

# **West Orange-Cove CISD**

## **Student Handbook Student Code of Conduct**



**North Early Learning Center  
West Orange-Stark Elementary  
2016 - 2017**

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## **PREFACE**

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2016–17! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students.

The West Orange-Cove CISD Student Handbook is designed to provide basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. The handbook is divided into two sections:

**Section I—PARENTAL RIGHTS**—with information to assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook.

**Section II—OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**—organized alphabetically by topic, and, where possible, further divided by applicability to ages and/or grade levels, for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

Please be aware that the term “parent,” unless otherwise noted, is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, any person granted some other type of lawful control of the student, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Both students and parents should become familiar with the West Orange-Cove CISD Student Code of Conduct, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found on the district’s website at [www.woccisd.net](http://www.woccisd.net) and is available in hard copy upon request.

The Student Handbook is a general reference guide only and is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the Student Code of Conduct. Please be aware that it is not a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules that may be applicable in a given circumstance.

In case of conflict between board policy (including the Student Code of Conduct) and any provisions of the Student Handbook, the current provisions of board policy and the Student Code of Conduct are to be followed.

Also, please be aware that the Student Handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed board policy changes by attending board meetings. Changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters or other communications. The district reserves the right to modify provisions of the Student Handbook at any time, whenever it is deemed necessary. Notice of any revision or modification will be given as is reasonably practical under the circumstances.

Although the Student Handbook may refer to rights established through law or district policy, the Student Handbook does not create any additional rights for students and parents. It does not, nor is it intended to, create contractual or legal rights between any student or parent and the district.

If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact a teacher, the school counselor, or the principal.

Your child’s school will request that you provide contact information, such as your current phone number and e-mail address, in order for the school to communicate items specific to your child,

your child's school, or the district. If you consent to receive such information through a landline or wireless phone, please ensure that you notify the school's administration office immediately upon a change in or disconnection of your phone number. The district or school may generate automated or pre-recorded messages, text messages, or real-time phone or e-mail communication, so prompt notification of any change in contact information will be crucial to maintain timely communication with you. Standard messaging rates of your phone carrier may apply. If you have specific requests or needs related to how the district contacts you, please contact your child's principal. Please see **Safety** on page 64 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.

Also, please complete and return to your child's campus the following forms provided in the forms packet distributed at the beginning of the year or upon the student's enrollment:

1. Acknowledgment Form OR Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of Student Handbook;
2. Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information;
3. Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education, if you choose to restrict the release of information to these entities; and
4. Consent/Opt-Out Form.

[See **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 7 and **Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey, Analysis, or Evaluation** on page 10 for more information.]

Please note that references to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. The district's official policy manual is available for review in the district administration office, and an unofficial electronic copy is available at [www.woccisd.net](http://www.woccisd.net).

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Tony Dallas	Board Member
Demetrius Hunter	Board Member
John Gray Jr,	Board Member

## ADMINISTRATION

Rickie Harris, Superintendent	902 West Park	882-5500
Dr. Silvia Martinez, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction	902 West Park	882-5555
Anitrea Goodwin, Executive Director of Human Resources	902 West Park	882-5610
Dr. Wayne Guidry, Executive Director of Operations	902 West Park	882-5462
Executive Director of Finance	902 West Park	882-5444
Dr. Nina Leblanc, Executive Director of Student Services	902 West Park	882-5407
Greg Willis, Director of Maintenance	902 West Park	882-5550
Danielle Robinson, Director of Food/Nutrition	902 West Park	882-5447
Elvis Rushing, Director of Technology	902 West Park	882-5421
Manuel Vera , Director of Transportation	2020 Western Avenue	886-1855

## SCHOOLS

North Early Learning Center	801 Cordrey	882-5434
West Orange-Stark Elementary School	2605 Martin Luther King	882-5630
West Orange-Stark Middle School	1402 West Green Ave.	882-5520
West Orange-Stark High School	1400 Newton Street	882-5570
Academic Alternative Center	902 West Park	882-5424

**WEST ORANGE-COVE CISD**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**DISTRICT GOALS 2016 - 2017**

**District Goals:**

1. Promote a positive image.
2. Maintain a quality staff.
3. Provide opportunities to increase family involvement.
4. Upgrade technology throughout the system.
5. Enhance programs to meet individualized student needs.

**Achieve the academic indicators of the Texas Education Agency for educational excellence ensuring that curriculum is aligned with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills**

1. Achieve high level of student performance on STAAR assessments at all levels
2. Increase STAAR performance by closing the gap for identified subgroups as a part of No Child Left Behind federal legislation
3. Increase the number of students taking dual credit courses at Lamar State College-Orange
4. Implement a District-wide common reading list at grades 6-12
5. Implement an early high school experience for grades 7 and 8
6. Increase student participation in college entrance testing
7. Work to remove barriers to student achievement and psycho-social development that includes enlisting state agency services for every campus
8. Begin instruction in a world language in Grades K-5

**School Climate and Professional Development**

9. Maintain good order and discipline in the schools
10. Improve facilities for aesthetics, safety and function
11. Develop a Superintendent's Leadership Team that includes campus principals

**Accountability to Community**

12. Build a laser focus on instruction to benefit students and teachers
13. Better communicate excellence to our community, staff and students
14. Seek to bring honor, civility and a professional spirit to all we do at all levels including Board of Trustees, staff and students
15. Work to re-invigorate the band program at the high school and middle school levels to include increased participation, jazz band and excellent marching band
16. Seek private funding sources to assist students in participation of a senior year in college program

17. Increase the numbers of graduates going to post-secondary education: university, technical school and military
18. Focus on the development of character in our students; instill a system of personal ethics and a sense of obligatory service to our fellow man.

**WEST ORANGE-COVE CISD  
OUR SHARED VISION  
OUR STUDENTS:**

Empowering lives through excellence everyday!

## **SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS**

This section of the West Orange-Cove CISD Student Handbook includes information related to certain rights of parents as specified in state or federal law.

### **CONSENT, OPT-OUT, AND REFUSAL RIGHTS**

#### **Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation**

A district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without obtaining prior written parental consent unless the examination, test, or treatment is required under state or federal law regarding requirements for special education or by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for child abuse investigations and reports.

#### **Consent to Display a Student's Original Works and Personal Information**

Teachers may display students' work, which may include personally identifiable student information, in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement.

However, the district will seek parental consent before displaying students' artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, original videos or voice recordings, and other original works on the district's website, a website affiliated or sponsored by the district, such as a campus or classroom website, and in district publications, which may include printed materials, videos, or other methods of mass communication.

#### **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student When Not Otherwise Permitted by Law**

State law permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:

- When it is to be used for school safety;
- When it relates to classroom instruction or a cocurricular or extracurricular activity;
- When it relates to media coverage of the school; or
- When it relates to the promotion of student safety as provided by law for a student receiving special education services in certain settings.

The district will seek parental consent through a written request before making any other video or voice recording of your child not otherwise allowed by law.

[See **Video Cameras** on page 71 for more information, including a parent's right to request video and audio equipment be placed in certain special education settings.]

#### **Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment—spanking or paddling the student—may be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and policy FO(LOCAL) in the district's policy manual.

If you **do not want** corporal punishment to be administered to your child as a method of student discipline, please return the form included in the forms packet OR submit a written statement to

the campus principal stating this decision. A signed statement must be provided each year if you do not want corporal punishment to be administered to your child.

You may choose to revoke this prohibition at any time during the year by providing a signed statement to the campus principal. However, district personnel may choose to use discipline methods other than corporal punishment even if the parent requests that this method be used on the student.

Please note that if the district is made aware that a student is in temporary or permanent conservatorship (custody) of the state, through foster care, kinship care, or other arrangements, corporal punishment will not be administered, even when a signed statement prohibiting its use has not been submitted by the student's caregiver or caseworker.

Corporal punishment is not used at the North Early Learning Center.

### **Limiting Electronic Communications with Students by District Employees**

Teachers and other approved employees are permitted by the district to communicate with students through the use of electronic media within the scope of the individual's professional responsibilities. For example, a teacher may set up a social networking page for his or her class that has information related to class work, homework, and tests. As a parent, you are welcome to join or become a member of such a page.

An employee described above may also contact a student individually through electronic media to communicate about items such as homework or upcoming tests.

However, instant or text messages sent to an individual student are only allowed if a district employee with responsibility for an extracurricular activity needs to communicate with a student participating in the extracurricular activity. The employee is required to include his or her immediate supervisor and the student's parent as recipients on all text messages.

If you prefer that your child not receive any one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee or if you have questions related to the use of electronic media by district employees, please contact the campus principal.

### **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, permits the district to disclose appropriately designated "directory information" from a child's education records without written consent. "Directory information" is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. This "directory information" will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it. Examples include a student's photograph for publication in the school yearbook; a student's name and grade level for purposes of communicating class and teacher assignment; the name, weight, and height of an athlete for publication in a school athletic program; a list of student birthdays for generating schoolwide or classroom recognition; a student's name and photograph posted on a district-approved and -managed social media platform; and the names and grade levels of students submitted by the district to a local newspaper or other community publication to recognize the A/B honor roll for a specific grading period. Directory information will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of a student's directory information. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of your child's first day of instruction for this school year.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, permits the district to disclose appropriately designated "directory information" from a child's education records without written consent. "Directory information" is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. This "directory information" will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of a student's directory information. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of your child's first day of this school year. [See the "Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information" included in the forms packet.]

The District often needs to use student information for school-sponsored purposes. The District has identified the following as directory information: student name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, and date and place of birth, as well as major field of study, degrees, honors and awards received, dates of attendance, grade level, most recent educational institution attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of members of athletic teams. This information will not be released to the public without consent of the parent or eligible student. (Consent form accompanying this handbook).

Unless you object to the use of your child's information for these limited purposes, the school will not need to ask your permission each time the District wishes to use this information for school-sponsored purposes listed above.

### ***"Opting Out" of Participation in Other Types of Surveys or Screenings and the Disclosure of Personal Information***

As a parent, you have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for your child's participation in:

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing, selling, or otherwise disclosing that information. Note that this does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law. [See policies EF and FFAA.]

As a parent, you may inspect a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to your child.



## **REMOVING A STUDENT FROM INSTRUCTION OR EXCUSING A STUDENT FROM A REQUIRED COMPONENT OF INSTRUCTION**

### **Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence in Grades 3–12**

You may request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3–12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child be excused, (2) the district determines that your child has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the U.S. government extends diplomatic immunity. [See policy EHBK(LEGAL).]

### **Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags**

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows. [See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** on page 61 and policy EC(LEGAL).]

### **Religious or Moral Beliefs**

You may remove your child temporarily from the classroom if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate conflicts with your religious or moral beliefs. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. Further, your child must satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by state law.

### **Tutoring or Test Preparation**

Based on informal observations, evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests, or results from diagnostic assessments, a teacher may determine that a student is in need of additional targeted assistance in order for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills. The school will always attempt to provide tutoring and strategies for test-taking in ways that prevent removal from other instruction as much as possible. In accordance with state law and policy EC, the school will not remove a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the school days on which the class is offered, unless the student's parent consents to this removal.

The school may also offer tutorial services, which students whose grades are below 70 will be required to attend.

[Also refer to policies EC and EHBC, and contact your student's teacher with questions about any tutoring programs provided by the school.]

## **RIGHT OF ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS, CURRICULUM MATERIALS, AND DISTRICT RECORDS/POLICIES**

### **Instructional Materials**

As a parent, you have a right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered to your child.

You are also entitled to request that the school allow your child to take home any instructional materials used by the student. If the school determines that sufficient availability exists to grant the request, the student must return the materials at the beginning of the next school day if requested to do so by the child's teacher.

### **Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent**

A noncustodial parent may request in writing that he or she be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to his or her child's misconduct that may involve placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) or expulsion. [See policy FO(LEGAL) and the Student Code of Conduct.]

### **Participation in Federally Required, State-Mandated, and District Assessments**

You may request information regarding any state or district policy related to your child's participation in assessments required by federal law, state law, or the district.

### **Student Records**

#### ***Accessing Student Records***

You may review your child's student records. These records include:

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,
- Teacher and school counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns,
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child, and

- Teaching materials and tests used in your child’s classroom.

### ***Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records***

A federal law, known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to student education records. For purposes of student records, an “eligible” student is one who is age 18 or older or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education. These rights, as discussed in this section as well as at **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 7 are:

- The right to inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.
- The right to request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA.
- The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student’s records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5901

Both FERPA and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights of privacy. Before disclosing any personally identifiable information from a student’s records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information.

Virtually all information pertaining to student performance, including grades, test results, and disciplinary records, is considered confidential educational records.

Inspection and release of student records is primarily restricted to an eligible student or a student’s parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student’s education records.

Federal law requires that, as soon as a student reaches the age of 18, is emancipated by a court, or enrolls in a postsecondary institution, control of the records goes to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes and under limited circumstances when there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student’s education records, without written consent of the parent or eligible student, in the following circumstances:

- When district school officials have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records. School officials would include board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, school

counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or district medical staff); a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third-party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, school resource officer, or volunteer); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties. “Legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student’s case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official’s professional responsibility to the school and the student; or investigating or evaluating programs.

- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General’s office, the U.S. Attorney General’s office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, TEA, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture’s office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, school district/system, or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or which the student has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses information it has designated as directory information [see **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 7 for opportunities to prohibit this disclosure].

Release of personally identifiable information to any other person or agency—such as a prospective employer or for a scholarship application—will occur only with parental or student permission as appropriate.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The principal is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated.

A parent or eligible student who wishes to inspect the student’s records should submit a written request to the records custodian identifying the records he or she wishes to inspect. Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

A parent or eligible student who provides a written request and pays copying costs of ten cents per page may obtain copies. If circumstances prevent inspection during regular school hours and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the

records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records. The address of the superintendent's office is 902 West Park St. Orange, Texas 77630. The address(es) of the principals' offices are:

North Early Learning Center 801 Cordrey, Orange, TX 77630

West Orange-Stark Elementary 2605 Martin Luther King, Orange, TX 77630

West Orange-Stark Middle 1402 West Green Ave., Orange, TX 77630

West Orange-Stark High School 1400 Newton Street, Orange, TX 77630

Academic Alternative Center 902 West Park, Orange, TX 77630

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction or amendment if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the appropriate records custodian. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record.

Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course or on an examination is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy. [See FINALITY OF GRADES at FNG(LEGAL), **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 63, and **Complaints and Concerns** on page 25 for an overview of the process.]

The district's policy regarding student records found at policy FL is available from the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's website at [www.woccisd.net](http://www.woccisd.net).

The parent's or eligible student's right of access to and copies of student records do not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records—such as a teacher's personal notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher—do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

## **Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications**

You may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and whether the teacher is currently teaching in the field of discipline of his or her certification. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

## STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

### Children of Military Families

Children of military families will be provided flexibility regarding certain district requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements.
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement.
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.
- Graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment of at least four months will be excused by the district. The district will permit no more than five excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment.

Additional information may be found at <http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=7995>.

### Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments

#### *Multiple Birth Siblings*

As a parent, if your children are multiple birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets, etc.) assigned to the same grade and campus, you may request that they be placed either in the same classroom or in separate classrooms. Your written request must be submitted no later than the 14th day after the enrollment of your children. [See policy FDB(LEGAL).]

#### *Safety Transfers/Assignments*

As a parent, you may:

- Request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the district to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 37.0832. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the principal for information.
- Consult with district administrators if your child has been determined by the district to have engaged in bullying and the board decides to transfer your child to another classroom or campus. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. [See **Bullying** on page 76 policy FDB, and policy FFI.]
- Request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See policy FDE.]

- Request the transfer of your child to a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether the assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. If the victim does not wish to transfer, the district will transfer the assailant in accordance with policy FDE.

### **Service/Assistance Animal Use by Students**

A parent of a student who uses a service/assistance animal because of the student’s disability must submit a request in writing to the principal at least ten district business days before bringing the service/assistance animal on campus.

### **Students Who Are Homeless**

Children who are homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain district provisions, including:

- Proof of residency requirements;
- Immunization requirements;
- Educational program placement, if the student is unable to provide previous academic records, or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness;
- Credit-by-examination opportunities;
- The award of partial credit (awarding credit proportionately when a student passes only one semester of a two-semester course);
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities; and
- Graduation requirements.

If a student in grade 11 or 12 is homeless and transfers to another school district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request to receive a diploma from the previous district if he or she meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

Federal law also allows a homeless student to remain enrolled in what is called the “school of origin” or to enroll in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing.

[See also **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration** on page 28 and **Homeless Students** on page 15 for more information.]

### **Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services**

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district’s overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The

implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within the timeline prescribed by law once the district receives written consent. The district must give a copy of the evaluation report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with prior written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights, if they disagree with the district. The district is required to give parents the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*. Additional information regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is available from the school district in a companion document, *A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*. Both documents may also be found at <http://framework.esc18.net/display/Webforms/LandingPage.aspx>.

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

- Texas Project First, at <http://www.texasprojectfirst.org>
- Partners Resource Network, at <http://www.partnerstx.org>

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services is the Executive Director for Student Services at 882-5407.

### **Students Who Receive Special Education Services with Other School-Aged Children in the Home**

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that any other student residing in the household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus. However, the district is not required to provide transportation to the other children in the household. The parent or guardian should speak with the principal of the school regarding transportation needs prior to requesting a transfer for any other children in the home. [See policy FDB(LOCAL).]

### **Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English**

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English. If the student qualifies for these extra services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.



## **Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected Under Section 504**

A child determined to have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law, and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services, may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine if the child is in need of services and supports under Section 504 to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as this is defined in federal law.

The designated person to contact regarding a referral for evaluation applicable to Section 504 is the Executive Director of Student services at 882-5407.

[Also see policy FB.]

## **SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

Topics in this section of the Student Handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Where possible, the topics are also organized to alert you to the applicability of each topic based on a student's age or grade level. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact the principal.

### **ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE**

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day's learning on the previous day's, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Two state laws—one dealing with the required presence of school-aged children in school, e.g., compulsory attendance, the other with how a child's attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or course credit—are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below.

#### **Compulsory Attendance**

##### ***Between Ages 6 and 19***

State law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 19 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

State law requires attendance in an accelerated reading instruction program when kindergarten, first grade, or second grade students are assigned to such a program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program as a result of a diagnostic reading instrument.

A student will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program, which may occur before or after school or during the summer, if the student does not meet the passing standards on the state assessment for his or her grade level and/or applicable subject area.

##### ***Prekindergarten and Kindergarten***

Students enrolled in prekindergarten or kindergarten are required to attend school and are subject to the compulsory attendance requirements as long as they remain enrolled.

#### **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance**

##### ***All Grade Levels***

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the student makes up all work. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining U.S. citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders, if the student comes to school or returns to school on the same day as the appointment. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student’s arrival or return to campus; and
- For students in the conservatorship (custody) of the state,
  - An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
  - Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student’s participation in the activity outside of school hours.

As listed in Section I at **Children of Military Families**, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments. Please see page 14 for that section.

## **Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance**

### ***All Grade Levels***

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction, termed “accelerated instruction” by the state; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

### ***Between Ages 6 and 19***

When a student between ages 6 and 19 incurs unexcused absences for three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period, the school will send a notice to the student’s parent, as required by law, to remind the parent that it is the parent’s duty to monitor his or her child’s attendance and to require the student to come to school. The notice will also inform the parent that the district will initiate truancy prevention measures and request a conference between school administrators and the parent. These measures will include a behavior improvement plan, school-based community service, or referrals to either in-school or out-of-school counseling or other social services. Any other measures considered appropriate by the district will also be initiated.

If you have questions about your student and the effect of his or her absences from school, please contact the campus administrator.

A court of law may also impose penalties against a student’s parent if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student is absent without excuse from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year.

If a student ages 12–18 incurs unexcused absences on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, the district, in most circumstances, will refer the student to truancy court.

[See policy FEA(LEGAL).]

### **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (Kindergarten–Grade 12)**

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student in kindergarten–grade 12 must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit or a final grade for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the approval of the judge presiding over the case will also be required before the student receives credit or a final grade for the class.

If a student attends less than 75 percent of the days a class is offered or has not completed the plan approved by the principal, then the student will be referred to the attendance review committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences. [See policy FEC.]

All absences, whether excused or unexcused, must be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

- If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed above at **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance** will be considered extenuating circumstances for purposes of attendance for credit or the award of a final grade.
- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district.
- In reaching a decision about a student’s absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will review absences incurred based on the student’s participation in board-approved extracurricular activities. These absences will be considered by the attendance committee as extenuating circumstances in accordance with the absences allowed under FM(LOCAL) if the student made up the work missed in each class.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student’s absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student’s parent could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.

- The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit or a final grade.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the board by following policy FNG(LOCAL).

The actual number of days a student must be in attendance in order to receive credit or a final grade will depend on whether the class is for a full semester or for a full year.

### **Official Attendance-Taking Time (All Grade Levels)**

The district must submit attendance of its students to the TEA reflecting attendance at a specific time each day.

Official attendance is taken every day at 10 a.m.

A student absent for any portion of the day, including at the official attendance-taking time, should follow the procedures below to provide documentation of the absence.

### **Documentation After an Absence (All Grade Levels)**

When a student is absent from school, the student—upon arrival or return to school—must bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is age 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law. A phone call from the parent may be accepted, but the district reserves the right to require a written note.

The campus will document in its attendance records for the student whether the absence is considered by the district to be excused or unexcused. Please note that, unless the absence is for a statutorily allowed reason under compulsory attendance laws, the district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence.

### **Doctor's Note After an Absence for Illness (All Grade Levels)**

Within 3 days of returning to school, a student absent for more than 5 consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. Otherwise, the student's absence may be considered unexcused and, if so, would be considered to be in violation of compulsory attendance laws.

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's absence from school in order to determine whether the absence or absences will be excused or unexcused.

This written note should contain the following information:

- a. The student's first and last name
- b. The reason for the student's absence
- c. The date(s) of this absence(s)
- d. The parent's full signature and telephone number

Failure to bring a written note from the student's parent or guardian will cause the absence to be marked unexcused until a note is received by the attendance clerk. No student will be allowed to leave class for an admission slip. It is the responsibility of the student to clear all unexcused absences, as soon as possible.

[See policy FEC(LOCAL).]

## **ACCOUNTABILITY UNDER STATE AND FEDERAL LAW (All Grade Levels)**

West Orange-Cove and each of its campuses are held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of the accountability requirements is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, which include:

- The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the district, compiled by TEA, the state agency that oversees public education, based on academic factors and ratings;
- A School Report Card (SRC) for each campus in the district compiled by TEA based on academic factors and ratings;
- The district's financial management report, which will include the financial accountability rating assigned to the district by TEA;
- The performance ratings of the district's evaluation of community and student engagement using the indicators required by law; and
- Information compiled by TEA for the submission of a federal report card that is required by federal law.

Information about all of these can be found on the district's website at [www.woccisd.net](http://www.woccisd.net).

Hard copies of any reports are available upon request to the district's administration office.

TEA also maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at <http://www.texaschoolaccountabilitydashboard.org> and <http://www.tea.texas.gov>.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TO AND FROM SCHOOL**

### **North Early Learning:**

Head Start/PreK/PPCD 7:30 am – 2:00 pm

Students should enter the building no earlier than 7:00 each morning.

Bus students are loaded and unloaded on the West Side of the building. Car riders are dropped off in the front of the building with an adult present to help them into the building.

Instruction begins at 7:30. Car riders will be unloaded from 7:00 until 7:25. After 7:25, the parent/guardian will be required to sign the student in the front office, receive a visitor pass and walk the student to class. Students are considered tardy after 7:30 and must be accompanied by the parent or guardian to check in with the front office. After the parent or guardian receives an admission slip, they will then walk the student to class or the cafeteria for breakfast. If students

have finished breakfast, they will be required to sit with their child while they eat breakfast prior to taking them to class.

## **WOS Elementary**

For the safety of students kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students should enter the building no earlier than 6:50 am each morning. Instruction begins at 7:30 am. Breakfast is served from 6:50 – 7:25 am. A student is considered tardy after 7:30 am. A student will receive an unexcused absence if they arrive to school after 8:00 am and/or leaves school before 2:15 pm. A valid parent/doctor's note is required to excuse this absence.

K – 5 7:30 am – 2:45 pm

Bus students are loaded and unloaded on the North side of the campus. Car riders and walkers are to be dropped off and picked up on the south side of campus. When dropping off and/or picking up student(s): parents must remain in their vehicles, vehicles must remain in line, not speed in the parking lot, and students will walk to and from their cars.

## **AWARDS AND HONORS (Elementary)**

Superintendent's Honor Roll (All A's)

Principal's Honor Roll (A's and 2 B's)

Honor Roll (Any combination of A's or B's)

## **BULLYING (All Grade Levels)**

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic methods, or physical conduct against another student on school property, at a school-sponsored or -related activity, or in a district operated vehicle, and the behavior:

- Results in harm to the student or the student's property;
- Places a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or of damage to the student's property; or
- Is so severe, persistent, and pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

This conduct is considered bullying if it exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator(s) and the student victim and if it interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, or ostracism. In some cases, bullying can occur through electronic methods, called “cyberbullying.”

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed bullying of another student, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. The district will also contact the parents of the victim and of the student who was found to have engaged in the bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to these individuals, as well as to any students who have been identified as witnesses to the bullying.

Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited.

Upon the recommendation of the administration, the board may, in response to an identified case of bullying, decide to transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student’s parent, the student may also be transferred to another campus in the district. The parent of a student who has been determined by the district to be a victim of bullying may request that his or her child be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district. [Also see **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 14

A copy of the district’s policy is available in the principal’s office, superintendent’s office, and on the district’s website, and is included at the end of this handbook in the form of an appendix. Procedures related to reporting allegations of bullying may also be found on the district’s website.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation may appeal through policy FNG(LOCAL).

[Also see **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 14, **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 29, **Hazing** on page 50, policy FFI, and the district improvement plan, a copy of which can be viewed in the campus office.]

## **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN (All Grade Levels)**

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at [www.woccisd.net](http://www.woccisd.net). As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child’s mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).



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

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

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see [http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention\\_and\\_Early\\_Intervention/Programs\\_Available\\_In\\_Your\\_County/default.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp).

The following websites might help you become more aware of child abuse and neglect:

- <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/whatiscan.pdf>
- <http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/child-abuse.html>
- <http://taasa.org/resources-2/>
- <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/cvs/what-we-can-do-about-child-abuse-1>
- <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/cvs/what-we-can-do-about-child-abuse-2>

Reports of abuse or neglect may be made to:

The CPS division of the TDFPS (1-800-252-5400 or on the web at <http://www.txabusehotline.org>).

## **COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS (All Grade Levels)**

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed informally by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the board has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG(LOCAL) in the district's policy manual. A copy of this policy may be obtained in the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's website at [www.woccisd.net](http://www.woccisd.net).

Should a parent or student feel a need to file a formal complaint, the parent or student should file a district complaint form within the timelines established in policy FNG(LOCAL). In general, the student or parent should submit the written complaint form to the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

## **CONDUCT (All Grade Levels)**

### **Applicability of School Rules**

As required by law, the board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior—both on and off campus as well as on district vehicles—and consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules. During any periods of instruction during the summer months, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

### **Campus Behavior Coordinator**

By law, each campus has a campus behavior coordinator to apply discipline management techniques and administer consequences for certain student misconduct, as well as provide a point of contact for student misconduct. Please see the campus principal for additional information.

### **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment—spanking or paddling the student—may be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and policy FO (LOCAL) in the District’s policy manual.

If you do not want corporal punishment to be administered to your child as a method of student discipline a signed statement must be provided each year.

You may choose to revoke this request at any time during the year by providing a signed statement to the campus principal. However, District personnel may choose to use discipline methods other than corporal punishment even if the parent requests that this method be used on the student.

Corporal punishment **is not** used at the North Early Learning Center.

## **Disruptions of School Operations**

Disruptions of school operations are not tolerated and may constitute a misdemeanor offense. As identified by law, disruptions include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.
- Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district.
- Students may not bring to school any item that would distract from instruction. Such items include but are not limited to toys, sports equipment, sharp instruments, games, cameras, and audio equipment.
- Students may not display or possess accessories not generally considered appropriate including cellphone, tablets, cases, etc. when the principal or designee determines that the accessory is inappropriate.
- No buying, selling, trading, or borrowing will be permitted. No collections, sales, or contributions by students or non-school groups may be conducted during school hours unless approved by the Superintendent.
- Distraction from instruction also includes the misuse or inappropriate use of items normally acceptable such as playing with jewelry and wearing hats or sunglasses indoors. Objects that cause distraction will be taken up and only returned to the parent or guardian.

## **ISS/Suspension**

In school suspension or out of school suspension may also be assigned for more serious infractions, or for persistent misbehavior. If a student is assigned either one of these consequences, the Campus Behavior Coordinator will be in contact with the parent on the day that the consequence is assigned to the student.

## **Social Events**

School rules apply to all school social events. Guests attending these events are expected to observe the same rules as students, and a student inviting a guest will share responsibility for the conduct of his or her guest.

A student attending a social event will be asked to sign out when leaving before the end of the event; anyone leaving before the official end of the event will not be readmitted.

Please contact the campus principal if you are interested in serving as a chaperone for any school social events.

## **COUNSELING**

### **Academic Counseling**

#### ***Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels***

The school counselor is available to students and parents to talk about the importance of postsecondary education and how best to plan for postsecondary education, including appropriate courses to consider and financial aid availability and requirements.

In either grade 7 or 8, each student will receive instruction related to how the student can best prepare for high school, college, and a career.

#### **Personal Counseling (All Grade Levels)**

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, emotional or mental health issues, or substance abuse. A student who wishes to meet with the school counselor should notify his/her teacher or school counselor. As a parent, if you are concerned about your child's mental or emotional health, please speak with the school counselor for a list of resources that may be of assistance.

[Also see **Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention** on page 69, and **Suicide Awareness** on page 69.]

#### **CREDIT BY EXAMINATION—If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject (All Grade Levels)**

A student who has previously taken a course or subject—but did not receive credit or a final grade for it—may, in circumstances determined by the principal or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam approved by the district's board of trustees on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject. Prior instruction may include, for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a nonaccredited school. The opportunity to take an examination to earn credit for a course or to be awarded a final grade in a subject after the student has had prior instruction is sometimes referred to as "credit recovery."

The school counselor or principal would determine if the student could take an exam for this purpose. If approval is granted, the student must score at least 70 on the exam to receive credit for the course or subject.

The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an exam.

[For further information, see the school counselor and policy EHDB(LOCAL).]

### **Students in Grades 1–5**

A student in elementary school will be eligible to accelerate to the next grade level if the student scores at least 80 on each exam in the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, a district administrator recommends that the student be accelerated, and the student's parent gives written approval of the grade advancement.

## **DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION (All Grade Levels)**

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and that their welfare is best served when they are free from this prohibited conduct while attending school. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect, to avoid behaviors known to be offensive, and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. District employees are expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office or on the district's website, [www.woccisd.net](http://www.woccisd.net). [See policy FFH.]

### **Dating Violence**

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. Dating violence also occurs when a person commits these acts against a person in a marriage or dating relationship with the individual who is or was once in a marriage or dating relationship with the person committing the offense. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to, physical or sexual assaults; name-calling; put-downs; threats to hurt the student, the student's family members, or members of the student's household; destroying property belonging to the student; threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship; threats to harm a student's current dating partner; attempts to isolate the student from friends and family; stalking; or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

## **Discrimination**

Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law that negatively affects the student.

## **Harassment**

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to, offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening, intimidating, or humiliating conduct; offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

In addition to dating violence as described above, two other types of prohibited harassment are described below.

## **Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment**

Sexual harassment and gender-based harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student are prohibited.

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but not be limited to, touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature, such as comforting a child with a hug or taking the child's hand. However, romantic and other inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Gender-based harassment includes harassment based on a student's gender, expression by the student of stereotypical characteristics associated with the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender.

Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include, but not be limited to, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

## **Retaliation**

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is prohibited. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment is also prohibited. A person who makes a

false claim or offers false statements or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

### **Reporting Procedures**

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced dating violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent. [See policy FFH(LOCAL) and (EXHIBIT) for other appropriate district officials to whom to make a report.]

Upon receiving a report of prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by that policy. If not, the district will refer to policy FFI to determine if the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying, as defined by law and that policy. If the alleged prohibited conduct, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct and would also be considered bullying as defined by law and policy FFI, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

The district will promptly notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district. In the event alleged prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parents of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy FFH.

### **Investigation of Report**

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law. Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated.

If a law enforcement or other regulatory agency notifies the district that it is investigating the matter and requests that the district delay its investigation, the district will resume the investigation at the conclusion of the agency's investigation.

During the course of an investigation and when appropriate, the district will take interim action to address the alleged prohibited conduct.

If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary action, and, in some cases, corrective action, will be taken to address the conduct. The district may take disciplinary and corrective action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint was not unlawful.

All involved parties will be notified of the outcome of the district investigation within the parameters and limits allowed under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL).

All involved parties will be notified of the outcome of the district investigation within the parameters and limits allowed under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL).

## **DISCRIMINATION**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on pages 29.]

## **DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE, PUBLISHED MATERIALS, OR OTHER DOCUMENTS (All Grade Levels)**

### **School Materials**

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with the prior approval of the principal, sponsor, or teacher. Such items may include school posters, brochures, flyers, etc.

The school newspaper and the yearbook are available to students.

All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal.

### **Nonschool Materials**

#### ***From Students***

Students must obtain prior approval from the principal before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing more than 10 copies of written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any nonschool material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. The decision regarding approval will be made within two school days.

The principal has designated the location for approved nonschool materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection by students. [See policy FNAA.]

A student may appeal a decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). Any student who sells, posts, circulates, or distributes nonschool material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

#### ***From Others***

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by policy GKDA. To be considered for distribution, any nonschool material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the Superintendent for prior review. The Superintendent will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received.



The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies at DGBA or GF.]

Prior review will not be required for:

- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.
- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours in accordance with policy GKD(LOCAL) or a noncurriculum-related student group meeting held in accordance with FNAB(LOCAL).
- Distribution for electioneering purposes during the time a school facility is being used as a polling place, in accordance with state law.

All nonschool materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from district property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

## **DRESS AND GROOMING (All Grade Levels)**

The West Orange-Cove CISD has a dress code for students in grades PK-8. The dress code gives the school a positive and distinctive identity and reflects the values of the schools and community. All students are required to wear the specified dress each day except for those days designated by school administration.

Purpose: The West Orange-Cove CISD believes the adoption of this dress standard will improve the educational environment for our students. A dress code will help identify students at West Orange-Cove CISD students in situations involving safety and security. The District believes this code will instill pride, and help foster unity among the students, thereby reducing discipline problems and improving opportunities for educational endeavors.

### **Shirts, Blouses, Turtlenecks (mock or regular)**

- All shirts, blouses, and turtlenecks must be tucked in at all times and must stay tucked in when arms are raised.
- Logos optional (1 ½ x 1 ½ inches).
- PK-5 any school related logo.
- Spirit shirts, with logos larger than 1 ½ x 1 ½ may be worn on designated school spirit days.
- All shirts and blouses must be buttoned from the first button past the collar.
- No stripes, checks or other designs on shirts, blouses and turtlenecks.
- Sleeveless shirts/blouses or shirts/blouses with cap sleeves are not allowed.
- Thermal type shirts are not allowed.
- No zippered shirts or blouses.

### **Slacks, Pants, Shorts**

- Slacks and pants must be worn at the waist, and be properly hemmed or cuffed.
- Belts optional for PK as long as the pants fit tightly in the waist.
- Logos or labels on slacks and pants must be no larger than 1 inch by 1 inch.

- No sweatpants, wind pants, pants with drawstrings, warm-ups or coveralls.
- Corduroy and jean (denim) material is not allowed. Khaki colored denim is not acceptable.
- Baggy style legged slacks or pants are not allowed.
- Shorts length must be no more than 3 inches above the top of the knee-cap (in both front and back).
- Soccer or boxer style shorts are not allowed except in PE/Athletics.
- No carpenter style pants.

### **Skirts, Skorts**

Skirts and skorts length must be no more than 3 inches above the top of the knee-cap (in both front and back).

Logos (name brand) or labels on skirts or skorts must be no larger than 1 inch by 1 inch.

Skirts may have a kick-pleat (no more than 3 inches above the top of the knee), but not a slit.

### **Jumpers**

- Jumpers must be no more than 3 inches above the top of the knee-cap (in both front and back).
- Dress code shirt, blouse, or turtleneck (mock or regular) must be worn under the jumper at all times.
- Kick pleats are allowed (no more than 3 inches above the top of the knee); slits are not allowed.
- Uniform style dresses (navy, khaki).

### **Outer-wear: Sweatshirts, Sweaters**

- Sweatshirts and sweaters must be appropriately sized in the shoulders, sleeves, and length; must be worn over uniform shirt, blouse or turtleneck (mock or regular) and must be in school colors.
- Logos optional (1 ½ x 1 ½ inches).
- Any school related logo.
- Sleeveless or capped sleeve sweatshirts are not allowed.
- Hoods do not count as collars.

### **Other Guidelines**

- Leather, suede, vinyl, corduroy, and denim materials are not allowed except for coats, jackets, and windbreakers.
- Coats may be worn in accordance with appropriate weather conditions. Wearing coats in the classroom will be at the discretion of the teacher/principal.

- Spandex, nylon, or stretch-type materials are not allowed.
- Clothing can be no more than one size larger than the student's measurements nor may the garment be too tight.
- Caps, hats, and head coverings inside the building are not allowed.
- Overall pants, overall shorts, and overall jumpers are not allowed.
- Wind shorts/pants, athletic shorts/pants, sweat shorts/pants are not allowed except in PE/Athletics.
- All clothing must be solid colored.
- Students must comply with District standards for grooming and accessories as outlined in the Alternate/Interim Student Dress Code.
- Clothing items cannot be worn in any way that reflects gang affiliation, conceals contraband, or creates a distraction.
- All clothing must be properly hemmed.
- No designs cut in hair. Part(s) are permitted

The District standard for grooming and appearance for hair, general appearance of clothing, jewelry and other accessories are addressed in the Alternative/Interim Student Dress Code in the Student Handbook.

Campus administrators will have discretion in all matters concerning interpretation of appropriate dress determined in the board approved dress code.

## **ALTERNATIVE/INTERIM STUDENT DRESS CODE**

This policy is only for new students to the District and students with school board approved opt-out requests. New students moving into the District have 7 calendar days to comply with the dress policy. Students in the process of opt-out appeal (see FNCA (Local) for process and timelines) must comply with alternative/interim dress code guidelines. All other students must be in compliance with the student dress policy guidelines.

Immodest or distracting dress or appearance of any type is not permitted. This is not confined to clothing, but also includes fads in hairstyles, make-up, or other attractions, but would in the opinion of the principal tend to promote student disruption, jeopardize students' conduct or otherwise interfere with the educational process. (Clothing containing offensive slogans, symbols, and other suggestive or controversial designs are not allowed.)

### **Shirts, Blouses, and Tops**

- These articles must be collared and are to be buttoned from the first button below the collar downward.
- These articles are to be tucked in.
- Length of all tops should be long enough to tuck in and stay in even when the arms are raised.

- All tops (etc.) should cover the back, shoulders, and stomach. No skin is to show at the waist at any time.
- Unhemmed or sleeveless tops are not acceptable for boys and girls.
- No t-shirts allowed. (Exception spirit days, college days, etc.)

### **Pants, Shorts, Skorts, Skirts and Jumpers**

- Slacks and trousers are to be full length and worn at the waist. Skirts and skorts also must be worn at the waist.
- Shorts for boys and girls must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee.
- Athletic and soccer type shorts (with or without a logo) are not allowed. Only walking shorts are permissible with a belt (at specified grade levels).
- Spandex, wind shorts, wind pants, or warm-ups are not permissible.
- Skirts, skorts, shorts, jumpers and similar attire must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee in front and back.
- Pants and shorts must be worn with a belt. (Belts are optional PK-5 grade provided the pants/shorts fit tight in the waist.)

### **Head and Footwear**

- Students shall not wear hats, caps, or other head coverings inside the building. Exceptions may be made upon written request to the principal based on religious or health reasons.
- Students must wear appropriate shoes at all times.
- No backless shoes will be allowed.

### **General Appearance of All Clothing (District Standard for Grooming and Appearance)**

- Frayed, cut off, or tattered clothing is not allowed.
- Student attire should be modest and appropriate in length, fit and design.
- Sufficient underclothing is required.
- Clinging or transparent clothing is unacceptable.
- Articles sporting messages that are obscene or suggestive or that pertain to alcohol, narcotics, tobacco, or other controlled substances shall not be worn to school.
- Shirts and blouses must be buttoned appropriately.
- Clothing may be NO more than one size larger than the student's measurements.

### **Jewelry and Other Accessories (District Standard for Grooming and Appearance)**

- Make-up and artificial nails will not be allowed.

- Excessive jewelry and jewelry causing a distraction is not allowed.
- All tattoos must be covered and hidden from view.
- Jewelry used in conjunction with body piercing (such as nose rings or tongue studs) is prohibited.
- Students are not to wear sunshades or sunglasses to school unless they provide a note from their physician stating the need to do so.

## **Dress Code Violations**

The principal/assistant principal reserves the right to question the dress of any student, and if either sees fit, to keep a student out of class until he/she is appropriately dressed.

At the first violation of the dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to call parents to bring proper clothing. Any further violation of the dress code will result in automatic disciplinary assignment.

## **Extra Curricular Dress Code**

With respect to any extracurricular activities, the principal, in conjunction with the sponsor, coach or other person in charge of such activity, may regulate the dress and grooming of participating students if the principal, sponsor, or coach reasonably believes that the student's dress or grooming:

Creates a hazard to the student's own safety or to the safety of others, or

Will prevent, interfere with, or adversely affect the purpose, direction, or effort required for activity to achieve its goals.

Such regulation may include denying the student permission to participate in the extracurricular activity or to go on extracurricular trips.

Compliance: If a non-exempt student attends school in violation of the dress policy, the following disciplinary steps will be taken:

- The student will be placed immediately in isolation on the campus, either until the parent can bring appropriate clothing or for the entire day, whichever comes first.
- The student may be sent to ISS for a minimum of 3 days for the second infraction.
- If the student still refuses to comply, the student will remain in ISS for a maximum of two weeks.

## **Disciplinary action will not be taken against a student:**

During the process of appeal.

Wearing the uniform of a nationally recognized organization (such as boys or girls scouting) on a regular meeting day (the 3" rule is applicable to the length of these uniforms as well as the standard school uniform such as cheerleader or drill team) when approved by the campus administrator.

## Non-Dress Code Days

- Administrator(s) shall have authority to waive the wearing of the school dress for certain days, parts of days, special events, or special activities. Students who choose not to participate in the special days are expected to abide by the dress code.
- Parents needing special assistance with the standardized dress code will meet with the building principal. Special note—having a child on the free-reduced lunch program does not automatically qualify for assistance.

Final authority: Administrators will have complete and final judgment on all matters concerning interpretation of the dress code. Matters concerning appearance and dress not specifically covered above shall be within the discretion of the administrator.

### Prekindergarten through Fifth Grade

STUDENT	ITEM	COLOR	NOT ALLOWED (BOYS & GIRLS)
Boys & Girls:	Pants: Docker Style	Navy, Khaki	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sweatpants, wind pants, pants with drawstrings, warm-ups or coveralls</li> <li>▪ Corduroy and jean (denim)</li> <li>▪ Khaki colored denim</li> <li>▪ Baggy style legged slacks or pants</li> <li>▪ Shorts length not more than 3 inches above the top of the knee cap</li> <li>▪ Soccer or boxer style shorts except in PE</li> <li>▪ Cargo or carpenter style pants</li> </ul>
	Shorts: Docker Style	Navy, Khaki	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Caps, hats, and head coverings inside the building</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Designs cut in hair</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Backless shoes</li> </ul>
	Outwear: Jackets and coats*		
Boys:	Shirts: Polo Oxford (Button-down collar) Turtleneck (mock or regular)	Navy, White, Gray, Light Blue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stripes, checks or other designs on shirts, blouses, and turtlenecks.</li> <li>▪ Sleeveless shirts/blouses or shirts/blouses with caps sleeves</li> <li>▪ Thermal type shirts</li> <li>▪ Zippered shirts or blouses</li> <li>▪ T-shirts</li> </ul>
Girls:	Shirts/Blouses: Polo Oxford (Button-down collar) Round Collar (no trim on collar) Turtleneck (mock or regular)	Navy, White, Gray, Light Blue	
	Skirts: Any style except straight	Navy, Khaki	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Skirts and skorts length not more than 3 inches above the top of the knee cap</li> <li>▪ Slit in skirt</li> </ul>
	Skorts: Any style	Navy, Khaki	
	<b>Uniform</b> style dresses:	Navy, Khaki	

	Jumpers: V-Neck, round neck, square neck	Navy, Khaki	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Jumper length not more than 3 inches above the top of the knee cap</li> <li>▪ Slit in jumper</li> </ul>
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\*Jackets/coats may be worn in accordance with appropriate weather conditions. Wearing jackets in the classroom will be at the discretion of the teacher/principal.

The principal/assistant principal reserves the right to question the dress of any student and if the administrator concludes the attire is inappropriate the administrator may keep the student out of class until he or she is appropriately dressed. At the first violation of the dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to call parents to bring proper clothing. Any further violations of the dress code will result in automatic disciplinary assignments.

If the principal determines that a student’s grooming or clothing violates the school’s dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school. If not corrected, the student may be assigned to in-school suspension for the remainder of the day, until the problem is corrected, or until a parent or designee brings an acceptable change of clothing to the school. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

If the principal determines that a student’s grooming or clothing violates the school’s dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school. If not corrected, the student may be assigned to in-school suspension for the remainder of the day, until the problem is corrected, or until a parent or designee brings an acceptable change of clothing to the school. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES (All Grade Levels)**

**Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones**

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess personal mobile telephones; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. A student must have approval to possess other telecommunications devices such as netbooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable computers.

The use of mobile telephones or any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event.

If a student uses a telecommunications device without authorization during the school day, the device will be confiscated. The student/parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal’s office for a fee of \$15.

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student or the student's parents will be disposed of after the notice required by law. [See policy FNCE.]

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See **Searches** on page 66 and policy FNF.]

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The district is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen telecommunications devices.

## **West Orange-Cove**

### **Bring Your Own Device Pilot - Student Policy**

#### **Electronic Devices**

Use of certain student owned electronic devices will be permitted in designated West Orange-Cove Schools as we conduct a pilot program during the current school year. Selected classes/subjects will permit students to bring their approved electronic device into the classroom for learning purposes. Utilization of any electronic device in this pilot program is ALWAYS at the discretion of the classroom instructor. Electronic devices are classified as **disruptive**, **non-disruptive**, and **mobile phone** devices. Permissibility of each type of electronic device is described as follows:

#### **Disruptive Electronic Devices**

1. Recording devices, radios, pagers, laser pointers, and other electronic devices are deemed distracting to the educational environment. As such, these devices **are not permitted** in any area of a West Orange-Cove campus, including the courtyard.
  - Use of cameras on non-disruptive devices and cell phones, to take still pictures or video, **is not permitted** on school grounds, including transportation, unless under the direction and supervision of the classroom teacher.
2. The misuse of permissible electronic devices in a manner distracting to other students or school
  - a) Use of any electronic device in a classroom or other area if not authorized by school personnel.
  - b) Violation of the West Orange-Cove's Acceptable Use Policy.
  - c) Listening to video or audio without headphones or earbuds.
  - d) Use of headphones/earbuds at a volume level where others can hear.

#### **Non-disruptive Devices**

1. Non-disruptive devices are defined as electronic devices primarily used for educational purposes.
2. The categories of non-disrupted devices are (a) laptops, (b) netbooks, (c) tablets, (d) eReaders, (e) audio players (MP3 players) and (f) I-Pads.
3. These devices may be used:



- a) during classroom instruction and in the computer lab as permitted and directed by school personnel.
- b) in study hall, privilege period, and lunch as permitted and directed by school personnel.

### **Mobile Phones**

1. Use of mobile phones for any voice or text communication **is not permitted** during school hours.
2. Mobile phones may be used as directed by school personnel. Otherwise, mobile phones **must** be turned off or muted during school hours.
3. Mobile phones may possess advanced functions including Internet access, eReader, and video/audio functions. Use of these functions during classroom instruction is at the discretion of school personnel.

### **Consequences for inappropriate use of electronic devices**

Violation of the appropriate use of electronic devices, as described above, (1) may result in detentions, Saturday detention, In School Suspension; and (2) student may be required to turn the device over to school personnel and the student and/or parent may pick up the device from the Attendance Office at the end of the school day.

### **Internet Connection**

Wireless Internet connection will be provided by West Orange-Cove for students to connect their devices to the Internet. Students must have a completed Acceptable Use Policy signed and on file at their campus. Additionally, students may connect to the Internet using their Internet provider. In this case, the student and family will be responsible for any Internet connection expense.

### **Lost or Damaged Device**

West Orange-Cove campuses assume no responsibility for theft, loss, or damage of an electronic device brought to school.

Students bring these devices to school at their own risk.

### **Transporting Devices**

Use of bags and cases to transport electronic devices to and from any West Orange-Cove campus is encouraged.

Students may use laptop bags to carry portable computers to and from class. However, the bags **may not** be used to carry books.

### **Possession and Use of Other Personal Electronic Devices**

Except as described below, students are not permitted to possess or use personal electronic devices such as MP3 players, video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, e-readers, or other electronic devices at school, unless prior permission has been obtained. Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the principal's office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal electronic device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See **Searches** on page 66 and policy FNF.]

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The district is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic device.

### **Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices**

In some cases, students may find it beneficial or might be encouraged to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must obtain prior approval before using personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional use. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook). When students are not using the devices for approved instructional purposes, all devices must be turned off during the instructional day. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### **Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources**

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in the use of district-owned technology resources for instructional purposes; specific resources may be issued individually to students. Use of these technological resources, which include the district's network systems and use of district equipment, is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### **Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources**

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, whether the equipment used to send such messages is district-owned or personally owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as "sexting," will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child <http://beforeyoutext.com>, a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology.

In addition, any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the district's computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of expulsion.

## **EMERGENCY OPERATION PLAN**

Should an emergency or disaster situation ever arise in our area while school is in session, we want you to be aware that the schools have made preparations to respond effectively to such situations.

Should we have a major disaster during school hours, your student(s) will be cared for at the school. West Orange-Cove CISD has a detailed emergency operations plan which has been formulated to respond to a major catastrophe.

Your cooperation is necessary in an emergency.

1. Do not telephone the school. Telephone lines may be needed for emergency communication.
2. In the event of a serious emergency, students will be kept at their schools until they are picked up by an identified, responsible adult who has been identified as such on the campus emergency form which is required to be filled out by parents at the beginning of every school year. Please be sure you consider the following criteria when you authorize another person to pick up your child at school:
  - He/she is 18 years of age or older.
  - He/she is usually home during the day.
  - He/she could walk to school, if necessary.
  - He/she is known to your child.
  - He/she is both aware and able to assume this responsibility.
3. Turn your radio to KOGT 1600 AM for emergency announcements. If students are to be kept at school, radio stations will be notified. If electrical service is not affected, information will be relayed via television. In addition, information regarding day-to-day school operations will be available by calling the District office at 882-5500.
4. Impress upon your children the need for them to follow the directions of any school personnel in times of an emergency.

Students will be released only to parents and persons identified on the school District's emergency card that is on file at their campus. During an extreme emergency, students will be released at designated reunion gates located on school campuses. Parents should become familiar with the School Emergency Disaster Plan and be patient and understanding with the student release process. Please instruct your student to remain at school until you or a designee arrives. Because local telephone service may be disrupted, also list an out-of-state contact on the emergency form, as calls may still be made out of the area while incoming calls are affected.

The decision to keep students at school will be based upon whether or not streets in the area are open. If this occurs, radio stations will be notified. In the event that a natural disaster takes place during the time that students are being transported, students will be kept on the bus and the driver will ask for assistance through radio contact with the school and District personnel. Any child who is home waiting for the bus will not be picked up (if roads are impassable) and remains the responsibility of the parent or guardian. In the event a natural disaster occurs in the afternoon, the driver will make every attempt to continue delivering the students to their homes. Should road conditions prevent the driver from delivering students to their home or to school in

the morning, the students will be delivered to the nearest school site and that school will communicate with the home school to inform them of students' whereabouts.

In case of a hazardous release event (chemical spill) near the school area, Shelter-in-Place procedures will be implemented to provide in place protection. All students and staff will clear the field, report to their rooms and all efforts will be made to prevent outside air from entering classrooms during the emergency. "Shelter-in-place" signs will be placed in classroom windows or hung outside classroom doors during a drill or emergency. Students arriving at school during a Shelter-in-Place drill or event should report to the school office or to a previously designated area at the school because classrooms will be inaccessible. When the dangerous incident has subsided, an all-clear signal will be given.

Please discuss these matters with your immediate family. Planning ahead will help alleviate concerns during emergencies.

### **Accident Insurance**

The District is not responsible for medical expenses associated with a student's injury. Soon after school opens, parents will have the opportunity to purchase low-cost accident insurance that would help meet medical expenses, in the event of injury to their child. A parent who desires coverage for his or her child will be responsible for paying insurance premiums and for submitting claims through the insurance carrier.

### **Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies**

From time to time, students, teachers, and other District employees will participate in preparedness drills of emergency procedures. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL-CLOSING INFORMATION**

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that school is dismissed early because of severe weather or another emergency, or if the campus must restrict access due to a security threat.

Rarely is it necessary for the Superintendent to close schools because of inclement weather conditions. However, should weather conditions be such that parents suspect that schools might be closed, they should listen to the local radio station or TV stations for official announcements by the District.

In cases of severe weather or local flooding due to torrential rains, lightning, or high winds, students will not be dismissed from school until the superintendent and principal determines it is safe for students to go home. Students may leave school if an authorized adult, parent, or guardian personally arrives at the campus to pick them up. However, District officials prefer that

students remain at school until the weather emergency is over to minimize traffic congestion at the school.

In the event of a serious safety event or disaster, and it becomes necessary to evacuate a campus, housing will be provided for the remainder of the school day. The location sites will be designated at the time of the event/disaster. The transportation department will use the same buses with the location of the suggested housing being determined by the superintendent. Parents, who come and want to pick up children from the new location, will be permitted to do so. At the end of the school day buses will run and students will be dismissed as usual, if conditions permit.

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (All Grade Levels)**

A student who is an English language learner is entitled to receive specialized services from the district. To determine whether the student qualifies for services, a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will be formed, which will consist of both district personnel and at least one parent representative. The student's parent must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC for an English language learner. However, pending the receipt of parental consent or denial of services, an eligible student will receive the services to which the student is entitled and eligible.

In order to determine a student's level of proficiency in English, the LPAC will use information from a variety of assessments. If the student qualifies for services, and once a level of proficiency has been established, the LPAC will then designate instructional accommodations or additional special programs that the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Ongoing assessments will be conducted to determine a student's continued eligibility for the program.

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR L, as mentioned at **Standardized Testing** on page 68, may be administered to an English language learner, or, for a student up to grade 5, a Spanish version of STAAR. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to English language learners who qualify for services.

If a student is considered an English language learner and receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student's ARD committee will make instructional and assessment decisions in conjunction with the LPAC.

## **Enrollment**

### **Enrollment Procedures Grades PK – 12**

- Early registration events are scheduled for each campus prior to the first day of school

**For students enrolling during the year:**

- Request verification of driver's license of person enrolling student and make copy for our files
- Complete V-soft (Raptor) visitor screening process
- Parent/Guardian of the student comes to the attendance office and completes enrollment forms for student. If person enrolling the student is not the parent or legal custodian of child, the enrolling individual must go to Administration building to complete Power of Attorney Form
- Campuses will be notified when Power of Attorney is completed.

**The following items are necessary for enrollment:**

- Latest report card or withdrawal form from previous school
- Birth Certificate – Original birth certificate must be provided at first enrollment into West Orange-Cove CISD. A copy is made and identified by the enrolling campus as “copy of original certificate.” Texas Education Agency allows 30 days for this to be completed.
- Social Security Card
- Immunization record (30 day grace period allowed for students transferring from another Texas school or students identified eligible for McKinney-Vento assistance). All out of state and out of country students must present immunization records at time of enrollment. Without the documentation in hand, the student cannot be enrolled. If the student provides records, the immunizations must be current. If not, the student must begin the necessary vaccine dose before he/she can be provisionally enrolled.
- Proof of residency may be required, North ELC and West Orange Stark Elementary requires utility bill or rent statement.
- Student Emergency Form and all other enrollment forms must be completed.

The attendance office and Counselor's office remind the enrolling parent/guardian that an accurate address and telephone number for students must be kept on record in the school office. If any change occurs in the address or telephone number of the student, the parent/guardian should report the change(s) by a note or a phone call as soon as possible.

**Withdrawal**

A student under 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The school requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. The parent may obtain a withdrawal form from the principal's office.

When withdrawing a student from the school District:

- Request verification of driver's license of person withdrawing student and make copy
- Complete V-Soft (Raptor) screening

- Verify student record for authorized Parent/Guardian/Legal Custodian. If person requesting withdrawal is not the Parent/Guardian/Legal Custodian of the child, contact the person who enrolled the child, and notify the principal.
- Check student Emergency Form and Student Pick Up Authorization Form.
- If person requesting withdrawal is not listed, notify the principal. **Only the principal can act on a withdrawal request in such a situation.**
- Parent/Guardian (or other person who actually enrolled the student) of the student must go to the Attendance office or Counselor's office and sign a Notice of Intent to Withdraw the student.
- Textbooks shall be turned in and library books returned to the library and the librarian signs as well.
- Outstanding fees must be cleared before withdrawal approved.
- The form is then signed by the principal or designated administrator and returned to the attendance office.
- The attendance clerk and parents must sign the form.
- Immunization records are also copied and mailed to the new enrolling District.
- The withdrawal form is then filed in the student's cumulative folder in the Principal's office and a pink copy is sent to the attendance office for withdrawal.

### **Day Check out**

- Parent/Guardian must report to attendance office, show appropriate identification such as valid driver's license, completed V-Soft (Raptor) screening and with approval may then sign that student out using Student Check in/Out log.
- Staff member verifies that person requesting to check out student is authorized to do so by referring to the approved Student Pick Up Authorization Form or the Student Emergency Form. If the person picking up the student is not the Parent/Guardian/Legal Custodian or is not on the approved pickup list, notify a campus administrator before calling for the student.
- The Parent/Guardian must sign out through the attendance office before leaving campus.
- Students are not allowed to leave campus without a parent or someone on the approved student pick up list unless otherwise instructed by an administrator.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS (All Grade Levels)**

Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships with other students; participation, however, is a privilege, not a right.

Participation in some of these activities may result in events that occur off-campus. When the district arranges transportation for these events, students are required to use the transportation provided by the district to and from the events. Exceptions to this may only be made with the approval of the activity's coach or sponsor. [Also see **Transportation** on page 70.]

Eligibility for initial and continuing participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association overseeing interdistrict competition. If a student is involved in an academic, athletic, or music activity governed by UIL, the student and parent are expected to know and follow all rules of the UIL organization. Students involved in UIL athletic activities and their parents can access the UIL Parent Information Manual at <https://www.uil texas.org/athletics/manuals>; a hard copy can be provided by the coach or sponsor of the activity on request. To report a complaint of alleged noncompliance with required safety training or an alleged violation of safety rules required by law and the UIL, please contact the curriculum division of TEA at (512) 463-9581 or [curriculum@tea.texas.gov](mailto:curriculum@tea.texas.gov).

[See <http://www.uil texas.org> for additional information on all UIL-governed activities.]

## **Field Trips**

Parents must sign waivers of liability before students can participate in field trips. Students who are involved in field trips must be in school all periods prior to the time they are to leave campus or they will not be allowed to participate or travel with that group. Students who do not exhibit acceptable behavior may be denied the privilege of a field trip and /or other extracurricular activities.

## **FUNDRAISING (All Grade Levels)**

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fundraising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the campus principal at least 7 days before the event. [For further information, see policies FJ and GE.]

## **GANG-FREE ZONES (All Grade Levels)**

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a location in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

## **GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 29.]

## **GRADING GUIDELINES (All Grade Levels)**

Grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated and distributed to students and their parents by the classroom teacher. These guidelines have been reviewed by



each applicable curriculum department and have been approved by the campus principal. These guidelines establish the minimum number of assignments, projects, and examinations required for each grading period. In addition, these guidelines establish how the student's mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.). Grading guidelines also outline in what circumstances a student will be allowed to redo an assignment or retake an examination for which the student originally made a failing grade. Procedures for a student to follow after an absence will also be addressed.

[Also see **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 63 for additional information on grading guidelines.]

### **In grades K-5, achievement is reported to parents as follows:**

Unless seventy percent (70%) of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in a given subject has been mastered, a grade of seventy (70) or better cannot be earned.

#### **Grading Scale:**

100 – 90 = A

79 – 75 = C

89 – 80 = B

74 – 70 = D

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the Board and designed to reflect each student's academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the Board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error or that the teacher did not follow the District's grading policy. (See policy EIA.)

#### **Honor Roll:**

Superintendent's Honor Roll (All A's)

Principal's Honor Roll (A's and 2 B's)

Honor Roll (Any combination of A's and B's)

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty – plagiarism – is not acceptable. Cheating includes the copying of another student's work – homework, class work, test answers, etc. – as one's own. Plagiarism is the use of another person's original ideas or writing without giving credit to the true author. A student found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be subject to loss of credit for the work in question, as well as disciplinary penalties, according to the Student Code of Conduct.

### **HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 29.]

## **HAZING (All Grade Levels)**

Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off campus directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated to, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include other students.

Hazing will not be tolerated by the district. If an incident of hazing occurs, disciplinary consequences will be handled in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. It is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report this to the principal or superintendent.

[Also see **Bullying** on page 23 and policies FFI and FNCC.]

## **HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

### **Student Illness (All Grade Levels)**

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she won't be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools are required to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods of time as identified in state rules. For example, if your child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. In addition, students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea free without diarrhea-suppressing medications for at least 24 hours. A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, he or she must receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. If the nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent.

The district is also required to report certain contagious (communicable) diseases or illnesses to the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) or our local/regional health authority. The school nurse can provide information from TDSHS on these notifiable conditions.

Contact the school nurse if you have questions or if you are concerned about whether or not your child should stay home.

### **Bacterial Meningitis (All Grade Levels)**

State law requires the district to provide information about bacterial meningitis:

- What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is common and most people recover fully. Parasitic and fungal meningitis are very rare. Bacterial meningitis is very serious and may involve complicated medical, surgical, pharmaceutical, and life support management.

- What are the symptoms?

Someone with meningitis will become very ill. The illness may develop over one or two days, but it can also rapidly progress in a matter of hours. Not everyone with meningitis will have the same symptoms.

Children (over 2 years old) and adults with bacterial meningitis commonly have a severe headache, high fever, and neck stiffness. Other symptoms might include nausea, vomiting, discomfort looking into bright lights, confusion, and sleepiness. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body.

The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results.

- How serious is bacterial meningitis?

If it is diagnosed early and treated promptly, the majority of people make a complete recovery. In some cases it can be fatal or a person may be left with a permanent disability.

- How is bacterial meningitis spread?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. They are spread when people exchange respiratory or throat secretions (such as by kissing, coughing, or sneezing).

The germ does not cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become carriers of the germ for days, weeks, or even months. The bacteria rarely overcome the body's immune system and cause meningitis or another serious illness.

- How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

Maintaining healthy habits, like getting plenty of rest, can help prevent infection. Using good health practices such as covering your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing and washing your hands frequently with soap and water can also help stop the spread of the bacteria. It's a good idea not to share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

There are vaccines available to offer protection from some of the bacteria that can cause bacterial meningitis.\* The vaccines are safe and effective (85–90 percent). They can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven to ten days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five years.

- What should you do if you think you or a friend might have bacterial meningitis?

You should seek prompt medical attention.

- Where can you get more information?

Your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Department of State Health Services office

to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the websites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us>.

\* Please note that the TDSHS requires at least one meningococcal vaccination for a student ages 11 to 12 or for a student enrolling in grades 7–12, and state guidelines recommend this vaccination be administered between ages 11 and 12, with a booster dose at 16 years of age. Also note that entering college students must show, with limited exception, evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five-year period prior to enrolling in and taking courses at an institution of higher education. Please see the school nurse for more information, as this may affect a student who wishes to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus.

[Also refer to **Immunization** on page 54 for more information.]

### **Food Allergies (All Grade Levels)**

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

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, which addresses employee training, dealing with common food allergens, and specific strategies for dealing with students diagnosed with severe food allergies. When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, individual care plans will be developed to assist the student in safely accessing the school environment. The district's food allergy management plan can be accessed at [www.woccisd.net](http://www.woccisd.net)

### **Head Lice (All Grade Levels)**

Head lice, although not an illness or a disease, is very common among children and is spread very easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, or nap time and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones. If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent to determine whether the child will need to be picked up from school and to discuss a plan for treatment with an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student has undergone one treatment, the parent should check in with the school nurse to discuss the treatment used. The nurse can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments and how best to get rid of lice and prevent their return.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the TDSHS website at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm>.

## **Physical Activity Requirements**

### ***Elementary School***

In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA, the district will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten–grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week.

For additional information on the district’s requirements and programs regarding elementary school student physical activity requirements, please see the principal.

### **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) (All Grade Levels)**

During the preceding school year, the district’s School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) held 4 meetings. Additional information is available from the school nurse.

The duties of the SHAC range from recommending curriculum to developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing issues such as school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, improving student fitness, mental health concerns, and employee wellness.

### **Student Wellness Policy/Wellness Plan (All Grade Levels)**

West Orange-Cove is committed to encouraging healthy students and therefore has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement the policy. You are encouraged to contact the school nurse with questions about the content or implementation of the district’s wellness policy and plan.

## **Other Health-Related Matters**

### ***Physical Fitness Assessment (Grades 3–12)***

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to the principal to obtain the results of his or her child’s physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

### ***Vending Machines (All Grade Levels)***

The district has adopted and implemented the state and federal policies and guidelines for food service, including the guidelines to restrict student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines, see the campus principal. [See policies at CO and FFA.]

### ***Tobacco and E-Cigarettes Prohibited (All Grade Levels and All Others on School Property)***

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), or any other electronic vaporizing device, while on school property at any time or while attending an off-campus school-related activity.

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of all tobacco products, e-cigarettes, or any other electronic vaporizing device, by students and all others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the Student Code of Conduct and policies at FNCD and GKA.]

### ***Asbestos Management Plan (All Grade Levels)***

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's Asbestos Management Plan is available in the superintendent's office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact the Director of Maintenance, the district's designated asbestos coordinator, at 882-5550.

### ***Pest Management Plan (All Grade Levels)***

The district is required to follow integrated pest management (IPM) procedures to control pests on school grounds. Although the district strives to use the safest and most effective methods to manage pests, including a variety of non-chemical control measures, pesticide use is sometimes necessary to maintain adequate pest control and ensure a safe, pest-free school environment.

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area. Parents who have further questions or who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact the Director of Maintenance, the district's IPM coordinator, at 882-5550.

### **HOMELESS STUDENTS (All Grade Levels)**

You are encouraged to inform the district if you or your child are experiencing homelessness. District staff can share resources with you that may be able to assist you and your family.

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's homeless education liaison, the Executive Director of Operations at 882-5462.

### **ILLNESS**

[See **Student Illness** under **Health-Related Matters** on page 50.]

### **IMMUNIZATION (All Grade Levels)**

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the TDSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://corequest.dshs.texas.gov/>. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are: diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis; measles, mumps, and rubella; polio; hepatitis A; hepatitis B; varicella (chicken pox); and meningococcal. The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the TDSHS. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. registered and licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or a member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a lifelong condition.

As noted at **Bacterial Meningitis**, entering college students must also, with limited exception, furnish evidence of having received a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five years prior to enrolling in and attending classes at an institution of higher education. A student wanting to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus may be subject to this requirement.

[For further information, see policy FFAB(LEGAL) and the TDSHS website:  
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm>.]

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES (All Grade Levels)**

### **Questioning of Students**

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances:

- The principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.
- The principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

### **Students Taken Into Custody**

State law requires the district to permit a student to be taken into legal custody:

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer,

without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.

- To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.

Before a student is released to a law enforcement officer or other legally authorized person, the principal will verify the officer's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student.

The principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a student's release to a law enforcement officer, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

### **Notification of Law Violations**

The district is required by state law to notify:

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

[For further information, see policies FL(LEGAL) and GRAA(LEGAL).]

### **LEAVING CAMPUS (All Grade Levels)**

Please remember that student attendance is crucial to learning. We ask that appointments be scheduled outside of school hours as much as reasonably possible. Also note that picking up a child early on a regular basis results in missed opportunities for learning. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the school day.

State rules require that parental consent be obtained before any student is allowed to leave campus for any part of the school day. The district has put the following procedures in place in order to document parental consent:

- For students in elementary and middle school, a parent or otherwise authorized adult must come to the office and sign the student out. Please be prepared to show identification. Once an identity is verified, a campus representative will then call for the student or collect the student and bring him or her to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, we cannot allow you to go to the classroom or other area unescorted to pick up the student. If the student returns to campus the same day, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student back in through the main office upon the



student's return. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required.

- For students in high school, the same process will be followed. If the student's parent will authorize the student to leave campus unaccompanied, a note provided by the parent must be submitted to the main office in advance of the absence, no later than two hours prior to the student's need to leave campus. A phone call received from the parent may be accepted, but the school may ultimately require a note to be submitted for documentation purposes. Once the office has received information that the student's parent consents to the student leaving campus, a pass will be issued to the student to hand to his or her teacher with the necessary information. The student must sign out through the main office and sign in upon his or her return, if the student returns the same day. If a student is 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor, the student may produce a note on his or her own behalf. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will be required.
- If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse or other district personnel determines that the student should go home, the nurse will contact the student's parent and document the parent's wishes regarding release from school. Unless directed by the parent to release the student unaccompanied, the parent or other authorized adult must follow the sign-out procedures as listed above. If a student is allowed to leave campus by himself or herself, as permitted by the student's parent, or if the student is age 18 or is an emancipated minor, the nurse will document the time of day the student was released. Under no circumstances will a child in elementary or middle school be released unaccompanied by a parent or adult authorized by the parent.

### **During Lunch**

NELC and WOSE are closed campuses, students are not allowed to leave the campus during lunch unless signed out by a parent or guardian.

### **At Any Other Time During the School Day**

Students are not authorized to leave campus during regular school hours for any other reason, except with the permission of the principal.

Students who leave campus in violation of these rules will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **LOST AND FOUND (All Grade Levels)**

A "lost and found" collection box is located in the campus office. If your child has lost an item, please encourage him or her to check the lost and found box. The district discourages students from bringing to school personal items of high monetary value, as the district is not responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of each semester.

## **MAKEUP WORK**

### **Makeup Work Because of Absence (All Grade Levels)**

For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher. A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

A student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time, including absences for extracurricular activities, so that the teacher and student may plan any work that can be completed before or shortly after the absence. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school and that, even though absences may be excused or unexcused, all absences account for the 90 percent threshold in regards to the state laws surrounding “attendance for credit or final grade.” [See also **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade** on page 20.]

A student involved in an extracurricular activity must notify his or her teachers ahead of time about any absences.

A student will be permitted to make up tests and to turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with time lines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

### ***Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels***

#### **In-School Suspension (ISS) Makeup Work (All Grade Levels)**

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FO(LEGAL).]

## **MEDICINE AT SCHOOL (All Grade Levels)**

Medication that must be administered to a student during school hours must be provided by the student’s parent. All medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, must be kept in the nurse’s office and administered by the nurse or another authorized district employee, unless the student is authorized to possess his or her own medication because of asthma or a severe allergy as described below or as otherwise allowed by law.

The district will not purchase nonprescription medication to give to a student. District employees will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements, with the following exceptions:

Only authorized employees, in accordance with policy FFAC, may administer:

- Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.
- Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

Students whose schedules provide for regular time spent outdoors, including for recess and physical education classes, should apply sunscreen before coming to school.

For students at the elementary level, the student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to a student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and requests assistance with the application of the sunscreen. Nothing prohibits a student at this level from applying his or her own sunscreen if the student is capable of doing so.

For students at the secondary level, a student may possess and apply sunscreen when necessary. If the student will need assistance with this application, please address the need for assistance with the school nurse.

Whether a student is at the elementary or secondary level, if sunscreen needs to be administered to treat any type of medical condition, this should be handled through communication with the school nurse so that the district is made aware of any safety and medical issues.

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may be permitted to possess and use prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her physician or health-care provider and to the school nurse the ability to use the prescribed medication, including any device required to administer the medication.

If the student has been prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day, the student and parents should discuss this with the school nurse or principal.

In accordance with a student's individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. See the school nurse or principal for information. [See policy FFAF(LEGAL).]

## **Psychotropic Drugs**

A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication. It is intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior and is commonly described as a mood- or behavior-altering substance.

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to

recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate. [For further information, see policy FFAC.]

## **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT (All Grade Levels)**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, West Orange-Cove does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law, in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following district representatives have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment or gender-based harassment: Executive Director of Human Resources at 882-5610.
- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Executive Director of Student Services at 882-5407.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent, 882-5500..

[See policies FB, FFH, and GKD.]

## **NONTRADITIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS (All Grade Levels)**

## **PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT (All Grade Levels)**

### **Working Together**

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Your involvement in this partnership may include:

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the school counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements and options for graduation with your child in middle school and again while your child is enrolled in high school.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** on page 22.]

- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, school counselor, or principal, please call the school office at [**North Early Learning Center- 882-5434 or West Orange-Stark Elementary - Phone Number 882-5630**] for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 49.]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policy GKG and **Volunteers** on page 57.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), which forms a vital part of any school system. Please contact the campus principal for more information.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. [For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB, and contact campus principal.]
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction and other wellness issues. [See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and information in this handbook at **School Health Advisory Council** on page 41.]
- Serving on a committee to determine criteria to be used to evaluate the overall performance of the district and each campus in community and student engagement. For further information, please contact the campus principal.
- Being aware of the school’s ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child’s emotional or mental well-being.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies at BE and BED for more information.]

### **Parent Involvement Coordinator**

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs is Dr. Wayne Guidry and may be contacted at (409) 882-5462.

### **PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE (All Grade Levels)**

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. [See **Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags** on page 9.]

State law requires that one minute of silence follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others. In addition, state law requires that each campus provide for the observance of one minute of silence at the beginning of the first class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001.

[See policy EC for more information.]

### **PRAYER (All Grade Levels)**

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

### **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district.

In addition, at certain grade levels a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR), if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1 and the date of the first administration of the STAAR.

#### **Elementary and Middle/Junior High Grade Levels**

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

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

If a student in grade 5 or 8 is enrolled in a course that earns high school credit and for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment will be administered, the student will not be subject to the promotion requirements described above for the relevant grade 5 or 8 assessment.

If a student in grades 3–8 is enrolled in a class or course intended for students above his or her current grade level in which the student will be administered a state-mandated assessment, the student will be required to take an applicable state mandated assessment only for the course in which he or she is enrolled, unless otherwise required to do so by federal law.

[See **Standardized Testing** on page 68.]

A student in grade 5 or 8 will have two additional opportunities to take a failed assessment. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee,

the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous and the student must complete additional special instruction before beginning the next grade level. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policy EIE.]

Certain students—some with disabilities and some classified as English language learners—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, school counselor, or special education director.

Parents of a student at or above grade level 3 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her state-mandated exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year. Failure of a student to attend these programs may result in violations of required school attendance as well as the student not being promoted to the next grade level.

## **RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

[See **Leaving Campus** on page 57.]

## **REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES (All Grade Levels)**

Report cards with each student's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at the end of the grading cycle.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period parents will be given a written progress report if their child's performance in any course is near or below 70, or is below the expected level of performance. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. [See **Working Together** on page 47 for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the Board pursuant to the board-adopted policy and are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See policy EIA(LOCAL) and **Grading Guidelines** on page 37.]

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG(LOCAL).

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 75 in a class or subject.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school promptly.

Tutorials are provided for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in math or reading.

Students failing or performing below state mandated minimum expectations will be required to attend tutorials. The State compulsory attendance law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 18 must attend school and District-required tutorial sessions unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused.

## **RETALIATION**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 29.]

## **SAFETY (All Grade Levels)**

Student safety on campus, at school-related events, and on district vehicles is a high priority of the district. Although the district has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensuring school safety. A student is expected to:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, campus behavior coordinator, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

## **Accident Insurance**

Soon after the school year begins, parents will have the opportunity to purchase low-cost accident insurance that would help meet medical expenses in the event of injury to their child.

## **Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies**

From time to time, students, teachers, and other district employees will participate in preparedness drills of emergency procedures. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

## **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school may have to rely on previously provided written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency



phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the school nurse to update any information that the nurse or the teacher needs to know.

### **Emergency School-Closing Information**

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that school is dismissed early or opening is delayed because of severe weather or another emergency, or if the campus must restrict access due to a security threat.

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number previously provided to the district has changed.

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will also alert the community in the following ways: TV, Radio, KOGT, District website, District call out.

### **SAT, ACT, AND OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS**

[See **Standardized Testing** on page 68.]

### **SCHEDULE CHANGES (Middle/Junior High and High School Grade Levels)**

#### **SCHOOL FACILITIES**

##### **Use by Students Before and After School (All Grade Levels)**

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place.

Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing an activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, unless a student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult, or unless students are granted permission to remain on campus in accordance with policy FNAB, students must leave campus immediately.

##### **Conduct Before and After School (All Grade Levels)**

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on district premises and at school-sponsored events off district premises, such as play rehearsals, club meetings, athletic practices, and special study groups or tutorials. Students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

### **Use of Hallways During Class Time (All Grade Levels)**

Loitering or standing in the halls during class is not permitted. During class time, a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Cafeteria Services (All Grade Levels)**

The district participates in the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily in accordance with standards set forth in state and federal law.

Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need or household situation. Information about a student's participation is confidential; however, disclosure of a student's eligibility may be made without prior notice or consent to programs, activities, and individuals that are specifically authorized access under the National School Lunch Act (NSLA), which is the law that sets forth the disclosure limits for the district's child nutrition programs. A student's name, eligibility status, and other information may be disclosed to certain agencies as authorized under the NSLA to facilitate the enrollment of eligible children in Medicaid or the state children's health insurance program (CHIP) unless the student's parent notifies the district that a student's information should not be disclosed. A parent's decision will not affect the child's eligibility for free and reduced price meals or free milk. See campus principal to apply for free or reduced price meal services.

Parents are strongly encouraged to continually monitor their child's meal account balance. When a student's meal account is depleted, the district will notify the parent. If the district is unable to work out an agreement with the student's parent on replenishment of the student's meal account and payment of any outstanding balance, the student will receive an alternate meal. For additional information please see the campus principal.

### **Library (All Grade Levels)**

The library is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure.

### **SEARCHES**

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, district officials may from time to time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

### **Students' Desks and Lockers (All Grade Levels)**

Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student.

Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of their assigned desks and lockers. Students must be certain that their lockers are locked, and that the combinations are not available to others.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable suspicion to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by policy, whether or not a student is present.

The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

### **Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices (All Grade Levels)**

Use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district. [See policy CQ for more information.]

Any searches of personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with law, and the device may be confiscated in order to perform a lawful search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed.

[See policy FNF(LEGAL) and **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources** on page 39 for more information.]

### **Trained Dogs (All Grade Levels)**

The district will use trained dogs to alert school officials to the presence of prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. At any time, trained dogs may be used around lockers and the areas around vehicles parked on school property. Searches of classrooms, common areas, or student belongings may also be conducted by trained dogs when students are not present. An item in a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle to which a trained dog alerts may be searched by school officials.

### **Metal Detectors (All Grade Levels)**

Students shall be notified at the beginning of each school year that they are subject to metal detector searches on a random basis. If the metal detector alerts to the presence of metal after the student has been asked to remove all metal objects from his or her person and possessions, or if a student refuses to remove all metal objects from his or her person and possessions without giving a satisfactory explanation, the District shall notify the student's parent(s), guardian, or person having lawful control. If, following such notification, the student again refuses to remove all metal objects from his or her person and personal possessions, the student shall be required to leave school property, in accordance with any applicable procedures in the Student Code of Conduct. If, following such notification, the student again refuses to remove all metal objects from his or her person and personal possessions, the District may turn them over to law enforcement officials.

[For further information, see policy FNF(LOCAL).]

[For further information, see policy FNF(LOCAL).]

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 29.]

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS (All Grade Levels)**

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, English language learners, students diagnosed with dyslexia, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction at 882-5555.

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

### **Secondary Grade Levels**

#### ***TSI (Texas Success Initiative) Assessment***

Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test called the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment. The purpose of the TSI assessment is to assess the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering freshmen-level students should have if they are to perform effectively in undergraduate certificate or degree programs in Texas public colleges and universities. This assessment may be required before a student enrolls in a dual credit course offered through the district as well. Achieving certain benchmark scores on this assessment for college readiness may also waive certain end-of-course assessment requirements in limited circumstances.

#### **STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness)**

##### ***Grades 3–8***

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels are required to take the state assessment, called STAAR, in the following subjects:

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

Successful performance on the reading and math assessments in grades 5 and 8 is required by law, unless the student is enrolled in a reading or math course intended for students above the student's current grade level, in order for the student to be promoted to the next grade level. [See **Promotion and Retention** on page 62 for additional information.]

STAAR A will be available for an eligible student with a Section 504 accommodation plan who has been identified with dyslexia or a related disorder, as well as for a student receiving special education services, if the student meets state-established criteria and requires certain instructional and assessment accommodations on a routine basis.

STAAR Alternate 2, for students receiving special education services who meet certain state-established criteria, will be available for eligible students, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

STAAR L is a linguistically accommodated assessment that is available for certain limited English proficient (LEP) students, as determined by the student's Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). A Spanish version of STAAR is also available to students through grade 5 who need this accommodation.

### **STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE (All Grade Levels)**

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district strives to assist any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (temporary or permanent custody of the state, sometimes referred to as substitute care) with the enrollment and registration process, as well as other educational services throughout the student's enrollment in the district.

A student who is placed in foster care and who is moved outside of the district's attendance boundaries is entitled to continue in enrollment at the school he or she was attending prior to the placement until the student reaches the highest grade level at the particular school. In addition, if a student in grade 11 or 12 is transferred to another district and does not meet the graduation requirements of the transferring district, the student can request to receive a diploma from the previous district if he or she meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

Please contact the Executive Director of Operations who has been designated as the district's foster care liaison, at 882-5462 with any questions.

### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION (All Grade Levels)**

If you are worried that your child may be using or is in danger of experimenting, using, or abusing illegal drugs or other prohibited substances, please contact the school counselor. The school counselor can provide you with a list of community resources that may be of assistance to you. The Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) maintains information regarding children's mental health and substance abuse intervention services on its website:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhsa-child-adolescent-services/>.

### **SUICIDE AWARENESS (All Grade Levels)**

The district is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its students. If you are concerned about your child, please access <http://www.texassuicideprevention.org> or contact the school counselor for more information related to suicide prevention services available in your area.

### **SUMMER SCHOOL (All Grade Levels)**

Summer school may be required. For questions, please contact the campus principal.

### **TARDIES (All Grade Levels)**

A student is considered tardy to class if he/she is not in his/her seat when the tardy bell rings. Each class will be independent of other classes concerning number of tardies

In accordance with campus policy, students will be assigned a campus-level consequence for habitual tardy violations.

The school may notify the Court of Law that the student has reached a number of tardies that are then considered as “egregious”, which then may result in penalties against both the student and parent/guardian. (AG Opinion No. DM-200)

### **TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT, AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS (All Grade Levels)**

Textbooks and other district-approved instructional materials are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Any books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. Electronic textbooks and technological equipment may also be provided to students, depending on the course and course objectives. A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return an item in acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day.

### **TRANSFERS (All Grade Levels)**

The principal is authorized to transfer a student from one classroom to another.

[See **Bullying** on page 23 and **Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services** on page 15, for other transfer options.]

### **TRANSPORTATION (All Grade Levels)**

#### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. As approved by the principal, a coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity may establish procedures related to making an exception to this requirement when a parent requests that the student be released to the parent or to another adult designated by the parent.

#### **Buses and Other School Vehicles**

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students.

Bus routes and stops will be designated annually, and any subsequent changes will be posted at the school and on the district’s website. For the safety of the operator of the vehicle and all passengers, students must board buses or other vehicles only at authorized stops, and drivers must unload passengers only at authorized stops.

A parent may also designate a child-care facility or grandparent’s residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, you may contact the Director of Transportation at 882-5422.

[See the Student Code of Conduct for provisions regarding transportation to the AAC.]

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses and other district vehicles remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding in district vehicles, including buses, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the vehicle in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the vehicle or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the vehicle.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco or e-cigarettes in any district vehicle.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the vehicle and before crossing in front of the vehicle.
- Follow any other rules established by the operator of the vehicle.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct; the privilege to ride in a district vehicle, including a school bus, may be suspended or revoked.

### **VANDALISM (All Grade Levels)**

The taxpayers of the community have made a sustained financial commitment for the construction and upkeep of school facilities. To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended—both this year and for years to come—littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **VIDEO CAMERAS (All Grade Levels)**

For safety purposes, video and audio recording equipment is used to monitor student behavior, including on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used.

The principal will review the video and audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Upon request of a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member, or a board member, state law requires the district to place video and audio recording equipment in a classroom in which the student spends at least 50 percent of his or her instructional day, referred

to in the law as a self-contained classroom. The majority of students in this type of classroom must also be students who receive special education services. Before the district places a video camera in a classroom or other setting in which your child receives special education services, the district will provide notice to you. Please speak directly with the principal for further information or to request the installation and operation of this equipment.

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL (All Grade Levels)**

### **General Visitors**

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the main office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures. When arriving on campus, all parents and other visitors should be prepared to show identification.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and only so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment. Even if the visit is approved prior to the visitor's arrival, the individual must check in at the main office first.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

## **VOLUNTEERS (All Grade Levels)**

We appreciate so much the efforts of parent and grandparent volunteers that are willing to serve our district and students. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the campus principal for more information and to complete an application.

## **WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL (All Grade Levels)**

A student under age 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The school requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. The parent may obtain a withdrawal form from the principal's office.

On the student's last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to each teacher for current grade averages and book and equipment clearance; to the librarian to ensure a clear library record; to the clinic for health records; to the school counselor for the last report card and course clearance; and finally, to the principal. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student, and a copy will be placed in the student's permanent record.

A student who is age 18 or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor may withdraw without parental signature.



## Glossary

**Accelerated instruction** is an intensive supplemental program designed to address the needs of an individual student in acquiring the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level and/or as a result of a student not meeting the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment.

**ACT-Aspire** refers to an assessment that took the place of ACT-Plan and is designed as a preparatory and readiness assessment for the ACT. This is usually taken by students in grade 10.

**ACT** refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the American College Test. The test may be a requirement for admission to certain colleges or universities.

**ARD** is the admission, review, and dismissal committee convened for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student and his or her parents are members of the committee.

**Attendance review committee** is responsible for reviewing a student's absences when the student's attendance drops below 90 percent, or in some cases 75 percent, of the days the class is offered. Under guidelines adopted by the board, the committee will determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences and whether the student needs to complete certain conditions to master the course and regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences.

**DAEP** stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the Student Code of Conduct.

**EOC assessments** are end-of-course tests, which are state-mandated, and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments are required for graduation. These exams will be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History.

**ESSA** is the Every Student Succeeds Act passed by the federal government in December 2015.

**FERPA** refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act that grants specific privacy protections to student records. The law contains certain exceptions, such as for directory information, unless a student's parent or a student 18 or older directs the school not to release directory information.

**IEP** is the written record of the individualized education program prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services. The IEP contains several parts, such as a statement of the student's present educational performance; a statement of measurable annual goals, with short-term objectives; the special education and related services and supplemental aids and services to be provided, and program modifications or support by school personnel; a statement regarding how the student's progress will be measured and how the parents will be kept informed; accommodations for state or district wide tests; whether successful completion of state-mandated assessments is required for graduation, etc.

**IGC** is the individual graduation committee, formed in accordance with state law, to determine a student's eligibility to graduate when the student has failed to demonstrate satisfactory performance on no more than two of the required state assessments.

**ISS** refers to in-school suspension, a disciplinary technique for misconduct found in the Student Code of Conduct. Although different from out-of-school suspension and placement in a DAEP, ISS removes the student from the regular classroom.

**PGP** stands for Personal Graduation Plan, which is required for high school students beginning with ninth graders in the 2014–15 school year, and for any student in middle school who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

**PSAT** is the preparatory and readiness assessment for the SAT.

**SAT** refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the Scholastic Aptitude Test. The test may be a requirement for admissions to certain colleges or universities.

**SHAC** stands for School Health Advisory Council, a group of at least five members, a majority of whom must be parents, appointed by the school board to assist the district in ensuring that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district’s health education instruction, along with providing assistance with other student and employee wellness issues.

**Section 504** is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined to be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), general education with appropriate instructional accommodations will be provided.

**STAAR** is the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, the state’s system of standardized academic achievement assessments, effective beginning with certain students for the 2011–2012 school year.

**STAAR A** is an accommodated version of the STAAR that is available for certain students who receive special education services or students who have been identified as dyslexic.

**STAAR Alternate 2** is an alternative state-mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student’s ARD committee.

**STAAR Linguistically Accommodated (STAAR L)** is an alternative state-mandated assessment with linguistic accommodations designed for certain recent immigrant English language learners.

**State-mandated assessments** are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Successful performance sometimes is a condition of promotion, and passing the STAAR EOC assessments is a condition of graduation. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests if necessary for promotion or graduation.

**Student Code of Conduct** is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board and identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from a classroom, campus, or district vehicle. It also sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP. It outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student’s violation of one of its provisions.

**TELPAS** stands for the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System, which assesses the progress that English language learners make in learning the English language, and is administered for those who meet the participation requirements in kindergarten–grade 12.

**TSI assessment** is the Texas Success Initiative assessment designed to measure the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering college-level freshmen students should have if they are to be successful in undergraduate programs in Texas public colleges and universities.

**TxVSN** is the Texas Virtual School Network, which provides online courses for Texas students to supplement the instructional programs of public school districts. Courses are taught by qualified instructors, and courses are equivalent in rigor and scope to a course taught in a traditional classroom setting.

**UIL** refers to the University Interscholastic League, the statewide voluntary nonprofit organization that oversees educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests.

## **APPENDIX I: Freedom from Bullying Policy**

Note that school board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit West Orange-Cove CISD Website, under the Heading “Board” open “Policy Online” in Advanced Search type in “Freedom from Bullying” Open FFI Local.

STUDENT WELFARE: FREEDOM FROM BULLYING

FFI(LOCAL)

Adopted on 3/22/2012

**APPENDIX II:  
Acknowledgment Form—Amendment**

*Note to handbook developer: You might keep this form on hand throughout the school year to assist in documenting communication of Student Handbook amendments made during the year.*

My child and I have received a copy of the West Orange-Cove CISD Student Handbook Amendment # [REDACTED] dated [REDACTED].

Print name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_