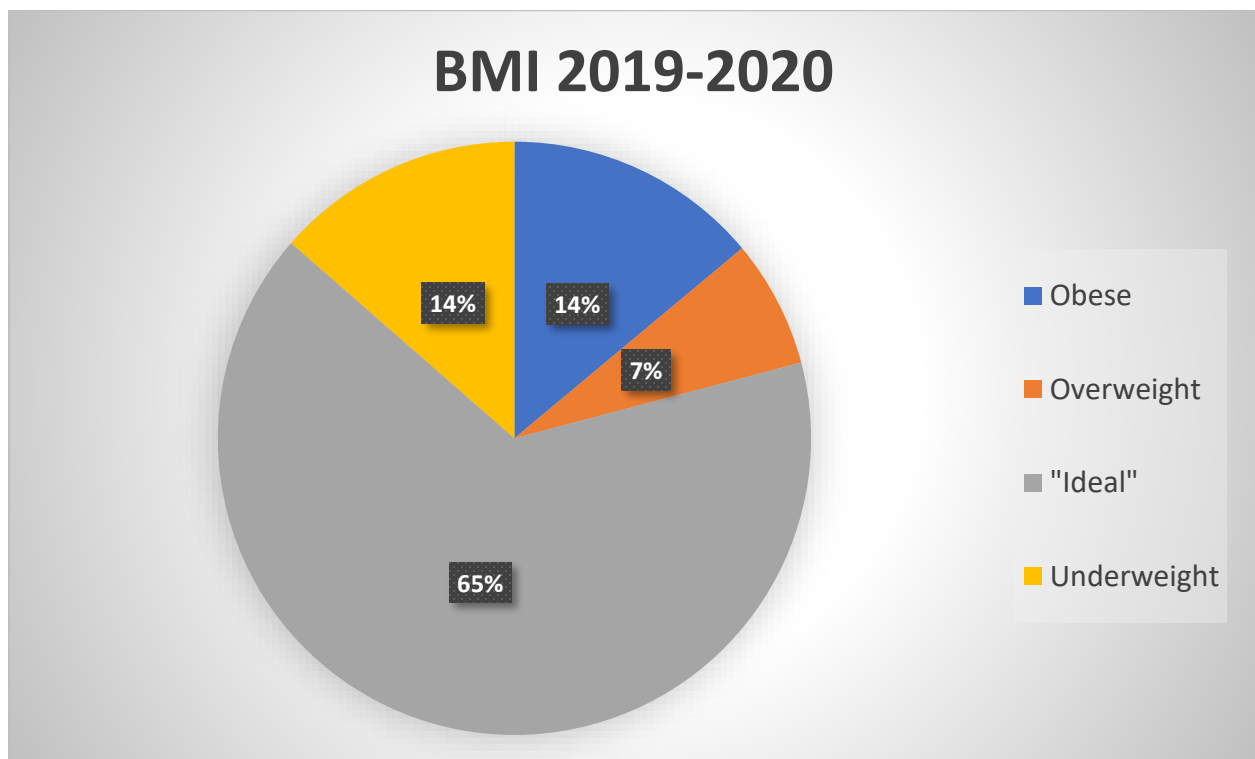
One trend that we are seeing in the clinic is greater levels of illness amongst the general student body population. There have been the same number of clinic visits so far this year, 438 office visits, as there were total for the entire school year of 2021-2022, at 421. The state is still updating their reports as to why this may be the case, but we believe it to be the large numbers of three-year-old students we have this year whose immune systems are weaker than previous years due to lack of exposure to environments outside of their homes. We have seen nationally and locally, a large increase in illnesses such as RSV, COVID, and Flu. These illnesses are heavily affecting this population, even outside of their normal seasons. This is causing difficulties for our families who cannot afford to keep missing work. To combat this, we are encouraging students to stay home when ill, engage in proper handwashing techniques, which are reinforced by staff, and offering masks to those who may have a greater need. We are also fogging and deep cleaning classrooms often. Finally, we send home infection control information and how to properly wash hand techniques in our monthly newsletter. We are working hard to reduce spread in the school setting.

Inflation rate:

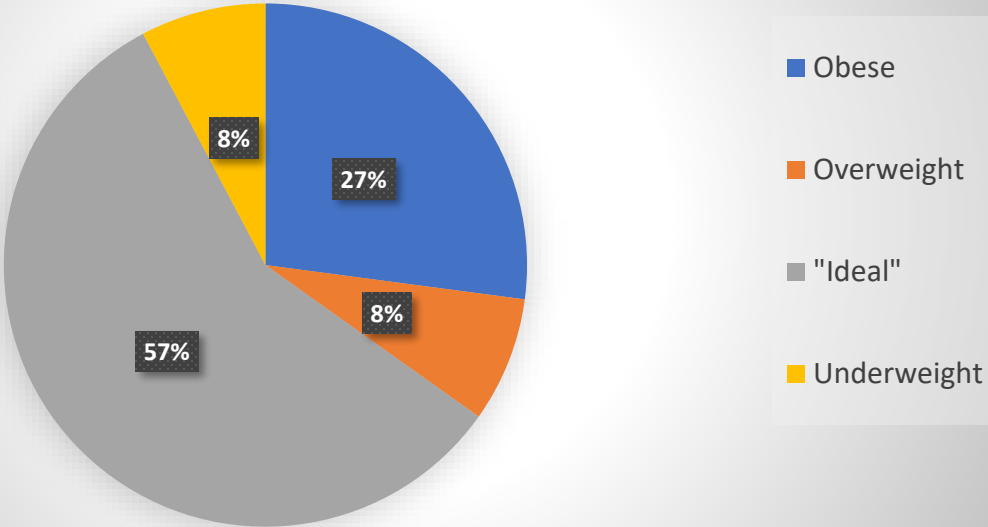
[https://www.bls.gov/regions/southwest/news-release/consumerpriceindex_dallasfortworth.htm#:~:text=Southwest%20%3E%20News%20Release-.Consumer%20Price%20Index%2C%20Dallas%2DFort%20Worth%2DArlington%20area%20%E2%80%93,9.2%20percent%20over%20the%20year.&text=Contacts%20Technical%20information%3A,\(972\)%20850%2D4800](https://www.bls.gov/regions/southwest/news-release/consumerpriceindex_dallasfortworth.htm#:~:text=Southwest%20%3E%20News%20Release-.Consumer%20Price%20Index%2C%20Dallas%2DFort%20Worth%2DArlington%20area%20%E2%80%93,9.2%20percent%20over%20the%20year.&text=Contacts%20Technical%20information%3A,(972)%20850%2D4800)

Texas obesity rate: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9141304/>

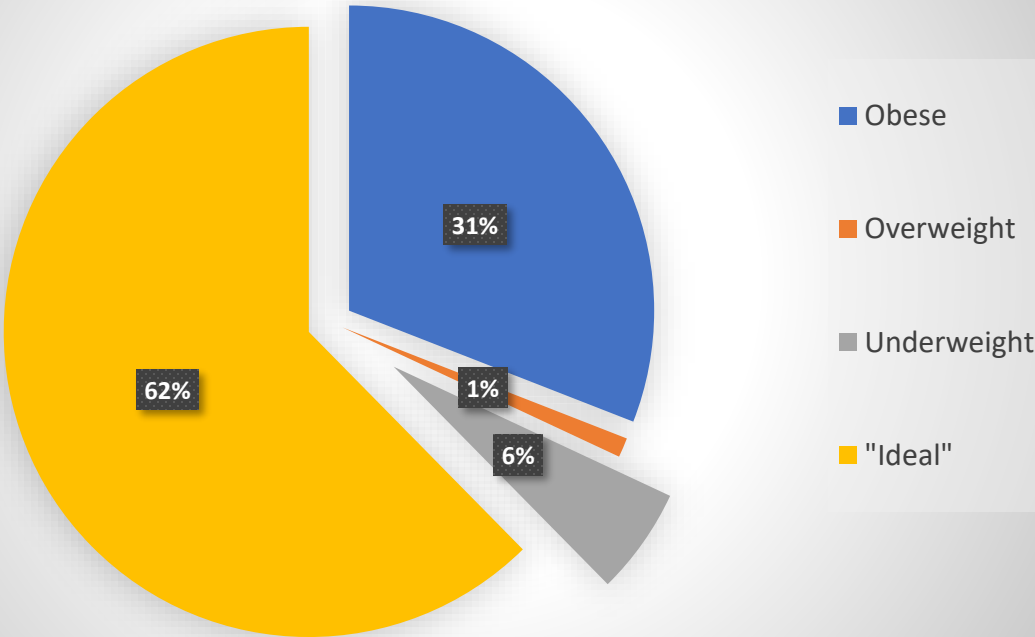
Increase in childhood illness: <https://www.ucihealth.org/blog/2022/06/is-covid-changing-childhood-illnesses>



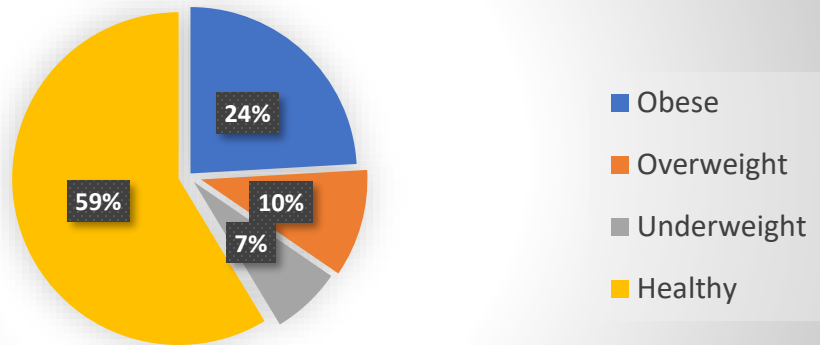
BMI 2020-2021



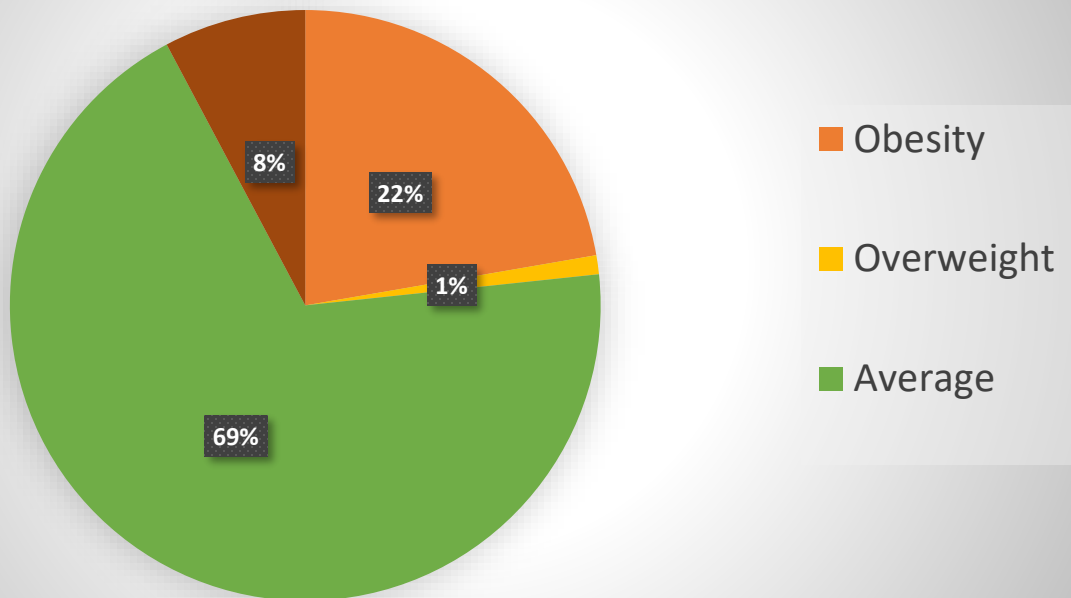
BMI 2021-2022 Fall Set



BMI 2021-2022 Spring Set



B.M.I. for Fall 22-23



DISABILITIES:

Information was obtained from the Denton ISD Special Education software program to determine the number of children served with a disability within the district's attendance area and on the two early childhood campuses. Results of the analysis indicated of the district's total special education population served in the preschool setting to be 298. Services are provided on all the district's elementary campuses, its K-8 Virtual Academy, and the district's two early childhood centers. One of the early childhood centers, Ann Windle School for Young Children, houses the district's Head Start Program. Both Early Childhood Centers for the district, along with eight of the elementary campuses house early childhood special education classes. These are the Adkins, Nelson, Houston, Cross Oaks, Bell, Union Park, and Sandbrock Ranch campuses.

Two of the elementary campus also house additional classes that implement specially designed curriculum which focuses on the development of communication skills. The Ann Windle School for Young Children houses a class with dually certified teacher who teaches both PK eligible students and those with IEPs. The class is served by the one teacher teaching both general education and special education curriculum along with two instructional teacher assistants.

The Gonzalez Early Childhood Center, Bell Elementary School campus, and the Cross Oaks Elementary campuses have Blended PK classrooms. In these classrooms both a special education and PK teacher are providing instruction with the special education teacher responsible for the implementation of IEPs. Additionally, the Ann Windle School for Young Children campus houses the Denton Regional Day School Program for the Deaf Preschool Program.

An analysis was also conducted to determine the disabilities served in this population and the percentage of the school population this comprised. This analysis is presented in the table below.

PRIMARY DISABILITY	SUM	PERCENT
Orthopedic Impairment	1	0.34
Other Health Impairment	17	5.70
Auditory Impairment	17	5.70
Visual Impairment	2	0.67
Deaf-Blind	0	0.00
Intellectual Disability	1	0.34
Emotional Disturbance	17	5.70
Learning Disability	0	0.00
Speech Impaired	147	49.33
Autism	49	16.44
Noncategorical Early Childhood	47	15.77
TOTAL	298	100.00

Within the community, numerous home health agencies provide services to children. Ten agencies were identified as providing speech, occupational therapy, and physical therapy to preschool aged children. Criteria for these services are based on medical eligibility criteria whereas services in the school setting are based on disability criteria. Five offices providing applied behavior analysis therapy to children within the Denton area were also identified. Both the home health and ABA therapy programs are currently providing in-home therapy, Telehealth therapy, and center-based therapy.

Both the University of North Texas and Texas Woman’s University offer low-cost speech and hearing therapy. Both universities utilized a telehealth approach during the Spring of 2020 when their campuses were closed to face-to-face interactions. Clinics are currently open with strict guidelines for client and service provider’s safety. Denton ISD has been experiencing a shortage in the staffing for Speech Therapists. This is an area of need.

MENTAL HEALTH:

Mental health is identified as an area of concern on the Denton County United Way website. The United Way Agency publishes a community assessment every five years. As part of this assessment, they also conduct listening sessions with local service providers and community members about what they believe are the primary needs in Denton County currently and the number one listed concern was mental health services. Clients seeking assistance are most often referred to mental

health services and this was listed as the third most significant barrier to financial stability. According to the 2021 State of Mental Health in America Report, Texas ranks 50 out of 51 in terms of access to care (Fritze et al., 2020). This suggests that Texas has low access to both insurance and treatment/services for mental health (Fritze et al., 2020). County Health Rankings states that there is one mental health provider for every 750 persons in Denton County. The top 10% of counties in America are 1 to 250. Texas overall is 1 to 760 (countyhealthrankings.org).

As of April 2022, there are no pediatric psychiatric inpatient bed services in Denton County for children in need of mental health services. When a child under the age of 13 needs hospitalization, the child must be sent out of the county for treatment, placing a hardship on the parents/families, who are required to be present for treatment and planning (Cook Children's, 2022). While our children are struggling with these issues the parents are having difficulties as well. According to the 2021 Mental Health in America report, 16.2% of adults in Texas have a mental illness. If statewide data is applied to Denton County, then about 152,640 out of 941,647 adults in Denton County have a mental illness and 59.6% of adults with a mental illness in Texas did not receive treatment (Fritze et al., 2020). With parents dealing with their own stressors, they are frequently unable to meet the social and emotional needs of their children leading to mental health concerns and an increase in dysfunctional behaviors.

County Health Rankings states that there is one mental health provider for every 750 persons in Denton County. According to the 2021 Cook Children's Community Health Needs Assessment Report, in Denton County:

- 11% of children (ages 5-15) are diagnosed with a mental illness or disorder.
- 12% of children (ages 0-15) received assistance for mental illness, behavioral, emotional, or a developmental problem.
- Two in three parents of school-aged children are not familiar with mental health services in their community.
- Of all school-aged children in Denton County that needed mental health care, over half experienced a difficulty with accessing care.
- 8,000 Denton County school-aged children did not receive needed mental health care during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The barriers to care included:
 - Could not afford
 - Not covered by insurance
 - Didn't know where to go
 - Long wait list/delay

- Inconvenient hours (Cook Children’s Center for Children’s Health, 2021)19

In Denton County children aged 6-17 years old, 19% are diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, 16.9 % with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and 9.8% with depression (2021 Cook Children’s Community Health Needs Assessment Report).

The Cook Children’s Regional Child Health Summit last conducted surveys of parents and community leaders in 2022 covering 8 counties, including Denton, reporting from the survey sample of 5715 parents and 306 community leaders. Included in the report are answers citing 19% of those children had experienced 1 Adverse Childhood Experience, and 14% had experienced 2—8 ACES. They indicated that mental health was consistently the top concern expressed in all forms of their 2021 CHNA research with a reported 46% of children ages 6-17 who needed mental health care or have experienced a difficulty in the past 12 months but 6% said they had forgone this care due to insurance not covering services, services not available in their area, or problems getting an appointment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 96% of community leaders are concerned about the negative impact of the pandemic on child mental health. The fact that this was indicated as the top “most needed” children’s health service (Mental Health Care or Counseling for Behavioral or Emotional Concerns) and that it wasn’t in the parent’s responses top 3 is a strong indicator of the lack of awareness parents in the community have regarding what is developmentally appropriate and the importance of children’s mental health on their overall development. Parents now have greater access to these services than previously as many practices and services such as Denton County MHMR, provide both in person and telehealth services however there can frequently be long waiting lists due to the high need and demand for services. Both local universities offer counseling services on a sliding scale. Counseling services are provided by student clinicians under the supervision of a faculty member who has the appropriate credentials. The Center for Play Therapy, as well as the counseling clinic, has reopened to seeing clients of all ages in person this school year. UNT also has masters and doctoral level clinicians who conduct play therapy with students here on campus, based on background information received and teacher referrals. The district also has a referral resource list of local centers and clinicians who can provide assessments, and direct services to students and their families. Another resource available in our community is the 2 family centers through Denton ISD which have opened in the past year at Braswell HS and Fred Moore HS where licensed clinicians can provide counseling to families and individuals as well as parenting classes two nights a week each. Their goal is to eventually have these family centers at each high school within the district.

The impact of the availability of mental health services was also explored beyond services at the local universities. The Children's Advocacy Center of North Texas reported a total of 2,404 reports filed in 2020 with 1,344 of these being the primary allegation of sexual abuse. They conducted 1,216 forensic interviews which was said to be 100% increase from 2016. In a presentation in September 2021, they indicated that they had already surpassed this number of interviews for the 2021 year.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

Staff shortages, inflation of cost for products and services, and the pandemic still present in the community has created hardship on the amount of resources that are available to families. Transportation services suffered during the pandemic and many entities had to shut down services. The inflation in gas prices also made commuting difficult for our families. Medical and dental facilities have difficulty keeping up with the needs of the community due to shortage in staff and increase in community health needs. While our community may be considered to have a rich variety of resources, the pandemic has caused barriers to access and receiving these resources.

PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT:

Our program uses the information from our Community Assessment Updates to help to plan our program's direction. It helps us plan our focus/vision for the new year in a way that works toward meeting the current needs of families in our service area. As we interview families upon entry into our program, we collect data to see what their greatest needs are. We then look to our community to identify the needed resources for our families in need. We strive to align our services that we render to the identified needs of our community.



Head Start Policy Council By-Laws

Policy Council Approved: 12/16/2022

Board Approved: _____



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BYLAWS
DENTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL
DISTRICT HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this organization shall be the Denton ISD Head Start Policy Council and shall be referred to as the Policy Council.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

Section 1: The purpose of the Policy Council shall be:

- a. To serve as a link between public and private organizations, the Recipient (Denton ISD) Board and the community it serves.
- b. To ensure the Recipient has an established policy group and a well- functioning governing body that shares responsibility for providing direction, designing, deciding and overseeing the delivery of high-quality services to children and families in accordance with Head Start legislation, regulation and policies.
- c. To recruit volunteer services from parents, community residents and community organizations.

Section 2: The major management functions of the Policy Council shall be, at a minimum:

- a. To develop Policy Council By-Laws.
- b. To develop and implement program planning by the Recipient with the consultation of the program's governing body, Policy Council and staff.
- c. To review, approve, and submit all Head Start Policies and Procedures to the governing board.
- d. To participate in a self-assessment of the Denton ISD Head Start Program annually.
- e. To make informed decisions concerning the Denton ISD Head Start budgets, grant proposals and operational changes as required in the Head Start Performance Standards including budget planning and program expenditures i.e., all funding, applications and amendments.
- f. To provide input/decisions in policies to employ staff, staff conduct and dismissal of any person who works primarily for the Denton ISD Head Start Program. The Policy Council members give the Denton ISD Head Start Director all authority to hire and terminate employees in emergency situations to benefit the welfare of staff and children in the program. All such decisions will be brought to the Policy Council for action during the next meeting immediately following the changes.

- g. To implement the ERSEA policies and procedures approved by the Denton ISD Board of Trustees.
- h. To establish and maintain a Complaint/Grievance Procedure.
- i. To serve as a link between public and private organizations.
- j. To develop procedures for how members will be elected.
- k. To Promote activities to support the active involvement of parents in supporting program operations, including policies to ensure that the Head Start agency is responsive to community and parent needs.

Section 3: The Policy Council adopts for its use all the written policies and procedures established by the Denton ISD Board of Trustees (governing board) in accordance with the Texas Education Code. The Board of Trustees will be responsible for oversight and will provide legal and fiscal administration in compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards.

ARTICLE III

Membership

The Policy Council shall consist of parents (at least 51%) of children presently enrolled in the Head Start Program plus representatives of the community and two (2) DISD Board of Trustees Liaisons.

Section 1: All parents serving on the Policy Council must be elected by parents of Head Start children currently in the program.

Section 2: The Recipient shall determine the composition of the community representation to include members of neighborhood community groups and local community or professional organizations which have a concern for children of low- income families and can contribute to the development of the program. The number of such representatives will vary depending on the number of organizations which should be appropriately represented. Parents of former Head Start children may serve as representatives of the community. All representatives of the community selected by the Recipient must be approved by the elected parent members of the Policy Council.

Section 3: Two (2) members of the Denton ISD Board of Trustees, the governing board, will serve as liaisons between the Board and the Policy Council. The liaisons will have voting rights.

Section 4: If a member does not attend for two (2) consecutive meetings, he/she may be replaced.

Section 5: The membership of the Policy Council must be rotated to assure a regular influx of new ideas into the program. Policy Council terms are one (1) year and members may serve up to five (5) one-year terms, **with elections held every school year. Since, Board Liaisons are publicly elected officials, the term limitation does not apply to them.**

Section 6: No staff members (nor members of their families) of the Recipient shall serve on the

Policy Council in a voting capacity. Staff members may attend meetings in a consultative non- voting capacity ~~upon request of the Council.~~

ARTICLE IV

Officers

The officers of the Policy Council shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and Parliamentarian. Officers, with the exception of the Parliamentarian, are elected annually by a majority vote of the membership at the beginning of the school year no later than October. In the event of a vacancy, the membership will fill the office at the next official meeting. The President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and Parliamentarian will be known as the Executive Committee.

Section 1: The President shall preside at all meetings and appoint committees as needed.

Section 2: The Vice President shall assume and perform the duties of the President in the absence or disability of the President.

Section 3: The Secretary/Treasurer shall record minutes at all meetings and dispense these prior to the next meeting. He/she shall be responsible for informing and disseminating to the Policy Council members all timely Head Start financial reports. The Secretary/Treasurer will work with Ann Windle School for Young Children staff to obtain the reports.

Section 4: The Parliamentarian, appointed by the President, shall advise the presiding officer in responding to points of order and parliamentary inquiries and generally provide advice on conducting the meeting according to the Robert's Rule of Order.

Section 5: All officers shall have the right to vote and to debate questions the same as any other member. The President or person presiding shall avoid taking sides on issues or entering debate unless he/she first surrenders the chair. **All members and officers will continue serving until successors for the new school year are named or elected.**

ARTICLE V

Policy Council Meetings

The Policy Council shall have a minimum of four (4) regular meetings each school year. Conducting the business of Policy Council is a priority for the DISD Head Start Program.

Section 1: Regular meetings shall be held monthly. Notice of meetings or cancellations shall be mailed or emailed to each member not less than five (5) school days in advance when possible. Members may also be personally notified of meetings.

Section 2: Special meetings may be called by the President or Policy Council Advisor at any time circumstances and business deem them necessary.

Section 3: Business of the Policy Council may be officially conducted if six (6) or more members are present. If unforeseen circumstances arise, members may participate by remote communication. Participation by remote communication shall constitute presence in person at the meeting for all purposes including quorum and voting.

Section 4: Members may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses to participate fully in their roles at Policy Council meetings subject to Head Start budget and Policy Council approval. AWSYC Family Service personnel will help members access available resources as needed.

Section 5: Rules of Order

- a. All meetings shall be conducted in a manner consistent with procedures set forth in Robert's Rules of Order Revised.
- b. All issues requiring a vote shall be determined by a majority of those present unless stipulated otherwise in these Bylaws.

Section 6: Conflict that arises between Policy Council members or other parents and/or staff in the program should first be addressed according to the Internal Dispute Resolution guideline provided in Attachment 1.

Section 7: The Policy Council Chairperson or a parent member may file a complaint/grievance under Texas Education Code Chapter 26, Denton ISD Board Policy FNG (Legal) and Denton ISD Board Policy FNG (Local). *See ATTACHMENT 2, ATTACHMENT 3 and ATTACHMENT 4.*

ARTICLE VI

Plan for Reporting, Approval and Shared Decision Making Between Governing Body (DISD Board of Trustees) and Policy Council

Section 1: When needs arise for shared decisions to be made between the Governing Body and Policy Council the following procedure shall be followed to ensure compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

- a. Policy Council will determine the extent of the need for any items which need to come before the Governing Body (DISD Board of Trustees).
- b. The Superintendent's office will be notified, and he will inform the Governing Body.
- c. The item or items will be slated as Workshop items or added to the Consent Agenda for approval at a scheduled Board of Trustees meeting. The Policy Council members and/or staff may report to the Board at the scheduled meeting.
- d. Workshop items will be discussed, and questions/concerns addressed.
- e. After the item has been "workshopped" it will be slated for a vote by the Governing Board.

Section 2: If questions remain or additional suggestions are brought forward the item will be referred to staff to be reworked before being presented again to the Policy Council and the Governing Body.

ARTICLE VII

Impasse Procedures

Section 1: The Governing Body (Board of Trustees) and the Policy Council should work to resolve all internal disputes through their members. One acceptable method is workshopping and reworking items as described in Article VI wherein the decisions and input of both parties are considered and respected.

Section 2: If an impasse occurs, the Board President and Policy Council Chairperson shall notify each other by written notice of any disagreement or non-concurrence within five (5) working days following preliminary decisions of disagreement or non-concurrence. This notice will indicate the reasoning behind the disagreement i.e., why a decision is not accepted.

Section 3: The Impasse Committee shall be called to convene by the Executive Director within fifteen (15) working days (or the scheduled meeting date of the Policy Council or the Board of Trustees). This committee will be composed of two (2) representatives of each body. A neutral mediator will be brought in to bring the bodies to a mutually agreeable decision that is not arbitrary, capricious or illegal. The representatives will then present this decision to their respective bodies. If the dispute is not resolved a Non-Binding Arbitration Committee shall be called.

Section 4: The Non-Binding Arbitration Committee shall be called to convene within fifteen (15) working days (or the scheduled meeting date of the Policy Council or the Board, whichever is later following the Impasse Committee's final attempt to resolve issues of impasse through mediation.

Section 5: The Non-Binding Arbitration Committee shall be made up of three (3) disinterested persons* who have agreed to serve as arbitrators and is composed of the following:

- a. One (1) representative of the Board of Trustees
- b. One (1) representative of the Policy Council
- c. One (1) representative mutually agreed upon by the representatives of the Board and Policy Council as described below.

NOTE: *Disinterested persons shall not include a parent of a family member of children currently enrolled in the Head Start Program, staff or member of their family, Board member or member of their family or a family member of the Recipient or Delegate Agency.

A list of six (6) arbitrators, (3 representing Policy Council and 3 representing the Board) with addresses and phone numbers and ranked in the order in which they were called upon to serve on the Non-Binding Arbitration Committee, will be submitted for consideration by the Board representative and the Policy Council representative. One will be selected to fill the third position on the committee.

Section 6: In the event the recommendations submitted by the Impasse Committee and/or the Non-Binding Arbitration Committee are not acceptable to either the Policy Council or the Board of Trustees, the parties agree to submit the issue(s) to binding Arbitration. This meeting will be scheduled within thirty (30) days if possible. The decision of the Binding Arbitrator will be based on the findings of fact and conclusions of the law.

ATTACHMENT 1

Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure

A Policy Council member who has an unresolved conflict or personal grievance with another Policy Council member, related to Policy Council business, may request a mediation hearing through the Policy Council advisor. The advisor may ask to have an impartial mediator meet with the Policy Council members to resolve the conflict.

If a conflict escalates to the level requiring removal of a representative, the Policy Council Executive Committee will ask all members of the Policy Council to hear the conflict and to vote on the petition for removal. When the Policy Council must vote on a request for removal, there will be an unbiased outside mediator to guide the discussion, so it remains fair, safe and respectful of all involved parties. The mediator will consult with others as needed to help the Policy Council make a fair decision. If the conflict is program related (not involving Policy Council business), it should be referred to the Policy Council Advisor who will direct the conflict to the appropriate Center Manager(s) or District Director.

Occasionally, disagreements or conflicts may arise. Therefore, this Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure has been established to help resolve the issues.

1. Talk directly to the person involved as both parties attempt to work out the problem.
2. If the problem cannot be solved at this level, go to the Policy Council Staff Advisor. The Advisor may call a meeting with those involved or talk with each person individually.
3. If the problem is still unresolved, the Head Start District Director may be contacted.

ATTACHMENT 2

Denton ISD Board Policy FNG (Legal) Student Rights and Responsibilities Student and
Parent Complaints/Grievances

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
STUDENT AND PARENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

FNG
(LEGAL)

United States
Constitution

A district shall take no action abridging the freedom of speech or the right of the people to petition the board for redress of grievances. U.S. Const. Amend. I, XIV [See FNA]

A board may confine its meetings to specified subject matter and may hold nonpublic sessions to transact business. But when a board sits in public meetings to conduct public business and hear the views of citizens, it may not discriminate between speakers on the basis of the content of their speech or the message it conveys. Rosenberger v. Rector & Visitors of Univ. of Virginia, 515 U.S. 819, 828 (1995); City of Madison v. Wis. Emp. Rel. Comm'n, 429 U.S. 167, 174 (1976); Pickering v. Bd. of Educ., 391 U.S. 563, 568 (1968)

Texas Constitution

Citizens shall have the right, in a peaceable manner, to assemble together for their common good and to apply to those invested with the powers of government for redress of grievances or other purposes, by petition, address, or remonstrance. Tex. Const. Art. I, Sec. 27

There is no requirement that a board negotiate or even respond to complaints. However, a board must stop, look, and listen and must consider the petition, address, or remonstrance. Prof'l Ass'n of College Educators v. El Paso County Cmty. [College] Dist., 678 S.W.2d 94 (Tex. App.—El Paso 1984, writ ref'd n.r.e.)

Federal Laws

Section 504

A district that receives federal financial assistance, directly or indirectly, and that employs 15 or more persons shall adopt grievance procedures that incorporate appropriate due process standards and that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. 34 C.F.R. 104.7(b)

Americans with
Disabilities Act

A district that employs 50 or more persons shall adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 28, Part 35 (Americans with Disabilities Act regulations). 28 C.F.R. 35.107

Title IX

A district that receives federal financial assistance, directly or indirectly, must adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student complaints alleging any action prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. 34 C.F.R. 106.8(b) [See FB and FFH]

Education Code
Chapter 26

Parents are partners with educators, administrators, and the board in their children's education. Parents shall be encouraged to actively participate in creating and implementing educational programs for their children. Education Code 26.001(a)

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
STUDENT AND PARENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

FNG
(LEGAL)

Unless otherwise provided by law, a board, an administrator, an educator, or other person may not limit parental rights. *Education Code 26.001(c)*

"Parent" Defined

For purposes of Education Code Chapter 26 (Parental Rights), "parent" includes a person standing in parental relation, but does not include a person as to whom the parent-child relationship has been terminated or a person not entitled to possession of or access to a child under a court order. Except as provided by federal law, all rights of a parent under Education Code Title 2 and all educational rights under Family Code 151.001(a)(10) shall be exercised by a student who is 18 years of age or older or whose disabilities of minority have been removed for general purposes under Family Code Chapter 31, unless the student has been determined to be incompetent or the student's rights have been otherwise restricted by a court order. *Education Code 26.002*

Complaint
Procedures

A board shall provide for procedures to consider complaints that a parent's right has been denied. *Education Code 26.001(d)*

A board shall adopt a grievance procedure under which the board shall address each complaint that it receives concerning a violation of a right guaranteed by Education Code Chapter 26 (Parental Rights).

The board is not required by the provision above or Education Code 11.1511(b)(13) (requiring adoption of a process to hear complaints) to address a complaint concerning a student's participation in an extracurricular activity that does not involve a violation of a right guaranteed by Education Code Chapter 26. This provision does not affect a claim brought by a parent under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Section 1400 et seq.) or a successor federal statute addressing special education services for a child with a disability.

Education Code 26.011

Parental rights listed in Education Code Chapter 26 are:

Parental Rights

1. Rights concerning academic programs. *Education Code 26.003* [See EHA, EIF, FDB, and FMH]
2. Access to student records. *Education Code 26.004* [See FL]
3. Access to state assessments. *Education Code 26.005* [See EKB]
4. Access to teaching materials. *Education Code 26.006* [See EF and EKB]

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
STUDENT AND PARENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

FNG
(LEGAL)

5. Access to board meetings, other than a closed meeting under the Open Meetings Act. Education Code 26.007 [See BE and BEC]

6. Right to full information concerning a student. Education Code 26.008 [See DF, FFE, and FM]

7. Right to information concerning special education and education of students with learning disabilities. Education Code 26.0081 [See FB]

8. Requests for public information. Education Code 26.0085 [See GBA]

9. Consent required for certain activities. Education Code 26.009 [See EHA, FFE, FL, FM, and FO]

10. Refusal of psychiatric or psychological treatment of child as basis for report of neglect. Education Code 26.0091 [See FFG]

11. Exemption from instruction. Education Code 26.010 [See EMB]

**Right to Attend
School Activities**

Unless limited by court order, a parent appointed as a conservator of a child has at all times the right to attend school activities, including school lunches, performances, and field trips. Family Code 153.073(a)(6)

**Objection to School
Assignment**

The parent or person standing in parental relation to any student may object to the student's school assignment. Upon receiving a written petition to request or object to a student's assignment, a board shall follow the procedures set forth at Education Code 25.034. Education Code 25.033(2), .034 [See FDB]

**Challenge to Education
Records**

A district shall give a parent or eligible student, on request, an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of the student's education records on the grounds that the information contained in the records is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the privacy

**Denial of Class Credit or
Final Grade**

If a student is denied credit or a final grade for a class by an attendance committee, the student may appeal the decision to the board. Education Code 25.092(d) [See FEC]

**Complaints Against
Professional Employees**

A person may not file suit against a professional employee of a district unless the person has exhausted the district's remedies for resolving the complaint. Education Code 22.0514

"Professional employee of a district" includes:

1. A superintendent, principal, teacher, including a substitute teacher, supervisor, social worker, school counselor, nurse, and teacher's aide employed by a district;
2. A teacher employed by a company that contracts with a district to provide the teacher's services to the district;
3. A student in an education preparation program participating in a field experience or internship;
4. A DPS-certified school bus driver;
5. A member of the board; and
6. Any other person whose employment by a district requires certification and the exercise of discretion.

Education Code 22.051(a)

Finality of Grades

An examination or course grade issued by a classroom teacher is final and may not be changed unless the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or not consistent with a district's grading policy applicable to the grade, as determined by the board.

A board's determination is not subject to appeal. This provision does not prohibit an appeal related to a student's eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities under Education Code 33.081. [See FM]

Education Code 28.0214

Public Information Requests

A district that receives a request from a parent for public information relating to the parent's child shall comply with Government Code Chapter 552 (Public Information Act). A district shall also comply with the deadlines and provisions set forth at Education Code 26.0085. Gov't Code Ch. 552; Education Code 26.0085

Closed Meeting

A board may conduct a closed meeting on a parent or student complaint to the extent required or provided by law. Gov't Code Ch. 551, Subch. D [See BEC]

Record of Proceedings

An appeal of a board's decision to the Commissioner of Education shall be decided based on a review of the record developed at the district level. "Record" includes, at a minimum, an audible electronic recording or written transcript of all oral testimony or argument. Education Code 7.057(c), (f)

It is a district's responsibility to make and preserve the records of the proceedings before the board. If a district fails to create and preserve the record without good cause, all substantial evidence issues that require missing portions of the record for resolution shall be deemed against the district. The record shall include:

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
STUDENT AND PARENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

FNG
(LEGAL)

1. A tape recording or a transcript of the hearing at the local level. If a tape recording is used:
 - a. The tape recording must be complete, audible, and clear; and
 - b. Each speaker must be clearly identified.
2. All evidence admitted;
3. All offers of proof;
4. All written pleadings, motions, and intermediate rulings;
5. A description of matters officially noticed;
6. If applicable, the decision of the hearing examiner;
7. A tape recording or transcript of the oral argument before the board; and
8. The decision of the board.

19 TAC 157.1073(d)

Disruption

It is a criminal offense for a person, with intent to prevent or disrupt a lawful meeting, to substantially obstruct or interfere with the ordinary conduct of a meeting by physical action or verbal utterance and thereby curtail the exercise of others' First Amendment rights. *Penal Code 42.05; Morehead v. State, 807 S.W. 2d 577 (Tex. Crim. App. 1991)*

Note: See EHBAB for provisions concerning students with disabilities; see the FO series for provisions concerning student discipline; see FL for provisions concerning student records.

ATTACHMENT 3

Denton ISD Board Policy FNG (Local) Student Rights and Responsibilities

Student and Parent Complaints/Grievances

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
STUDENT AND PARENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

FNG
(LOCAL)

Complaints

In this policy, the terms “complaint” and “grievance” shall have the same meaning.

Other Complaint
Processes

Student or parent complaints shall be filed in accordance with this policy, except as required by the policies listed below. Some of these policies require appeals to be submitted in accordance with FNG after the relevant complaint process:

1. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, disability, shall be submitted in accordance with FFH.
2. Complaints concerning dating violence shall be submitted in accordance with FFH.
3. Complaints concerning retaliation related to discrimination and harassment shall be submitted in accordance with FFH.
4. Complaints concerning bullying or retaliation related to bullying shall be submitted in accordance with FFI.
5. Complaints concerning failure to award credit or a final grade on the basis of attendance shall be submitted in accordance with FEC.
6. Complaints concerning expulsion shall be submitted in accordance with FOD and the Student Code of Conduct.
7. Complaints concerning any final decisions of the gifted and talented selection committee regarding selection for or exit from the gifted program shall be submitted in accordance with EHBB.
8. Complaints concerning identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability within the scope of Section 504 shall be submitted in accordance with FB and the procedural safeguards handbook.
9. Complaints concerning identification, evaluation, educational placement, or discipline of a student with a disability within the scope of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act shall be submitted in accordance with EHBAE, FOF, and the procedural safeguards handbook provided to parents of all students referred to special education.
10. Complaints concerning instructional resources shall be submitted in accordance with EF.
11. Complaints concerning a commissioned peace officer who is an employee of the District shall be submitted in accordance with CKE.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
STUDENT AND PARENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

FNG
(LOCAL)

12. Complaints concerning intradistrict transfers or campus assignment shall be submitted in accordance with FDB.
13. Complaints concerning admission, placement, or services provided for a homeless student shall be submitted in accordance with FDC.

Complaints regarding refusal of entry to or ejection from District property based on Education Code 37.105 shall be filed in accordance with this policy. However, the timelines shall be adjusted as necessary to permit the complainant to address the Board in person within 90 days of filing the initial complaint, unless the complaint is resolved before the Board considers it. [See GKA(LEGAL)]

Notice to Students and Parents

The District shall inform students and parents of this policy through appropriate District publications.

Guiding Principles

Informal Process

The Board encourages students and parents to discuss their concerns with the appropriate teacher, principal, or other campus administrator who has the authority to address the concerns. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

Informal resolution shall be encouraged but shall not extend any deadlines in this policy, except by mutual written consent.

Formal Process

A student or parent may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint form.

Even after initiating the formal complaint process, students and parents are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. A student or parent whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time.

The process described in this policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or Board policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or "mini-trial" at any level.

Freedom from Retaliation

Neither the Board nor any District employee shall unlawfully retaliate against any student or parent for bringing a concern or complaint.

General Provisions

Filings

Complaint forms and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery, by electronic communication, including email and fax, or by U.S. Mail. Hand-delivered filings shall be timely filed if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Filings submitted by electronic communication shall be timely filed if they are received by the close of business on the deadline, as indicated by the date/time shown on the electronic communication shall be timely filed if they are received by the close of the business on the deadline, as indicated by the

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	<p>date/time shown on the electronic communication. Mail filings shall be timely filed if they are post- marked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline and received by the appropriate administrator or designated representative no more than three days after the deadline.</p>
Scheduling Conferences	<p>The District shall make reasonable attempts to schedule confer- ences at a mutually agreeable time. If a student or parent fails to appear at a scheduled conference, the District may hold the con- ference and issue a decision in the student's or parent's absence.</p>
Response	<p>At Levels One and Two, "response" shall mean a written communi- cation to the student or parent from the appropriate administrator. Responses may be hand-delivered, sent by electronic communi- cation to the student's or parent's email address of record, or sent by U.S. Mail to the student's or parent's mailing address of record. Mailed responses shall be timely if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline.</p>
Days	<p>"Days" shall mean District business days. In calculating timelines under this policy, the day a document is filed is "day zero." The fol- lowing business day is "day one."</p>
Representative	<p>"Representative" shall mean any person who or organization that is designated by the student or parent to represent the student or parent in the complaint process. A student may be represented by an adult at any level of the complaint.</p> <p>The student or parent may designate a representative through writ- ten notice to the District at any level of this process. If the student or parent designates a representative with fewer than three days' notice to the District before a scheduled conference or hearing, the District may reschedule the conference or hearing to a later date, if desired, in order to include the District's counsel. The District may be represented by counsel at any level of the process.</p>
Consolidating Complaints	<p>Complaints arising out of an event or a series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. A student or parent shall not file separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint.</p>
Untimely Filings	<p>All time limits shall be strictly followed unless modified by mutual written consent.</p> <p>If a complaint form or appeal notice is not timely filed, the com- plaint may be dismissed, on written notice to the student or parent, at any point during the complaint process. The student or parent may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within ten days from the date of the written dismissal notice, starting at the</p>

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	<p>level at which the complaint was dismissed. Such appeal shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.</p>
Costs Incurred	<p>Each party shall pay its own costs incurred in the course of the complaint.</p>
Complaint and Appeal Forms	<p>Complaints and appeals under this policy shall be submitted in writing on the form at FNG(EXHIBIT) or in writing in narrative form providing the same information requested in FNG(EXHIBIT).</p> <p>Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the student or parent does not have copies of these documents, copies may be presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted by the student or parent unless the student or parent did not know, or with reasonable diligence could not have known, the documents existed before the Level One conference.</p> <p>A complaint or appeal form that is incomplete in any material aspect may be dismissed but may be refiled with all the required information if the refiling is within the designated time for filing.</p>
Level One	<p>Complaint forms must be filed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Within 15 days of the date the student or parent first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance; and2. With the lowest level administrator who has the authority to remedy the alleged problem. <p>In most circumstances, students and parents shall file Level One complaints with the campus principal.</p> <p>If the only administrator who has authority to remedy the alleged problem is the Superintendent or designee, the complaint may begin at Level Two following the procedure, including deadlines, for filing the complaint form at Level One.</p> <p>If the complaint is not filed with the appropriate administrator, the receiving administrator must note the date and time the complaint form was received and immediately forward the complaint form to the appropriate administrator.</p> <p>The appropriate administrator shall investigate as necessary and schedule a conference with the student or parent within ten days after receipt of the written complaint. The administrator may set reasonable time limits for the conference.</p>

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Absent extenuating circumstances, the administrator shall provide the student or parent a written response within ten days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the administrator may consider information provided at the Level One conference and any other relevant documents or information the administrator believes will help resolve the complaint. All documents relied upon by the Level One administrator in reaching the Level One decision shall be provided to the student or parent along with the written decision.

Level Two

If the student or parent did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may request a conference with the Superintendent or designee to appeal the Level One decision.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within ten days of the date of the written Level One response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level One response deadline.

After receiving notice of the appeal, the Level One administrator shall prepare and forward a record of the Level One complaint to the Level Two administrator. The student or parent may request a copy of the Level One record.

The Level One record shall include:

1. The original complaint form and any attachments.
2. All other documents submitted by the student or parent at Level One.
3. The written response issued at Level One and any attachments.
4. All other documents relied upon by the Level One administrator in reaching the Level One decision.

The Superintendent or designee shall schedule a conference within ten days after the appeal notice is filed. The conference shall be limited to the issues and documents considered at Level One. At the conference, the student or parent may provide information concerning any documents or information relied upon by the administration for the Level One decision. The Superintendent or designee may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the student or parent a written response within ten days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the Superintendent or designee may consider the

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Level One record, information provided at the Level Two conference, and any other relevant documents or information the Superintendent or designee believes will help resolve the complaint.

Recordings of the Level One and Level Two conferences, if any, shall be maintained with the Level One and Level Two records.

Level Three

If the student or parent did not receive the relief requested at Level Two or if the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may appeal the decision to the Board.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within ten days of the date of the written Level Two response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level Two response deadline.

The Superintendent or designee shall inform the student or parent of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the complaint will be on the agenda for presentation to the Board.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the Board the record of the Level Two appeal. The student or parent shall be provided with a copy of the Level Two record at least three days before the Level Three hearing.

The Level Two record shall include:

1. The Level One record.
2. The notice of appeal from Level One to Level Two.
3. The written response issued at Level Two and any attachments.
4. All other documents relied upon by the administration in reaching the Level Two decision.

The District shall determine whether the complaint will be presented in open or closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and other applicable law. [See BE]

The presiding officer may set reasonable time limits and guidelines for the presentation, including an opportunity for the student or parent and administration to each make a presentation and provide rebuttal and an opportunity for questioning by the Board. The Board shall hear the complaint and may request that the administration provide an explanation for the decisions at the preceding levels.

In addition to any other record of the Board meeting required by law, the Board shall prepare a separate record of the Level Three presentation. The Level Three presentation, including the presentation by the student or parent or the student's representative, any

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presentation from the administration, and questions from the Board with responses, shall be recorded by audio recording, video/audio recording, or court reporter.

The Board shall then consider the complaint. It may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If the Board does not make a decision regarding the complaint by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of a response by the Board upholds the administrative decision at Level Two.

ATTACHMENT 4

Denton ISD Board Policy FNG Exhibits A - C

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(EXHIBIT)

The forms on the following pages are provided to assist the District in processing student/parent complaints/grievances.

- Exhibit A: Student/Parent Complaint Form — Level One — 1 page
- Exhibit B: Student/Parent Complaint Form — Notice of Appeal — Level Two — 1 page
- Exhibit C: Student/Parent Complaint Form — Notice of Appeal — Level Three — 1 page

EXHIBIT A

DENTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
STUDENT/PARENT COMPLAINT FORM — LEVEL ONE

Any student or parent who wishes to file a complaint must fill out this form completely and turn it in to the principal of the campus where the student is enrolled. All complaints will be processed in accordance with policies FNG(LEGAL) and FNG(LOCAL). Please use additional sheets of paper as necessary to completely respond. Failure to give complete details, including dates, will prevent those details from being considered in resolution of the grievance. Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the student or parent does not have copies of these documents, they may be presented at the Level One conference. **After the Level One conference, new documents may only be submitted if the student or parent did not know and with reasonable diligence could not have known of the existence of the documents.**

1. Name (student's and parent's) _____

2. Campus: _____ Grade Classification: _____
3. Please state the first date of the event or series of events causing the complaint.

4. Please state your complaint, including the harm that you allege to have occurred.

5. Please state the remedy you are seeking.

6. Please state specific facts of which you are aware to support your complaint. List in detail and include dates when applicable:

If hand-delivered, make two copies. Leave one with the administration and keep the other. If mailed, send certified with return receipt requested. DO NOT FAX.

7. Name and date of receipt by principal:

To Be Completed by an Administrator Only

Signature of Grievant: _____
Date: _____

EXHIBIT B

DENTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
STUDENT/PARENT COMPLAINT FORM
NOTICE OF APPEAL — LEVEL TWO

This form must be filled out completely by a student or parent appealing a Level One complaint decision to Level Two in accordance with policies FNG(LEGAL) and FNG(LOCAL).

1. Name (student and parent) _____

2. Campus: _____ Grade Classification: _____
3. Name and position of administrator whose complaint decision you are appealing:

4. Are you appealing a decision at Level One? _____ If not, please complete a Level One form (EXHIBIT A) and attach to this Level Two form.
5. Date of complaint conference you are appealing: _____
6. How has the previous decision failed to fulfill the remedy sought in your complaint?

7. If you will be represented in pursuing your complaint, please identify that individual and/or organization.
Name: _____ Ph one No.: _____
Organization: _____
Address: _____
8. The hearing officer will notify you, not your representative, of the hearing date.
9. Attach a COPY OF THE ORIGINAL COMPLAINT AND A COPY OF THE COMPLAINT DECISION being appealed to this Notice of Appeal. DELIVER ORIGINAL AND COPY TO LEVEL ONE HEARING OFFICER AND HAVE ADMINISTRATOR ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF BOTH AND RETAIN COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS. DO NOT FAX.
Signature of Grievant:

For Administrator Completion Only

Administrator's name and date of receipt _____

EXHIBIT C

DENTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
STUDENT/PARENT COMPLAINT FORM
NOTICE OF APPEAL — LEVEL THREE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OR BOARD'S DESIGNEE

This form must be filled out completely by a student or parent appealing a complaint decision from Level Two to Level Three in accordance with policies FNG(LEGAL) and (LOCAL).

1. Name (student's and parent's) _____

2. Campus: _____ Grade Classification: _____
3. Date of the Level Two conference you are appealing: _____
4. Name of Level Two hearing officer: _____
5. How has the previous decision failed to fulfill the remedy sought in your complaint?

6. If you will be represented in pursuing your complaint, please identify that individual and/or organization.
Name: _____ Phone No.: _____ Organization: _____
Address _____

7. The hearing officer will notify you, not your representative, of the hearing date.
8. Attach a COPY OF THE ORIGINAL COMPLAINT, NOTICE OF APPEAL TO LEVEL TWO, AND A COPY OF EACH COMPLAINT DECISION being appealed to this Notice of Appeal. DELIVER ORIGINAL AND COPY TO LEVEL TWO HEARING OFFICER AND HAVE ADMINISTRATOR ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF BOTH AND RETAIN COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS. DO NOT FAX.

Signature of Grievant:

For Administrator Completion Only

Administrator's name and date of receipt _____

ATTACHMENT 5

Denton ISD Human Resource Procedures

Denton ISD
061901

Denton ISD Head Start

Denton Independent School District Human Resources Procedures

Normas y procedimientos del Departamento de Recursos Humanos del Distrito Escolar Independiente de Denton

Recognizing that all Denton ISD Head Start employees are employed by Denton ISD, this Head Start Policy Council adopts the policies and procedures used and updated each year by the Denton ISD Human Resources Department.

Reconociendo que todo el personal del Denton ISD Head Start son empleados por Denton ISD, el Consejo de Políticas de Head Start adopta las normas y procedimientos usados y actualizados cada año o por el Departamento de Recursos Humanos de Denton ISD.

These include, but are not limited to:

Estas normas incluyen, pero no están limitadas a:

1. Hiring policies and procedures *Normas y procedimientos de empleo*
2. Employee performance evaluation policies and procedures *Normas y procedimientos para evaluar el desenvolvimiento del empleado*
3. Employee grievance policies and procedures *Normas y procedimientos en caso de quejas del empleado*
4. Employee termination policies and procedures *Normas y procedimientos de despido del empleado*

Denton ISD Head Start employees understand that each employee is required to abide by all Head Start and Denton ISD policies, regulations and directives.

Los empleados de Head Start de Denton ISD entienden que cada empleado debe conducirse dentro de las normas, reglamentos y directivas de Head Start y Denton ISD.