

**STUDENT & PARENT  
HANDBOOK  
2019-2020**



**SCHOOL OF SCIENCE  
& TECHNOLOGY**

*Better Education, Better Future*



# **SST PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Better Education, Better Future

2019

2020

## **STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK**



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## **Preface**

### **Mission**

The School of Science and Technology drives academic and socio-emotional development through a college preparatory, STEM-based learning model. SST's model is anchored on 21st century skills, embraced by character building approach, and delivered in an enriching, safe, and student centered learning environment.

### **Vision**

Nurturing world-class scholars and ethical citizens to build a better future for all.

### **Code Values: M.A.G.I.C.**

**M** » Moral Compass

**A** » Accountability

**G** » Generosity

**I** » Innovation

**C** » Citizenship

### **District Core Ethical Values**

Accountability, Citizenship, Dedication, Honesty, Integrity, Kindness, Leadership, Respectfulness, and Responsibility.

Campuses may have a different core ethical values.

### **Board of Directors**

**President** : Dr. Turgay Korkmaz

**Vice President** : Mr. Christopher John Gieseke

**Secretary** : Dr. Suleyman Tek

**Treasurer** : Mr. Mehmet Bulut

**Member** : Mrs. Valarie Aktepe

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year at SST Public Schools! The new school year means a new beginning and new promise for the future. The administrative team is excited about this school year, and the staff at SST Public Schools is caring, dedicated and willing to assist you. We are working very hard to provide the best possible learning environment for our students.

We believe that education is a shared responsibility and the successful operation of a school depends on the cooperation of everyone involved: students, parents, and staff. A primary goal of SST Public Schools is to create a partnership among these three groups. We all are responsible, and must do our part to make our school a place where we can all work together in SST.

Our policies and procedures are intended to provide a safe and orderly environment that will be conducive to learning. Our faculty looks forward to sharing their expertise in academics, along with special programs and extracurricular activities.

We encourage parents and students to become active participants in our school system by getting to know its program and activities.

This Handbook is an overview of our school's goals and rules. It is an essential reference book describing what we expect of our students and parents, what they can expect of us, and how we will achieve our educational mission. We have attempted to make the language in this Handbook as straightforward as possible.

This Handbook is designed to be a reflection of current Board Policy, and is updated yearly. Changes in policy and procedure that occur during the school year and that affect the Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through communications during the school year. In case of conflict between Board Policy and any provision of this handbook, the provision that was most recently adopted by the Board of Directors will be followed.

We ask our parents to review the entire Handbook with their students and to keep it as a reference during this school year. Parents or students with questions about the material in this Handbook should contact their Principal.

Finally, you must complete and return the last page of the Handbook – “Acknowledgement and Approval of Student/ Parent Handbook” – to the school office at your campus.

On behalf of the entire SST Public Schools staff and community, best wishes for a great 2019-2020 school year!

Sincerely,

Mehmet Nalcaci, Superintendent

## **Notice of Nondiscrimination in Career and Technical Education Programs**

SST SCHOOLS offers support to school district for career and technical education programs in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources; Architecture and Construction; Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications; Business Management and Administration; Education and Training; Finance; Government and Public Administration; Health Science; Hospitality and Tourism; Human Services; Information Technology; Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security; Manufacturing; Marketing; Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics; Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics. Admission to these programs is based on enrollment in SST schools.

It is the policy of SST SCHOOLS not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap in its CTE programs, services or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

It is the policy of SST SCHOOLS not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

SST SCHOOLS will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and CTE programs.

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the Title IX Coordinator Dr. Ekrem Demirci, and/or the Section 504 Coordinator, Yvette Alvarez, at 5300 Wurzbach Road San Antonio, TX, 78238, Phone: (210) 957-1955.

# SECTION I : GENERAL INFORMATION

## Student Rights

The school pledges to allow all students to:

- Feel safe in the school environment.
- Take full advantage of learning opportunities.
- Work in an environment free from disruptions and chaos.
- Express opinions, ideas, thoughts and concerns.
- Have a healthy environment that is smoke, alcohol and drug free.
- Use school resources and facilities for self-improvement.
- Expect courtesy, fairness and respect from all members of the community.
- Be informed of all expectations and responsibilities.
- Take part in a variety of school activities.

## Equal Education Opportunity

SST Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, or disability in providing educational services, activities, and programs, including vocational and career technology programs, in accordance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

## Admission Policies and Procedures for SST Public Charter Schools

SST Public Schools require applicants to submit a complete application form in order to be considered for admission. For the first year of operation of a new campus which has the commissioner 'approval on the first day of that school year, application period will start on November 1st (beginning date) and end on March 15th (ending date). For the first year of operation for a new campus that have not yet been approved by TEA on the first day of that school year, the application period will start on January 10th (beginning date) and end on March 15th

(ending date). For the following years, the beginning and ending dates of the application period shall be November 1st and February 10th of each year, respectively.

### *Lottery Procedures and Date when a grade or class is oversubscribed*

A "lottery" for purposes of this policy is a random selection process that determines the order of enrollment of student applicants. An annual lottery is required for each campus if the number of applicants for that campus exceeds the number of available positions. The lottery shall take place within fifteen days after the closing date of the application period. The required lottery will be conducted via lottery selection software. To ensure that the required lottery winner list and the waiting list are selected randomly, the principal or designee of each campus will conduct the computerized lottery, supervised by a representative from the Central Office to which the school reports.

### *Development of a Waiting List*

The required lottery will be paused momentarily after the computerized lottery fills all available seats allowed by the enrollment cap. A lottery drawing will then continue, and the randomly-selected numbers will be used to create an annual waiting list. As space becomes available, applicants will be called from the waiting list, beginning with applicants with the lowest number assignment in the order of each category.

### *Admission Process of Returning Students*

Returning students (students who currently attended the school) who remain qualified to attend the school, and who notify the school of their intent to return for the next school year by the fourth Friday of January, are exempt from the lottery and will remain enrolled. Parent shall submit a Proof of Residency with each year re-enrollment.

### ***Siblings Policy and Children of the School's Founders and Employees***

As permitted by federal guidance on the Charter Schools Program, the following categories of applicants are exempt from the required lottery:

Children of the school's founders, teachers, and staff (so long as the total number of students allowed does not exceed 3% of the total enrollment) are the initial category exempt from the required lottery requirements, and, space permitting, are automatically enrolled.

Subsequently, space permitting, siblings of returning students currently enrolled at a SST Public School campus who have qualified as returning students constitute a second category of student applicants who are automatically enrolled; Thereafter, space permitting, siblings of applicants selected through the required lottery who were also registered for that lottery constitute the third automatically enrolled category.

"Sibling" shall mean a biological or legally adopted brother or sister residing in the same household as the applicant. Cousins, nieces, nephews and unrelated children sharing an address with the applicant are not siblings. Sibling enrollment is dependent on available space and does not guarantee enrollment.

Priority of admission in the order of each above-listed category of lottery-exempt students shall also be determined by lottery.

#### ***Applications that are submitted outside of the designated application period***

If a student applies to the school outside of the designated application period, the student will be placed on a waiting list in the order of the category and date in which the application is received.

#### ***Students with documented histories of a criminal offense and/or misconduct***

Students who have a documented history of a criminal offense, juvenile court adjudication, listed in TEC, §12.111(6), or other serious discipline problems listed under TEC, Chapter 37, Subchapter A will be excluded from enrollment as TEC, §12.111(6) authorizes a charter school to do so.

#### ***Documents and Information Applicants are Required to Provide***

Applicants must submit a completed application form in order to be considered for admission. The

application form must be signed and dated by the parent(s). The application form must include the following items:

- Applicant's name (first, last, and middle names)
- Applicant's birth date
- Applicant's current grade level and grade applied for
- Applicant's residential address
- Phone numbers
- Applicant's current school and district names
- Applicant's parents' name and signature
- Whether the applicant has a sibling already admitted to attending the school
- Whether the applicant has a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems under Chapter 37 of the Education Code.

Applicants are not required to provide transcript or other academic records until after they are offered admission.

#### ***Non-discrimination Statement as Part of the School's Admission Policy***

It is the policy of SST Schools to comply with all state and federal regulations regarding admission and not to discriminate during the admission and the lottery process on the basis of gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic, artistic, athletic ability, or the district the child would otherwise attend.

#### **Student Information**

Any student admitted to SST Public Schools must provide records, such as report cards from the previous school attended, to verify his or her academic standing. Verification of residency and current immunization records are also required.

No later than 30 days after enrolling in SST Public Schools, the parent and school district in which the student was previously enrolled shall furnish records which verify the identity of the student. These records may include the student's birth certificate or a copy of the student's school records from the most recently attended school.

Every student enrolling at SST Public Schools for the first time must present documentation of immunizations. As required by the Texas Department of State Health Services, and except as provided in subparagraphs "2" and "3" below,

students enrolling in SST Public Schools for the first time must:

- 1) present a signed statement from a physician or documentation of immunizations as required by the Texas Department of Health;
- 2) upon enrollment submit an affidavit from a physician stating immunizations should not be administered to that student for medical reasons, or students who submit upon enrollment an affidavit signed by the student's parent or guardian declining immunizations for reasons of conscience, are exempted from this requirement.
- 3) Students who are eligible for provisional enrollment (See SST Public Schools Board Policy 3.36) shall be enrolled but must comply with required immunization record submission within 30 days of enrolling.

SST Public Schools will forward a student's records on request to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll without the necessity of the parent's consent.

### **Residency Verification**

The Texas Education Code authorizes schools to obtain evidence that a person is eligible to attend public schools. To be eligible for continued enrollment in SST Public Schools, each student's parent must show proof of residency at the time

- P.O. Box cannot be listed as an address.
- A recently paid rent receipt.
- A current lease agreement.
- The most recent tax receipt indicating home ownership.
- A current utility bill indicating the address and name of the residence occupiers.
- Mailing address of the residence occupiers.
- Visual inspection of the residence.
- Interviews with persons with relevant information.
- Building permits issued to a parent on or before September 1 of the school year in which admission is sought as evidence of residency for the school year in which admission is sought only.

Falsification of residence on an enrollment form is a criminal offense. of enrollment.

### **Pre-Kindergarten Age Requirement**

To be eligible for Pre-Kindergarten your child must be at least four years of age by September 1st of the school year they are applying for and meet at least one of the following criteria listed below. The child must also reside within the District's Geographic Boundary.

- Be unable to speak and comprehend the English language and are Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students,
- Be educationally disadvantaged,
- Be homeless, as defined by 42 United States Code (U. S. C.) Section 1143a,
- Military Member's,
- First Responder's child
- Meet eligibility criteria for Head Start,
- Foster Care Child.

### **Kindergarten Age Requirement**

To qualify for the kindergarten, the child must be five years old on or before September 1st of the school year they are applying for.

### **First Grade Age Requirement**

To qualify for first grade the child must be six years old on or before September 1st of the school year they are applying for.

**Exception:** Students who have been enrolled in the first grade or have completed kindergarten at an accredited public school in another state may be eligible to attend first grade or successfully completed SST Kindergarten Acceleration process.

### **Attendance**

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, students and parents should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Two state laws – one dealing with compulsory attendance, the other with attendance for course credit – are of special interest to students and parents. These laws are discussed below.

#### ***Compulsory Attendance***

The state compulsory attendance law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 19 must attend school and school- required tutorial sessions unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused. School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory



attendance law. A student absent from school without permission – including absence from any class, required special programs, such as SAT/ PSAT classes, or required tutorials – will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action.

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18th birthday is required to attend each school day. If a student 18 years of age or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the school may revoke the student's enrollment. The student's presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing.

### ***Notice to Parents***

Under Texas Education Code § 25.095(a), you are hereby notified that if a student is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in any one school year or is absent for three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period, the parent is subject to prosecution under Texas Education Code § 25.093 and the student is subject to prosecution under Texas Education Code § 25.094 or to referral to a juvenile court in a county with a population of less than 100,000 for conduct that violates that section.

### ***Attendance for Credit***

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90% of the days the class is offered. These include both excused and unexcused absences.

A student who attends for at least 75 percent, but fewer than 90% of the days the class may be referred to a campus Attendance Review Committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit.

In determining whether there are extenuating circumstances for an absence, the Attendance Review Committee will use the following guidelines:

- All absences will be reviewed, with consideration given to special circumstances discussed in the Texas Education Code. For a student transferring into SST Public Schools after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.
- In reaching a consensus about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to

ensure that its decision is in the best interest of the student.

- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or parent could exercise control.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documentation expressing reasons for the student's absences.
- 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, parent, or other representative will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to discuss ways to earn or regain credit.

If credit is lost because of excessive absences, the Attendance Review Committee will decide how the student may regain credit. If the committee determines that there are no extenuating circumstances and that credit may not be regained, the student and/or parent may appeal the decision by filing a written request with the Campus Principal within 15 days of the last day of the semester. The appeal will then be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Campus Principal or designee shall inform the student or parent of the date, time, and place of the meeting.

### **Driver's License Attendance Verification**

To obtain or renew a driver's license, a student under 18 years of age must annually provide to the Texas Department of Public Safety a form obtained from the school verifying that the student has met the requirements set forth by state regulation. Eligible students may obtain the required Verification of Enrollment form from the main office.

### **Absence and Tardiness**

#### ***Absence in General***

When a student must be absent from school, parents are asked to call the school each day the student will be absent. Upon returning to school, it is mandatory that the student bring **a note from a parent explaining the absence, the Principal or designated school administrator, will have final approval as to if the absence will be excused. Notes**

**must be received within three days of the absence or the absence will be unexcused.** A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted.

All assignments missed will be due on the day the student returns to school unless otherwise arranged with teachers or the Assistant Principal. Any absence not approved in advance will be unexcused.

Because excessive un-excused absences are considered truancy under state law, the school reserves the right to take extreme absence cases to court. txcourts.gov "flow chart" (Exhibit A) will be used as a guide to enforce the truancy law for truant students.

### ***Types of Absences***

The school recognizes two kinds of absences: excused and unexcused. Students and parents should read this section carefully to understand the school's expectations. Students and parents should also be aware of the school's policy regarding homework, quizzes, and tests following an absence.

### **Excused Absences**

Students may be excused for temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the Principal. As discussed above, students must provide a written explanation for the absence and the absence must be approved by the Principal to be excused. The excuse will be filed in the attendance office and become part of the student's record.

An absence will be considered excused if the absence is for one or more of the following reasons:

- Personal illnesses that do not exceed three consecutive days. Illnesses that extend beyond three days will require a doctor's note.
- Family emergency or illness. \*\*
- Quarantine of the home. (Medical Note Needed)
- Bereavement of a family member. \*\*
- Observing religious holy days.
- Juvenile court proceeding documented by a probation officer.
- Appearing at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the student's application for United States citizenship.
- Student participation in a United States naturalization oath ceremony.

- Documented health care appointments, if the student begins classes or returns to school on the same day as the appointment.
- Serving as an election clerk.
- Required screening, diagnosis, and treatment for Medicaid- eligible students.
- Documented college visits by junior or senior students. A student will not be excused for this purpose for more than two days during the student's junior year and two days during the student's senior year.
- Temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the student's teacher, Principal, or Superintendent.

**\*\*Number of days allowed is at the discretion of the Principal or designated school administrator.**

The school will also excuse a student from attending school for travel under the following circumstances:

- Observing religious holy days;
- Attending a required court appearance;
- Appearing at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the student's application for United States citizenship;
- Taking part in a U.S. naturalization oath ceremony; or
- Serving as an election clerk.

Any student participating in an activity listed above will be allowed one day's excused absence for travelling to the activity and one day's excused absence for returning from the activity.

### **Unexcused Absences**

Any absence not listed above will be considered an unexcused absence. Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to bring a written note within three school days following an absence;
- Leaving school without the permission of the Principal/ Assistant Principal;
- Walking out of class; and
- Receiving a pass to report to a certain school area and failing to report.

### ***Make-Up Work***

A student must submit an "excused absence slip" to be eligible for make-up work. Students who are absent for school-related reasons or for an anticipated or planned absence must make

arrangements for make-up assignments prior to the absence.

For any class missed, the teacher may assign make-up work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the student's needs in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements. Students are responsible for obtaining and completing make-up work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher.

Students should receive credit for satisfactory makeup work after an absence. They may receive a zero as a placeholder until missed work is completed and turned in.

If a student misses a test due to an excused absence, a make-up test will be scheduled by the teacher. Students are responsible for taking the test at that time. Teachers are not obligated to reschedule a makeup exam.

**Students may not make up work following an unexcused absence. An unexcused absence may result in an "F" or grade of 0% for each assignment missed.**

### Tardy Policy

The school's tardy policy has been developed to emphasize the importance of each student arriving on time to school every day and remaining in the classroom for the entire period. Learning personal responsibility by arriving to school and class on time is an integral part of the school's standard of excellence, which helps prepare students for success.

Tardiness interrupts instructional time. Students should be inside the classroom by the school's announced start time. If a student is more than 20 minutes late to any class, he/she will be counted absent for the period. A student arriving after this time must first report to the front office and obtain a tardy slip. Tardiness to school will be unexcused, unless the student arrives to campus late for one of the following reasons:

- Attendance at a required court appointment
- Appointment with a doctor, dentist, or other professional
- Inclement Weather (Principal's Approval Needed).

During the first few days of school, the school will be working with the students, focusing on getting organized and arriving to class on time. **This Tardy**

**Policy will become effective on the 10th day of school.**

**The student's responsibility** is to move quickly and safely through school's hallway and report to class before the tardy bell rings. It is the student's responsibility to BE ON TIME to class!

**The parent's responsibility** is to discuss the school's tardy policy with their child, reinforcing the student's ability to be responsible for arriving to class on time and most importantly it is the parent's responsibility to bring the student to school on time.

**Note: Parents who bring their children to school after the 1st period tardy bell rings, must park their car, enter the building and sign their child in at the front office. The student will not be allowed to attend classes until the parent signs their child in at the front office.**

#### CONSEQUENCES FOR ARRIVING LATE TO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS WHOSE PARENTS DRIVE TO SCHOOL

Number of Tardies	Consequences
1-3	Verbal warning to parents
4-5	Written warning to parents
6-9	Conference with parents
For every 10	<b>After the 10 tardies, the Parent/ Guardian must meet with the school principal or designee and submit a letter explaining the reason(s) for the excessive tardiness.</b> Failure to meet this requirement may result in the school filing a case with Child Protective Services.

#### CONSEQUENCES FOR ARRIVING LATE TO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS WHO DRIVE THEMSELVES TO SCHOOL

Number of Tardies	Consequences
1-3	Verbal warning
4-5	Morning or afterschool detention
6-9	1 Day in-school suspension
For every 10	Student will be required to perform 1 hour of community service. School will provide the community

service options to the parents/guardian/student. Parent will be responsible for the student' fulfillment of community service hour. Failure to attend will result in a 1 day out-of-school suspension.

#### CONSEQUENCES FOR TARDINESS TO CLASS

Number of Tardies	Consequences
5-9	Saturday or afterschool detention
10-14	In-School Suspension
15-19	One day out-of-school suspension
20 and Above	Up to three days out-of-school suspension

### Dismissal Policy

Students should be picked up no later than thirty minutes after dismissal each day. Students should not be in the corridors, at their lockers, or in the school building later than ten minutes following dismissal time unless accompanied by a staff member. Students must follow all school rules during dismissal time.

#### *Dismissal/Pick Up Information Form*

Parents must fill out a form provided by the after school coordinator to provide dismissal information about their child. The school is not responsible for students who leave campus without written permission from an administrator. Students are not allowed to loiter in front of neighboring businesses and/ or school grounds. Disciplinary action will be taken against students who leave and return to campus without having written permission from an administrator.

#### *Loitering*

Students are not allowed to remain on campus unsupervised after designated dismissal times. The school will not have adult supervision after school hours. A student who remains on campus unsupervised after dismissal time may be subject to state criminal trespass laws.

Disciplinary consequences for remaining on campus unsupervised after designated dismissal times within a school year are as follows:

Number of Times Unsupervised after Dismissal Times	Consequences
2-3	Warning notice sent to parent informing of loitering policy and possible consequences for continued loitering
4	Meeting with parents
5	Student assigned to Saturday detention; school contacts CPS
7-9	Student assigned to one day in-school suspension
10-14	Student assigned to one day out-of-school suspension
15 and Above	Student assigned up to three days out-of-school suspension; school contacts local law enforcement

Additionally, students who have not been picked up after their designated dismissal time may be placed in the school's after school program. Parents of these students will be responsible for all fees incurred as a result of such placement.

#### *Early Dismissal from School*

In all instances of early dismissal, the following precautions are taken to ensure student safety:

Approval of parent or guardian is required in all instances of early dismissal. The Principal may release a student before the end of a school day only upon presentation of a written or face-to-face request from a parent (no telephone calls), or for reasons of emergency. Students may be released only to a parent or guardian whose signature is on file in the school office or to a properly identified person, authorized in writing by the parent or guardian to act on his or her behalf.

A student is over the age of 18 years of age may be released "on his or her own" only with verified parental permission. No staff member shall permit or cause a student to leave school prior to the regular dismissal time, except with the knowledge and approval of the Principal and parent.

### Withdrawal from School

#### *Voluntary Withdrawal*

A parent wishing to withdraw a student from school should notify the school at least 24 hours in advance. By providing this information in advance,

parents help facilitate the withdrawal process. A withdrawal form may be obtained from the school registrar's office. The Principal or other administrator will verify the information on the withdrawal form when the parent arrives to sign withdrawal papers to complete the process. The parent shall also provide the name of the new school in which the student will be enrolled, and must sign the formal withdrawal request to document that the student will continue to be enrolled in a school as required by compulsory attendance laws. On the student's last day, a copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student and a copy placed in the student's permanent record. The student will also be provided with a copy of the completed withdrawal form showing the student's grades earned to date to provide to his or her new school.

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

Withdrawing students and parents are expected to:

- Return all textbooks and checked-out materials and equipment;
- Complete any make-up work assigned;
- Pay any unpaid balance for student fees, if any; and
- Sign a release of student records.

### ***Involuntary Withdrawal***

The school may initiate withdrawal of a student under the age of 18 for nonattendance under the following conditions:

- 1) The student has been absent ten consecutive school days; and
- 2) Repeated efforts by the attendance officer and/or Principal to locate the student have been unsuccessful.

### **Dress and Grooming**

As authorized by state law and the school's charter, students are required to wear uniforms to school. The school's uniform policy and grooming

standards are established to teach grooming and hygiene, create a safe and orderly environment, instill discipline, and eliminate competition and distractions caused by varied dress styles. Students are expected to arrive in a proper school uniform every day, display modesty and neatness, and take pride in their uniforms. The school relies on student common sense and the support of parents to help maintain this dress code.

Parents must provide their student(s) with the required uniform, except in the case of educationally disadvantaged students as provided in the Texas Education Code. The school may provide a uniform for economically disadvantaged students. A request for school assistance for purchasing uniforms must be made in writing to the Principal, and include evidence of the inability to pay. Further details are available in the Principal's office.

A parent may choose for his or her student(s) to be exempted from the requirement of wearing a uniform and/or grooming if the parent provides a written statement that, as determined by the Board of Directors, states a bona fide religious or philosophical objection to the requirement.

### ***Notice to Parents and Students***

If a student arrives at school out of uniform or is groomed inappropriately, the student's parent(s) will be called to bring a change of clothes. The student will not be allowed to attend class until he or she is appropriately dressed. Any class time missed will be counted as an unexcused absence. The school reserves the right to determine and restrict unbecoming styles. Violations of the school's uniform policy and grooming standards will result in incremental disciplinary action.

### **Note to Parents and Students**

Uniforms with torn pants or shirts with holes are not allowed. All damaged uniform items should be replaced.

## Dress Code



**Uniform top for K-5**  
Will be sold at school



**Uniform top for 6-8**  
Will be sold at school



**Uniform top for high school**  
Will be sold at school

ITEM	ACCEPTABLE DRESS	SPECIAL COMMENTS AND INTERPRETATIONS
<b>Uniform Top</b>	All students must wear the SST School uniform shirt. Shirts must be tucked in at all times	This shirt must be purchased from the school, and may not be substituted with a plain red polo shirt or any other type of shirt.
<b>Pants / Belts</b>	Properly fitting navy blue, black or khaki pants/slacks/capri. Capri pants are allowed only for K-8 grades. Black brown or any neutral colored belt. (4-12 grades only)	Pants/Slacks may NOT be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Jeans</li> <li>➤ Cargo-style pants/shorts</li> <li>➤ Yoga pants, joggers, jeggings, leggings, and/or spandex</li> <li>➤ Baggy or sag, or tight-fitted</li> <li>➤ Must be worn properly at waist, no low waistline</li> <li>➤ Rolled up at the legs</li> <li>➤ Belts may not have rhinestones, wording, or designs</li> </ul>
<b>Shorts</b>	Properly fitting navy blue, black or khaki shorts or shorts (K-8th grades only)	Shorts must be to the mid of the knee or longer
<b>Dress / Skirts</b>	Dresses and Skirts are NOT allowed	
<b>Footwear</b>	Socks must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ White, navy, blue or black</li> <li>➤ Footies are not allowed</li> </ul> Shoes must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Plain/Neutral-colored lace-up shoes or loafers with closed toes/heels, or athletic shoes.</li> <li>➤ Secure straps on the heel for safety.</li> <li>➤ Kept clean at all times</li> </ul>	Socks must be worn at all times. Shoes may not be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sandals, mules, "Ugs", high heels, boots or Crocs</li> <li>➤ Heelies (shoes with wheels)</li> <li>➤ Illuminated or light up</li> </ul> Shoelaces must be tied at all times.
<b>Hair</b>	Hair must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Well-groomed</li> <li>➤ Non-distracting hair color that is styled in a way that is neither distracting nor conspicuous.</li> </ul>	Facial hair must be clean and well-groomed and styled in a way that is neither distracting nor conspicuous. Extreme hairstyles (Mohawk/Fauxhawk/Designs Cut and Spiked-up) or extreme un-natural colors are not permitted.

<b>Jewelry</b>	Earrings, hair jewelry, watches, bracelets, rings and necklaces that are not a safety hazard or a material or substantial disruption may be worn. Necklaces must be tucked into the uniform shirt. Bracelets and necklaces are limited to two.	Clip-on jewelry (earrings, nose rings, etc.) is not permitted. Students may wear only 1 pair of stud earrings; no large dangling or hoop earrings. Spike/gaged earrings, necklaces, bracelets are not permitted. No facial or body piercing.
<b>Outwear</b>	V neck cardigans must be: ➤ Color of navy, red, or black. (A cardigan is defined as a knitted sweater fastening down the front, with long sleeves).	Outwear, such as, “hoodies” (any clothing item with a hood), pullovers, or sweatshirts are not permitted to be worn inside the building. These items must be stored in the student’s locker. Hats, caps, bandannas, or other headwear are not permitted indoors except in the interest of religious practices, safety, or with the permission of the principal.
<b>General</b>	Solid colored, long sleeve shirt may be worn under the school uniform shirt. SST embroidered jackets may be worn. Students may also have unembroidered jackets. It should be purchased from school. Jacket must be color of navy blue, or black. Uniform style loose fitting pants is only acceptable option.	No tattoos (permanent or temporary) No accessories such as sunglasses No extreme make-up or nail color No wallet with chains

### ***P.E. Uniform Policy***

Kindergarten thru 3rd grade: Students are required to wear their school uniforms during P.E. classes.

Some campuses may require the purchase of a school PE uniform. Other campuses may require wearing a gray t- shirt (no sleeveless shirts/tank tops) and gray shorts (must be to the mid of the knee level or longer) or gray sweatpants. No spandex or tight fitting t-shirts, shorts, sweatpants, or slip on/ballet slipper style shoes are allowed. Students are required to change back to their school uniform after their P.E. class.

Some campuses may not require P.E. uniforms for 4th and 5th grades. Parents must check with campus administration for the local school policy.

### **Additional Uniform Policy and Grooming Requirements and Limitations**

In addition to wearing proper school uniforms, SST Public Schools requires that students follow the following dress code guidelines. SST Public Schools prohibits any clothing or grooming that, in the administration’s’ judgment, may reasonably be expected to cause disruption of, or interference with, normal school operations.

### ***Dress Code on Free Dress Days***

All general guidelines for dress apply on free dress days, even though school uniforms are not mandatory. Garments must be free of holes, tears, inappropriate wording, logos, messages or advertising. No short, skin tight, or legging dresses, or skirts may be worn. All dresses must have sleeves. Students may not wear low cut, midriff-baring, or backless blouses. Students may wear jeans, but they cannot be tight pants including jeggings, tights or skinny style pants. Clothing items must not depict images of violence. Parents will be called to bring a change of clothes or pick up a child if he or she violates the dress code.

### **Student Fees**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. Students are expected to provide their own consumable items, such pencils, paper, pens, erasers, and notebooks. Students may be required to pay certain fees or deposits, including:

- 1) A fee for materials for a class project that the student will keep, if the fee does not exceed the cost of materials.

- 2) Membership dues in voluntary student clubs or organizations and admission fees for extracurricular activities.
- 3) A security deposit for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment.
- 4) A fee for personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel, although a student may provide his or her own equipment or apparel if it meets reasonable requirements and standards relating to health and safety.
- 5) A fee for voluntarily purchased items, such as student publications, class rings, pictures, yearbooks, and graduation announcement.
- 6) A fee for voluntary student health and accident benefit plan.
- 7) A reasonable fee, not to exceed the actual annual maintenance cost, for the use of musical instruments and uniforms owned or rented by the school.
- 8) A fee for items of personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that become the property of the student.
- 9) A parking fee or a fee for an identification card.
- 10) A fee for a driver training course, not to exceed the actual cost per student in the program for the current school year.
- 11) A fee for an optional course offered for credit that requires the use of facilities not available on campus or the employment of an educator who is not part of the school's regular staff.
- 12) A fee for summer school courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- 13) A reasonable fee for transportation of a student who lives within two miles of the campus.
- 14) A reasonable fee, not to exceed \$50, for costs associated with an educational program offered outside of regular school hours through which a student who was absent from class receives instruction voluntarily for the purpose of making up the missed instruction and meeting the level of attendance required for class credit, so long as the fee would not create a

financial hardship or discourage the student from attending the program.

- 15) A fee for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- 16) A fee specifically permitted by any other statute.

The school may waive any fee or deposit if the student and parent are unable to pay. A request for such a waiver must be made in writing to the Principal, and include evidence of the inability to pay. Details for the fee waiver are available in the Principal's office.

### **Textbooks and Curriculum Materials**

State-approved textbooks and additional curriculum materials are provided free of charge for each subject or class, except for dual credit courses. Materials must be used by the student as directed by the teacher. A student who is issued damaged materials should report the damage to the teacher.

Students must return all textbooks and supplemental materials to the teacher at the end of the school year or when the student withdraws from school. Any student failing to return issued materials in an acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and educational materials until the damages are paid for by the student and/or parent. However, a student will be provided textbooks for use at school during the school day. The school may reduce or waive the payment requirement if the student is from a low-income family. The release of student records, including official transcripts, will be delayed pending payment for lost or severely damaged textbooks or supplemental materials.

Electronic textbooks shall be returned free of viruses or any other malicious software, and free of any plug-ins or software not specifically approved by the school. All components or applications that are a part of the electronic textbook when issued must be returned.

### **Student ID Cards**

ID cards may be issued to each student with a reasonable fee. This fee may be waived under appropriate circumstances; details for the fee waiver are available in the Principal's office of each campus. All students must wear student ID as part of their uniform. Students may be asked to show their ID card in order to order breakfast or lunch. If a student loses an ID card, he or she should go to the main office before or after school to purchase a



replacement. Students shall return their student ID cards upon withdrawal from the school.

## **Lost and Found**

Anyone who finds books, clothing or other personal items left unattended should bring these items to the front office. Students who have lost these items should check at the front office. Items will be kept in lost and found for up to seven days. The hallways are inspected each evening and all unsecured items are placed in the front office. Students should label all books, uniforms and other personal belongings with their name to ensure the prompt return of an item that has been misplaced.

## **Meals**

The school participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. Guidelines set by the Texas Department of Agriculture (“TDA”) and United States Department of Agriculture (“USDA”) are followed to meet the nutritional needs of all students. Menus may be viewed online on the school’s website. Each student has a meal account in which money may be deposited. Payments may be made online or at the school office.

### ***State-Mandated Nutrition Guidelines***

TDA establishes nutrition standards for all food and beverages sold during the school day. The school day is defined as midnight the day before to 30 minutes after the last dismissal bell. These “Smart Snack” standards apply to a la carte items sold by Child Nutrition as well as any sales conducted by other organizations. More detailed information may be obtained at the school office or online at [www.squaremeals.org](http://www.squaremeals.org).

### ***Free and Reduced-Cost Meals***

The school sends a Letter to Household with information regarding free and reduced price meals to each student’s home at the beginning of the school year. Eligibility applications are available online, or a paper copy may be obtained from the school office. The information requested includes all members of the household and income for each. A social security number is not required to apply for meal benefits. Should family income change, a new application may be submitted at any time during the school year.

### ***Lunch Periods***

All students will remain on-campus during the lunch period. Students may buy lunch at school or bring a packed lunch. During the lunch period,

students are expected to display good manners and courtesy. Students may eat only in the lunch area, and must clear their place and dispose of all trash appropriately. The lunch area will be monitored by teachers.

The following guidelines apply to the cafeteria.

- Students must dispose of plates and utensils in garbage bins.
- Students must keep tables, seats, and floors clean.
- Students must talk in a normal voice. No shouting is allowed.
- Students must use appropriate language at all times.
- Students must keep cafeteria lines orderly; no pushing, running, horse playing or cutting in lines.
- Students may not loiter in the cafeteria and hallways during lunch.
- Students must remain seated unless otherwise instructed.
- Students must keep hands, feet, personal belongings and food to themselves.
- No backpacks or books are allowed in the lunch area.
- Students who deface school property will be fined an amount necessary to cover the cost of restoring the damaged property.
- Students may not order food from outside.

Students who do not follow these guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Public Areas**

Hallways, stairways, the cafeteria, and restrooms are used by all students and school employees. The following rules of conduct apply to all students:

- Students may not loiter in hallways, stairways, the cafeteria, or restrooms.
- Students may not eat in these areas except in cafeteria.
- Students may not run in these areas.
- Students may not use any profane or vulgar language while in these areas.
- Students may not yell, scream, hit lockers or otherwise make excessive noise while in these areas.
- Students may not draw graffiti, post fliers or write on walls, bulletin boards, doors, desks, books or any other school property.

- Students must keep these areas clean and safe.
- Students may not leave belongings on the floor, outside of, or on top of lockers.
- Students must clean up after themselves and properly dispose of all trash.
- Students must immediately report any leaks, spills or other problems in the restroom to a teacher or the office.
- Students may not roughhouse, wrestle with, or trip others in these areas.

Students are not permitted in the halls during class periods or during the lunch hour unless they are accompanied by a teacher or have a hall pass from an authorized staff member. Students who are found in the halls without passes or who violate the guidelines listed above will be subject to disciplinary action.

Additionally, teachers have the authority to submit referrals to

- Use of a classroom without teacher permission.
- Using or removing any item from a teacher's desk.
- Using laboratories when no teacher is present.
- Using the playground without permission.
- Presence in construction areas or any other area deemed "off limits" by the Principal or Assistant Principals.
- Use of the school phone during the day without permission from authorized school personnel.

## **Closed Campus**

The school operates a closed campus. Students are not allowed to leave for any reason during the school day without properly checking out in accordance with campus rules and procedures.

## **Library**

The library is a resource center used by all students for class assignments and for leisure-time reading of appropriate materials. The resources of the library are available to support and enhance student learning and understanding and to encourage students to become independent, lifelong learners. Students may use the library before and after school and during study hall. Books, magazines and reserve materials may be checked out for varying times. Desks and carrels are

available for studying. Students may perform group work for class if they work quietly. School policy does not allow students to bring food or drink into the library. The total number of students who may use the library at any one time will be limited.

## **Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices**

Possession and use of cell phones, computers, and other devices capable of electronic communications at school is a privilege and not a right. Possession and use of such devices at school or school-related events or activities shall be subject to school approval and regulations.

All cellular phones must be turned off and kept in the locker during school day and while in school building. The school will not be responsible for damage to, loss, or theft of any cellular phone or electronic device a student brings to school. Devices that are found on students will be confiscated. If a school employee observes a student using any cell phone or other telecommunication device during the school day or on a school bus to or from the school or a school-related activity, the school employee shall confiscate the device and turn it into the front office. Any such device may be powered on and searched by school officials if there is a reasonable cause to believe that the device has been used in the transmission or reception of communications prohibited by law, policy, or regulation. The school administration will return confiscated items to the parent. The school will not be responsible for damage to or loss or theft of confiscated items.

School administrators shall have the discretion to determine the appropriate use of phones for students participating in extracurricular activities or attending school-sponsored or school-related activities on or off school property.

The use of camera phones for recording is strictly forbidden on the school premises at any time.

The school further prohibits students from possessing other electronic devices – including but not limited to radios, tape or CD players, iPods, iPad, smart watches, electronic games and any other similar devices with access to internet, photos, games, calls, or camera – on school property during the school day. These devices disrupt classes and distract others from learning. If a school employee observes a student using any electronic device during the school day or on a school bus to or from the school or a school related activity, the school

employee will confiscate the device and turn it into the front office. The school administration will return confiscated items to the parent. The school will not be responsible for damage to or loss or theft of confiscated items.

Any student refusing to give a cell phone or other electronic device to school staff shall be subject to disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Phone Messages**

During school hours, parents should not try to reach a student's cell phone. Parents should call the main office in emergency situations. The school will then notify the student of any emergency.

## **Distribution of Published Materials**

### ***School Materials***

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

### ***Non-School Materials***

Students must obtain express prior approval of the Principal before distributing, ***posting, selling, or circulating*** written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials on campus.

Non-school literature shall not be distributed by students on school property if:

- The materials are obscene, vulgar, or otherwise inappropriate for the age and maturity of the audience.
- The materials endorse actions endangering the health or safety of students.
- The materials promote illegal use of drugs, alcohol, or other controlled substances.
- The distribution of such materials would violate the intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or other rights of another person.
- The materials contain defamatory statements about public figures or others.
- The materials advocate imminent lawless or disruptive action and are likely to incite or produce such action.
- The materials are hate literature or similar publications that scurrilously attack ethnic, religious, or racial groups or contain content

aimed at creating hostility and violence, and the materials would materially and substantially interfere with school activities or the rights of others.

- There is reasonable cause to believe that distribution of the non-school literature would result in material and substantial interference with school activities or the rights of others.

Any student who posts 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.***

### ***Fundraising***

No person may solicit contributions or collect funds for any purpose from students or school personnel on school property, at school-sponsored events, or on school transportation unless he or she has the written permission of the Principal or Superintendent.

### ***Sales***

Advertising may be permitted for approved school-related activities. This may include school newspapers, yearbooks, and other fundraising projects. Advertising material that promotes the use of alcohol and/or tobacco is strictly prohibited. No person may display, solicit, or sell any item or service to students or school personnel while on school property, at school-sponsored events, or on school transportation without the written permission of the Principal.

### ***Demonstrations or Meetings on School Premises (Non-School Sponsored)***

Any student who wishes to promote, organize or participate in a non-school sponsored demonstration or meeting on school premises must obtain prior written approval from the Principal at least three days prior to the requested activity. This three-day period does not include the day of the request or the day of the activity. The school may prohibit demonstrations or meetings that materially and substantially interfere with school activities or the rights of other students or teachers; are vulgar or profane; might reasonably be perceived to advocate drug or alcohol use, irresponsible sex, or conduct otherwise inconsistent with the shared values of a civilized order; inappropriate for the maturity level of the audience; associates the school with a non-neutral

position on matters of political controversy; and/or the school demonstrates reasonable cause to believe that the expression would create material and substantial interference with its educational program.

## **Bulletin Boards**

Students must obtain permission from teachers to post materials on classroom bulletin boards and from the Principal to post materials on hallway bulletin boards. Materials should not be taped to glass surfaces, and students should not damage any surface by using tacks or pins to post materials.

## **Deliveries**

Flowers, balloons, food items etc. should not be delivered to the school for students. These will not be delivered to the classroom. Student may not receive any form of delivery (balloons, food, flowers etc.) except by any parent/guardian in person and as necessary for the school day. Food items, including but not limited to, fast food, pizza, cakes, etc. will not be accepted for delivery to the students. However, parents are welcome to join students for a cafeteria lunch in our school cafeteria.

Parents who want to organize activities in school such as birthday parties, pizza parties etc., must receive prior approval from the Principal or his/her designee. All food items must be store-bought; homemade items will not be allowed.

## **School Activities**

The school offers a wide range of activities to enrich student learning during and after school. Students participating in such activities are subject to the provisions of this Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct whenever the students are under the direct supervision of a school employee.

### ***Field Trips***

Field trips offer exciting ways to learn. Students will have the opportunity to go on field trips at various times during the school year. The following rules apply to all field trips:

- Students must return a Field Trip Permission Slip signed by his or her parent(s) by the specified date. Phone calls will not be accepted as permission.
- Students must wear their school uniforms, unless otherwise specified.
- Students will abide by the Student Code of Conduct while on the field trip.

- Students will be responsible to make up any missed assignments.
- The group will leave within five minutes of the scheduled departure time. After a group returns from a field trip, the school is not responsible for students who are not picked up at the designated time.
- School official may require parent to participate in the field trip to supervise his/her child.
- While field trips are an important part of a student's education, they are also a privilege that must be earned. A student will be eligible to attend the campus field trip if he/she meets all of these requirements three days prior to the trip taking place:
  - passing ALL classes
  - no more than one office referral within 30 calendar days of the trip
  - have school attendance of 90% or higher for the year.

*\*Grades, behavior, and attendance will all be verified three days prior to the trip, but students may still lose the chance to attend at any time. Teachers and administrators reserve the right to exclude a student based on negative classroom behavior even if they meet the above requirements. The parent will be notified if the student may not attend. All decisions are approved by administration and final.*

### ***After-School Activities***

There is no better way for students to enrich their education than by taking part in clubs and after-school activities, or working with a teacher. Students who stay for after-school activities are expected to follow these rules:

- Students must be with a teacher or other staff member at all times.
- Students must arrange for their own transportation; the student's ride should arrive promptly at the end of the activity.
- Students must abide by the Student Code of Conduct while participating in the activity.
- Students may not stay after school to wait for another student.

### ***Science Fair***

The school organizes a school-wide science fair every year. Due to the school's high expectations in math, science and technology, each student is

required to complete an individual or group research project in one of these areas.

The science fair handbook will be provided to each student by the science fair committee. Students are required to follow the guidelines cited in the science fair handbook.

### ***Arts and Activity Groups***

Students participating in arts and activity groups will be evaluated on both practice and performance. Students and parents should be aware of possible conflicts with other activities, within and out of the school system.

Students participating in performing arts and activity groups are subject to the following guidelines:

- Participating students must adhere to all organizational rules and policies.

Students are expected to attend rehearsals and performances. Participation will be a determining factor of the student's grade.

- A student may have his or her semester grade lowered one letter grade for any unexcused absences from scheduled rehearsals or performances. Additionally, the student may lose his or her position in the group and become an alternate performer.

The following conditions constitute reason for an excused absence for a required rehearsal or performance:

- Scheduled family trip or vacation, provided the student provides five days' written notice obtains prior approval from the director.
- Family emergencies.
- Illness. The student should notify the activity director of the illness as soon as possible.
- Conflicting school activities that have been cleared with the activity director and the Principal.

The Principal may review a request to miss a required rehearsal or performance if the director denies the request. The Principal will meet with the concerned student and the director. The decision of the Principal is final.

## **Transportation**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips may be required to ride a school vehicle to and from the event. The Principal, however, may make an exception if the parent personally requests that the student be permitted to ride with the parent, or if the parent presents a written request that the student be permitted to ride with an adult designated by the parent, so long as the written request is presented before the scheduled trip.

Riding a school vehicle is a privilege. School vehicle drivers have the authority to maintain discipline and require seating charts. Students are expected to assist school staff in ensuring that school vehicles remain in good condition. When riding a school vehicle, 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.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the vehicle or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, legs, or any object out of any window, or throw objects within or out of the vehicle.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco on school buses.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal in order to leave or cross in front of the vehicle.

Only designated students are allowed to ride in school vehicles. Students may neither ride the vehicle to a different location nor have friends ride the vehicle to participate in after-school activities. Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and the student's bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

If bus transportation is required as a result of an Individual Education Plan ("IEP"), the Admissions Review and Dismissal ("ARD") Committee will have discretion in determining appropriate disciplinary consequences for improper behavior in a school vehicle.

## **Student Parking**

Students shall acquire administration before parking a vehicle on school property. In order to park on campus, students must hold a valid driver's license and have proof of insurance. Unauthorized vehicles will be towed at the owner's expense. Students driving on school property must follow all posted speed limits and comply with traffic laws. Unsafe operation of a vehicle on campus (speeding, improper parking, etc.) may result in disciplinary action and/or removal of parking privileges.

Students are instructed to leave their vehicles immediately after parking. Under no circumstances will students be allowed to sit in their vehicles.

## **Pledges of Allegiance**

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the Campus Director to excuse their child from reciting a pledge.

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.

## **Recitation 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." A student will be exempted from this requirement if a parent provides a written statement requesting that the student be excused, the school determines that the student has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or the parent is a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity.

## **Prayer and Meditation**

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

## **School Facilities**

### ***Damage to School Property***

Students shall not vandalize or otherwise damage or deface any property belonging to or used by the school, including furniture and other equipment, textbooks, and library books. To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended—both this year and in coming years—littering, defacing, or damaging school property will not be tolerated. In addition to disciplinary sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct, parents or guardians of students who are guilty of damaging school property shall be liable for damages in accordance with state law.

# SECTION II : STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY

## General Information

Student health and safety is a high priority of SST Public Schools. Student cooperation is essential to ensuring health and safety. Students should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this Handbook, including the Student Code of
- Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the Principal, teachers, or other school staff.
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus and threats made by a person toward a student or staff member.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.

Immediately follow instructions from staff members who are overseeing student welfare.

## Tobacco-Free School Notice

Smoking and using smokeless tobacco are not permitted in school buildings, vehicles, or on school property, 300 feet from school property, or at school-related or school-sanctioned events off school property. Students may not possess tobacco products at any of the locations or activities listed above. All violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law. Additionally, student violators are subject to the disciplinary terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

## Alcohol-Free School Notice

In order to provide a safe and alcohol-free environment for students and employees, all alcoholic beverages are prohibited on school property at all times, and at all school-sanctioned activities occurring on or off school property. Student violators are subject to the disciplinary terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

## Drug-Free School Notice

The school believes that student use of illicit drugs is both wrong and harmful. Consequently, the

school prohibits the use, sale, possession, or distribution of illicit drugs by students on school premises or any school activity, regardless of its location. Student violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law, as well as the disciplinary terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

## Asbestos Management Plan

All school facilities have been inspected for asbestos by a licensed Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (“AHERA”) inspector. An Asbestos Management Plan has been created for the school in accordance with federal regulations.

Parents may view the Asbestos Management Plan by contacting the Principal.

## Bacterial Meningitis

State law requires SST Public Schools to provide the following information:

### 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 most common and the least serious. Bacterial meningitis is the most common form of serious bacterial infection with the potential for serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease, but requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

### 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. Students and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pains, and drowsiness or confusion. In both student 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. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing; sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes). 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?

Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss. While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include a disease outbreak in a community or for people traveling to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. Also, a vaccine is recommended by some groups for college students, particularly freshmen living in dorms or residence halls. The vaccine is safe and effective (85–90%). It 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 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 Texas Department of Health office to ask about meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>; and the Texas Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us>

## Communicable Diseases

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. Parents of a student with a communicable or contagious disease should phone the Principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. Among the more common of these diseases are the following:

- Amebiasis
- Influenza
- Campylobacteriosis
- Measles (rubeola)
- Chickenpox
- Meningitis, bacterial
- Common cold
- Meningitis, viral
- Conjunctivitis, bacterial and/or viral
- Mumps
- Fever
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Fifth disease (erythema infectiosum)
- Ringworm
- Gastroenteritis
- Rubella (German measles)
- Giardiasis
- Salmonellosis
- Head lice (pediculosis) - nit free
- Scabies
- Hepatitis A
- Shigellosis
- Infections (wounds, skin, and soft tissue)
- Streptococcal sore throat and scarlet fever
- Infectious mononucleosis
- Tuberculosis, pulmonary

Any student excluded from school attendance for reason of communicable disease may be readmitted by one or more of the following methods, as determined by the local health authority:

- Certificate of the attending physician, advanced practice nurse, or physician assistant attesting that the child does not currently have signs or symptoms of a communicable disease or to the disease's non-infectiousness in a school setting;
- Submitting a permit for readmission issued by a local health authority; or
- Meeting readmission criteria as established by the commissioner of health.



## **Immunizations**

The State of Texas requires that every child in the state be immunized against preventable diseases caused by infectious agents, in accordance with an established immunization schedule. To determine the specific number of doses that are required for your student, please read the “2017-2018” Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Students.” This document and more information about school vaccine requirements are available at the Texas Department of State Health Services (“DSHS”) Immunization Branch website: [www.ImmunizeTexas.com](http://www.ImmunizeTexas.com) (click on the “School & Childcare” link).

Proof of immunization may be shown through personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

For Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten Students: Current Immunization record must be provided to the school during the registration process. The students in these grade levels cannot attend school unless all immunization requirements are met.

**Immunizations received outside the United States**  
Vaccinations received outside the United States must be adequately documented and comparable to the schedule and dosage required by the State of Texas. Foreign immunization records must be legible and officially certified.

### ***Provisional Enrollment***

A student may be enrolled provisionally for no more than 30 days if he or she transfers from one Texas school to another, and is awaiting the transfer of immunization records. A student may be enrolled provisionally if the student has an immunization record that indicates the student has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate vaccine required by law.

To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly, as is medically feasible and provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school. SST Public Schools shall review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student every 30 days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccination. If, at the end of the 30-day period, a student has not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, the student is not in compliance and the

school shall exclude him or her from school attendance until the required dose is administered.

A student who is homeless, as defined by the McKinney Act (42 U.S.C. § 11302), shall be admitted temporarily for 30 days if acceptable evidence of vaccination is not available. The school shall promptly refer the student to appropriate public health programs to obtain the required vaccinations.

### ***Exclusions from Immunization Requirements***

Exclusions from immunization compliance are allowable on an individual basis for medical reasons, reasons of conscience, and active duty with the armed forces of the United States.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student must present a statement signed by the child’s physician (M.D. or D.O.), duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States who has examined the child, in which it is stated that, in the physician’s opinion, the vaccine required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the child or any member of the child’s household. Unless it is written in the statement that a lifelong condition exists, the exemption statement is valid for only one year from the date signed by the physician.

To claim an exclusion for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, a signed DSHS affidavit must be presented by the student’s parent, stating that the student’s parent declines vaccinations for reasons of conscience, including because of the person’s religious beliefs. The affidavit will be valid for a two- year period. Information for obtaining an affidavit for exclusion from immunization requirements is available at [www.ImmunizeTexas.com](http://www.ImmunizeTexas.com) (click on the “School/Childcare Requirements” link). The official DSHS affidavit form must be notarized and submitted to the school office within 90 days from the date it is notarized. SST Public Schools will accept only official DSHS affidavit forms developed and issued by DSHS; no other forms or reproductions will be allowed. The student, who has not received the required immunizations for reasons of conscience, including religious beliefs, may be excluded from school in times of emergency or epidemic declared by the commissioner of public health.

To claim an exclusion for military service, the student must prove that he or she is serving on active duty with the armed forces of the United States.

If a parent seeks an exemption for more than one student, a separate form must be provided for each student.

### ***Immunization Records Reporting***

The school's record of your student's immunization history, while private in most instances, may be inspected by the Texas Education Agency, local health departments and the Texas Department of Health and transferred to other schools associated with the transfer of your student to those schools.

### **Emergency Medical Treatment**

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity and the parent cannot be reached, school employees will seek emergency medical treatment unless a parent has previously provided a written statement denying this authorization. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form, which includes information about their student's allergies to medications, etc. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date. Please contact the Principal or secretary to update any information.

### **Illness During the School Day**

Students becoming ill or injured during the school day are directed to report to the medical assistant. If the medical assistant is not available, the student should report to the main office. Parents or other persons designated on the student's enrollment application will be contacted as appropriate.

Except in emergencies, students failing to report to the medical assistant or main office will be counted absent, unexcused. Students must report to the main office before leaving the building.

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. 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 medical assistant.

If your child vomits during the school day due to illness, he/she will be sent home and will not be able

to return until he/she is vomit free without vomit-suppressing medications for at least 24 hours.

Conjunctivitis (pink eye) can sometimes be confused with allergies, so it can be difficult to determine if they have it. Indications include: crusty eyelids and/or redness and conjunctival swelling in only one eye. If the student presents these symptoms, he/she will be sent home and will be able to return with clearance to return with orders from the treating physician.

### **Sending Students Home from School**

Students will be sent home for:

- Fever more than 100 Degrees
- Vomiting (unless cause can be attributed as non-illness related)
- Clear indication of conjunctivitis (pink eye). This is sometimes confused with allergies, so it can be difficult to determine whether a student needs to go home. Crusty eyelids and/or redness and conjunctival swelling in only one eye are indications of conjunctivitis, not allergies.
- Ringworm on the scalp only. If ringworm is suspected on the body, student may stay at school as long as the ringworm stays covered.
- Scabies, until treatment is completed and doctor approves readmission
- Unexplained rash, especially if accompanied by other viral symptoms. Parents will be contacted and student must bring a physician note for readmission.
- Lice (no nit policy).

### **Administration of Medication**

All medication should be administered outside of school hours, if possible. If necessary, medication can be administered at school under the following circumstances:

- 1) The school will NOT dispense over the counter medication (i.e., acetaminophen, aspirin, ibuprofen, etc.) to students without physician's orders and parent(s)/guardian will need to bring the medication in a sealed container.
- 2) Medication brought to school must be submitted to the school medical assistant, along with a Medication
- 3) Administration Directions Form signed by the student's physician and parent.

Prescription medications administered during school hours must be prescribed by a physician or advanced medical assistant practitioner (“ANP”) and filled by a pharmacist licensed in the State of Texas.

- 4) Prescription medications must be submitted in a labeled container showing the student’s name, name of the medication, reason the medication is being given, proper dosage amounts, the time the medication must be taken, route of transmission, and the method used to administer the medication. Medications sent in plastic baggies or unlabeled containers will NOT be administered.
- 5) Only the amount of medication needed should be delivered to the school, i.e., enough medication to last one day, one week, etc. In cases of prolonged need, send in the amount for a clearly specified period. Extra medication will not be sent home with the student.
- 6) If the school provides liability insurance for a licensed physician or registered medical assistant who provides volunteer services to the school, the Board may allow the physician or medical assistant to administer to any student nonprescription medication or medication currently prescribed for the student by the student’s personal physician.
- 7) The SST medication administration form must be filled by the treating physician in order for the medical assistant to administer any medication.

Changes to daily medications require written instruction from the physician or ANP and written permission from the parent. Parents are responsible for advising the school office that a medication has been discontinued.

### ***Asthma and Anaphylaxis Medication***

Asthma and anaphylaxis are life-threatening conditions, and students with those conditions are entitled to possess and self-administer prescription medication while on school property or at school-related events with physicians’ orders.

Student possession and self-administration of asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school requires the student to demonstrate his or her ability to self-administer the medication to the

student’s physician or other licensed health care provider and the school medical assistant, if available. Requirements also include written authorization from the student’s parent and physician or other licensed health care provider on file in the school office indicating the student is capable of independently administering his or her own asthma or emergency anaphylaxis medication. Medication in a student’s possession must be in an original container with a prescription label. Please note that most pharmacies will place a label on the inhaler device upon request.

### **Food Allergy Information**

The parent of each student enrolled at the school must complete a form provided by the School that discloses (1) whether the child has a food allergy or a severe food allergy that should be disclosed to the School to enable the School to take any necessary precautions regarding the child’s safety and (2) specifies the food(s) to which the child is allergic and the nature of the allergic reaction.

For purposes of this requirement, the term “severe food allergy” means a dangerous or life-threatening reaction of the human body to a food-borne allergen introduced by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact that requires immediate medical attention.

(3) The School may also require information from a child’s physician if the child has food allergies.

Food allergy information forms will be maintained in the child’s student records, and shall remain confidential. Information provided on food allergy information forms may be disclosed to teachers, school counselors, school medical assistants, and other appropriate school personnel only to the extent consistent with Board policy and as permissible under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (“FERPA”).

### **Potty Trained**

All students entering SST Public Schools must be potty trained unless it states otherwise in their Individualized Health Plan (IHP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

### **Fitness Testing**

According to requirements under state law, the school will annually assess the physical fitness of students. The school is not required to assess a student for whom, as a result of disability or other condition identified by rule or law, the assessment exam is inappropriate. Annually, the coaches will

conduct a physical fitness assessment mandated by the state of students in grades 3 – 12 and all students in physical education and or athletics in 9 - 12. At the end of testing, the campus will send the results to all parent/guardian.

### **Dyslexia and Related Disorders**

From time to time, students may be screened and treated for dyslexia and other related disorders in accordance with programs, rules, and standards approved by the State of Texas. Parents will be notified should the school determine a need to identify or assist a student diagnosed with dyslexia or related disorder.

### **Vision and Hearing Screenings**

All children enrolled in Texas schools must be screened for possible vision and hearing problems in accordance with regulations issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services. Students shall be screened for vision and hearing problems annually at any time during the year prior to May 31.

Screening records for individual students may be inspected by the Texas Department of State Health Services or a local health department, and may be transferred to another school without parental consent.

#### **Exemption**

A student is exempt from screening requirements if screening conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the individual is an adherent or a member. To qualify for the exemption, the individual or, if the individual is a minor, the minor's parent, managing conservator, or guardian, must submit to the Principal on or before the day of admission an affidavit stating the objections to screening.

### **Spinal Screening**

All children in 6th–9th grade must be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. The screening requirement for students entering grade six or nine may be met if the child has been screened for spinal deformities during the previous year.

A parent, managing conservator, or guardian who declined participation in the spinal screening provided by the school must submit to the Principal documentation of a professional examination which includes the results of a forward-bend test. This documentation must be submitted to the school

during the year the student is scheduled for screening or, if the professional exam is obtained during the following summer, at the beginning of the following school year.

#### **Exemption**

A student is exempt from screening if the screening conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the individual is an adherent or member. To qualify for the exemption, the student's parent, managing conservator, or guardian must submit to the Principal on or before the day of the screening procedure an affidavit stating the objections to screening.

### **Acanthosis Nigricans Screening**

Acanthosis Nigricans (AN) is a skin condition characterized by abnormally increased coloration (hyperpigmentation) and "velvety" thickening (hyperkeratosis) of the skin, particularly of skin fold regions, such as of the neck and under the arms (axillae). The screening is mandated by Texas law (Section 95.001, Health and Safety Code). Students who attend public or private schools in grades K, 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 7th are required to participate in the screening.

#### **Exemption**

A student is exempt from screening if the screening conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the individual is an adherent or member. To qualify for the exemption, the student's parent, managing conservator, or guardian must submit to the Principal on or before the day of the screening procedure an affidavit stating the objections to screening.

### **Counseling Services**

The school provides a teacher to see students regarding problems that they may be experiencing at school or home. Usually, a student's class teacher will refer the student to the designated teacher with the approval of the Principal or Assistant Principal.

### **Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**

#### ***Statement of Nondiscrimination***

SST Public Schools believes that all students learn best in an environment free from harassment, and that student welfare is best served when students can work free from discrimination. Students are

expected to treat other students and School employees with courtesy and respect, to avoid behaviors known to be offensive, and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. School employees are also expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The Board of Directors has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behavior. In accordance with these policies and procedures, SST Public Schools prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. SST Public Schools also prohibits dating violence, as defined in this Handbook. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is also a violation of school policy.

### ***Discrimination***

For purposes of this handbook, discrimination against a student is defined as conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law that adversely affects the student.

### ***Prohibited Harassment***

Prohibited harassment of a student is defined as physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the student's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

- Affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

Prohibited harassment includes dating violence as defined by this Handbook.

Examples of prohibited harassment may include offensive or derogatory language directed at another person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening or intimidating conduct; offensive jokes; name calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; display of graffiti or printed

material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

### ***Sexual Harassment***

In compliance with the requirements of, SST Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities.

Sexual harassment of a student, including harassment committed by another student, includes unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or sexually motivated physical, verbal,

Or nonverbal conduct when 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, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

Examples of sexual harassment of a student may include sexual advances; touching intimate body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

SST Public Schools does not tolerate sexual harassment of a student by employees or other students. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and school employees are prohibited. Sexual relationships between students and school employees are always prohibited, even if consensual. Sexual harassment of a student by a school employee includes both welcome and unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- A school employee causes the student to believe that the student must submit to the conduct in order to participate in a school program or activity, or that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the student submits to the conduct; or

- 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, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities; or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment.

### ***Dating Violence***

Dating violence occurs when one partner in a dating relationship, either past or current, intentionally uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other partner. Examples of dating violence against a student may include physical or sexual assaults, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the student or 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, attempts to isolate the student from friends and family, stalking, or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

Dating violence is considered prohibited harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct

- Affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

### ***Use by Students Before and After School***

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 the 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, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately.

### ***Retaliation***

SST Public Schools prohibits retaliation against a student alleged to have experienced discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, or another student who, in good faith, makes a report, serves as a witness, or otherwise participates in an investigation.

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a School investigation regarding discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is subject to appropriate discipline.

### ***Reporting Procedures***

A student who experiences discrimination or harassment based on race, color, national origin, religion, age, or gender, including sexual harassment, or who believes that another student has experienced such prohibited discrimination or harassment must immediately:

- 1) Report the experience to campus Title IX coordinator. If she/he is absent, a teacher, a counselor, the Campus, Principal, or to another school employee may take the complaint with respecting the confidentiality of the complaint. The teacher, counselor, or other school employee who receives such a report must immediately relay that report to the Campus Title IX coordinator, who will report directly to the:

SST Title IX Coordinator

Dr. Ekrem Demirci

Director of Student Affairs

5300 Wurzbach Road Suite 800

San Antonio, Texas 78238 Telephone: 210-957-1955

*Each campus Dean of Students is the campus Title IX coordinator.*

- 2) A student who experiences discrimination or harassment based on disability or who believes that another student has experienced such prohibited discrimination or harassment must immediately report to the campus ADA/Section 504 Coordinator who will report directly to:

SST ADA/Section 504 Coordinator

Yvette Alvarez

Director of Special Education

5300 Wurzbach Road Suite 800  
San Antonio, Texas 78238 Telephone: 210-957-1955

*Each campus Dean of Students is the campus ADA/Section 504 coordinator.*

- 3) A student shall not be required to report prohibited discrimination or harassment to the person alleged to have committed the conduct. Reports of prohibited conduct involving the campus Title IX Coordinator or ADA/Section 504 Coordinator must be directed to the appropriate Campus Principal. Reports of prohibited conduct involving the Campus Principal are to be submitted to the local Area Superintendent.

### **Consultation and Assistance**

With regard to the investigation of gender discrimination and sexual harassment investigation, the campus Title IX coordinator may consult with and/or request assistance from the Campus Principal, the Area Superintendent, the

Director of Operation, Director of Student Affairs, or the SST attorney.

With regard to a disability discrimination/harassment investigation, the campus ADA/Section 504 Coordinator may consult with and/or request assistance from the Campus SPED/504 Coordinator, the Associate Director of Special Programs, the District Special Education Coordinator, the District Director of Academics, the Area Superintendent, or the SST attorney.

### ***Investigation of Complaints***

After receiving a complaint of prohibited discrimination or harassment, the School may, but need not, require the student to prepare a written report. Oral complaints will be reduced to written form. Upon receipt of a complaint, the appropriate campus Title IX Coordinator/ or ADA/Section 504 Coordinator or designee shall promptly undertake an investigation. Following completion of the investigation, the campus Title IX Coordinator/ or ADA/Section 504 Coordinator or designee will discuss his or her findings with the Campus Principal, and will prepare a written decision regarding the complaint.

When appropriate, the School may take interim action to avoid additional opportunities for discrimination or harassment. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the person

making the report, the person against whom the report is filed, and any others with knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the allegations. If the results of the investigation establish that prohibited discrimination or harassment occurred, the School shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the discrimination or harassment and prevent its recurrence. The School may take disciplinary action based on the results of the investigation, even if the School concludes that the conduct did not rise to the level of harassment prohibited by law or policy

### ***Confidentiality***

To the greatest extent possible, the School shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

### ***Appeal***

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the process set forth in Board Policy PG-3.30 (Parent and Student Complaints and Grievances), beginning at Level Two.

### **Freedom from Bullying and Cyber-bullying**

SST Public Schools prohibits bullying as defined by this section, as well as retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process. Bullying means a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or the school; or

- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Cyberbullying means bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet- based communication tool.

The SST bullying policy applies to:

- Bullying that occurs on or is delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school- related activity on or off school property;
- Bullying that occurs on a publicly or privately owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of students to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity; and
- Cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity if the cyberbullying:
- Interferes with a student’s educational opportunities; or
- Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school- related activity.

### ***Reporting Procedures***

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced any form of bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to the Principal or designee, a teacher, counselor, or other school employee. A report may be made orally or in writing, and may be submitted anonymously. Any school employee who receives notice that a student has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the Principal or designee. The Principal or designee will notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any student witnesses of available counseling options.

The Principal or designee shall provide notice of incident of alleged bullying to:

- A parent or guardian of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the date the incident is reported; and
- A parent or guardian of the alleged bully within a reasonable amount of time after the incident.

### ***Investigation of Report***

The Principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited harassment and, if so, proceed under that policy instead. The Principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report, and shall take prompt interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

The Principal or designee shall prepare a written report of the investigation, including a determination of whether bullying occurred. If the results of an investigation indicated that bullying occurred, the school shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. SST Public Schools may take action based on the results of an investigation, even if the school concludes that the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying under this policy.

Discipline for bullying of a student with disabilities shall comply with applicable requirements under federal law, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.). SST Public Schools may not impose discipline on a student who, after an investigation, is found to be a victim of bullying, based on that student’s use of reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying.

The Principal, or the Principal’s designee, may make a report to the police department of the municipality in which the school is located or, if the school is not in a municipality, the sheriff of the county in which the school is located if, after an investigation is completed, the Principal or designee has reasonable grounds to believe that a student engaged in conduct that constitutes an offense under Section 22.01 (Assault) or 42.07(a) (7) (Harassment), Texas Penal Code.

### ***Confidentiality***

To the greatest extent possible, the School shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

### ***Appeal***

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the SST Public Schools’ grievance procedure.



## Law Enforcement Agencies

The following procedures shall be followed when law enforcement officers and other lawful authorities want to question or interview a student at the school:

- The school administration shall verify and record the identity of the official and request an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school;
- The school administration shall make reasonable efforts to notify the student's parent.
- Unless prohibited by law or when the student has been arrested or taken into police custody, a staff member shall be present during the questioning or interview.
- When the investigation involves allegations of child abuse, special rules apply. See "Child Abuse Reporting and Programs" on page 34.
- The school shall permit a student to be taken into custody: Pursuant to an order of the juvenile court;
- Pursuant to 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 the terms of probation imposed by a juvenile court;
- Pursuant to a properly issued directive to apprehend; or
- By an authorized representative of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order and under the conditions set out in Texas Family Code § 262.104 relating to the student's physical health or safety.

## Child Abuse Reporting and Programs

SST Public Schools provides child abuse anti-victimization programs and cooperates with official child abuse investigators as required by law. SST provides training to its teachers and students in preventing and addressing incidents of sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, including knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a child may be a victim of sexual abuse or

maltreatment. Assistance, interventions and counseling options are also available.

SST's administration shall cooperate with law enforcement investigations of child abuse, including investigations by the Texas Department of Protective and Family Services. School officials may not refuse to permit an investigator to interview at school a student who is alleged to be a victim of abuse or neglect. School officials may not require the investigator to permit school personnel to be present during an interview conducted at school.

## Plan for Addressing Sexual Abuse and Other Maltreatment of Students

### *What is Sexual Abuse of a Child?*

The Texas Family Code defines "sexual abuse" as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as, in certain circumstances, failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct harmful to a child.

### *What is Other Maltreatment of a Child?*

Under state law, "other maltreatment" of a child includes "abuse" or "neglect," as defined by Texas Family Code sections 261.001 and 261.401.

### *Reporting Obligation*

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 the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services ("DFPS"). Reports may be made by contacting one of the following:

Texas Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 or, in non-emergency situations only,

<http://www.txabusehotline.org> Please contact your local police department for further assistance.

Call 911 for emergency situations.

SST has established the following Plan for Addressing Sexual Abuse of Children (the "Plan"). The Plan may be accessed through the School's website, and is available in the Principal's office and central administrative office.

### *Methods for Increasing Awareness Regarding Sexual Abuse or Other Maltreatment of Children*

#### **For Teachers**

The School annually trains teachers in all content areas addressed in the Plan. Training will include contents of board policy and is provided by campus staff, administrative staff, or outside agencies as determined by the campus administration.

### **For Students**

School counseling staff will address issues to increase awareness regarding sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children and anti-victimization programs with age appropriate conversation and materials no less than once per semester. These discussions will occur classroom group settings for students in grades K-8, and in health or PE classes for students in grades 9-12.

### **For Parents**

Parents must be aware of warning signs indicating that their child may have been or is being sexually abused or otherwise maltreated. A child who has experienced sexual abuse or other maltreatment should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware, as a parent or other trusted adult, that evidence of sexual abuse or other maltreatment may be more indirect than disclosures or signs of physical abuse. It is important to remain calm and comforting if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing in coming to you.

The fact that the abuser is a parent or other family member does not remove your obligation to protect the child. Parents who permit their child to remain in a situation where he or she may be injured or abused may also be subject to prosecution for child abuse. And, if you are frightened for your own safety or that of your child, you should call 911 or 1-800-252-5400.

Also, remember that parents are legally responsible for the care of their children and must provide their children with safe and adequate food, clothing, shelter, protection, medical care and supervision, or arrange for someone else to provide these things. Failure to do so may be considered neglect.

The Campus Principal or designee will provide information regarding counseling options available in your area for you and your child if your child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment. DFPS also provides early abuse intervention through counseling programs. Services available in your county can be accessed at the following web address:

[https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/prevention\\_and\\_early\\_intervention/](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/prevention_and_early_intervention/)

Refer to Handbook Exhibit for campus specific information.

The following websites are also helpful:

Texas Education Agency – Prevention of Child Abuse  
Overview:  
[https://tea.texas.gov/Texas\\_Schools/Safe\\_and\\_Healthy\\_Schools/Child\\_Abuse\\_Prevention/Child\\_Abuse\\_Prevention\\_Overview/](https://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Schools/Safe_and_Healthy_Schools/Child_Abuse_Prevention/Child_Abuse_Prevention_Overview/)

### **Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs:**

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/prevention-programs/sexualabuse/>

### **Promoting Healthy Families in Your Neighborhood:**

[http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res\\_packet\\_2008/](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res_packet_2008/)

### **DFPS -- How to Report Child Abuse or Neglect:**

[http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Contact\\_us/report\\_abuse.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Contact_us/report_abuse.asp)

### **Texas Attorney General -- What Can We Do About Child Abuse?**

[https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG\\_Publications/txts/child\\_abuse.shtml](https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/child_abuse.shtml)

### **Prevent Child Abuse.org -- Texas Chapter:**

<http://www.preventchildabuse.org/chapters/state/contact.cfm?stateabbrev=tx>

### **Texas Council on Family Violence -- Abuse Prevention Links:**

<http://www.tcfv.org/>

### ***Likely Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse or Other Maltreatment***

Psychological and behavioral signs of possible sexual abuse and other maltreatment may include:

- Nightmares, sleep problems, extreme fears without an obvious explanation.
- Sudden or unexplained personality changes; becoming withdrawn, angry, moody, clingy, “checking out” or showing significant changes in eating habits.
- Depression or irritability.
- An older child behaving like a young child, for example, bedwetting or thumb sucking.

- Developing fear of certain places or resisting being alone with an adult or young person for unknown reasons.
- Resistance to routine bathing, toileting, or removing clothes, even in appropriate situations.
- Play, writing, drawings, or dreams of sexual or frightening images.
- Refusal to talk about a secret he or she has with an adult or older child.
- Leaving clues that seem likely to provoke a discussion about sexual issues.
- Using new or adult words for body parts.
- Engaging in adult-like sexual activities with toys, objects or other children.
- Developing special relationships with older friends that may include unexplained money, gifts, or privileges.
- Intentionally harming him or herself, for example, drug/ alcohol use, cutting, burning, running away, and sexual promiscuity.
- Thinking of self or body as repulsive, dirty, or bad.
- Becoming increasingly secretive about Internet or telephone use.

Physical symptoms of possible sexual abuse or other maltreatment include:

- Stomachaches or illness, often with no identifiable reason. Difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Stained or bloody underwear.
- Genital or rectal pain, itching, swelling, redness, or discharge. Bruises or other injuries in the genital or rectal area.
- Unexplained soreness, pain or bruises around the mouth, sexually transmitted disease, or pregnancy.

Any one sign does not necessarily mean that a child has been sexually abused or maltreated, but the presence of several signs is the time you should begin asking questions and seeking help. Signs often first emerge at other times of stress, such as during a divorce, death of a family member or pet, problems at school or with friends, or other traumatic or anxiety-inducing events.

### ***Actions That a Child Who is a Victim of Sexual Abuse or Other Maltreatment Should Take***

During student awareness sessions concerning sexual abuse and other maltreatment issues,

students will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in a private and confidential conversation if they have been a victim of sexual abuse or have been in situations that make them feel uncomfortable in any way. School employees are trained to take appropriate actions to help the child obtain assistance and to follow proper reporting procedures. Older students will also be provided with local crisis hotline numbers to obtain assistance.

### ***Available Counseling Options***

**Refer to Handbook Exhibit for campus specific information.**

### **Lockers and Desks**

Each student will be assigned a locker and desk for his or her individual use. The use of lockers is strongly encouraged, as backpacks and purses are not allowed in classrooms. Lockers are to be used to store books, coats and personal items. Valuable items should not be stored in lockers or desks.

The school is not liable for personal items stored in lockers or desks. The school will provide a lock for each locker. Students may not put a personal lock on their lockers, and all students must keep their locker combinations private. Students may not trade or share lockers. Students are responsible to make sure that lockers are kept locked at all times. Any damage, vandalism, or other problems with lockers or desks should be reported to the front office. Students will be held responsible for the condition of their lockers if such damage, vandalism, or other problems are not reported.

During the school day, students may go to their lockers during the following designated times only:

- Before class begins in the morning.
- During the five-minute passing periods between classes.
- After classes are over.

Students may not visit their lockers during lunch time.

### **Interrogations and Searches**

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

Administrators, teachers and other professional personnel may question a student regarding the

student's own conduct or the conduct of other students. In the context of school discipline, students have no claim to the right not to incriminate themselves.

Students shall be free from unreasonable searches and seizures by school officials. School officials may search a student's outer clothing, pockets, or property by establishing reasonable cause or securing the student's voluntary consent. Express or implied coercion – such as threatening to contact parents or police – invalidates apparent consent.

A search is reasonable if (1) the school official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will uncover evidence of a rule violation or a criminal violation and (2) the scope of the search is reasonable related to the circumstances justifying the search; i.e., the measures adopted are reasonably related to the objectives of the search and are not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

### ***Desk and Locker Searches***

Students should have no expectation of privacy in the contents of their lockers, desks or other school property. Lockers and desks assigned to students remain at all times under the control and jurisdiction of the school. The school will make periodic inspections of lockers and desks at any time, with or without notice or student consent. School officials will remove any item that violates school policy or that may potentially be dangerous.

Students have full responsibility for the security of their lockers and desks, and shall be held responsible for any prohibited items found during a search. The student's parent shall be notified if any prohibited articles or materials are found in a student's locker or desk, or on the student's person, as a result of a search conducted in accordance with this policy.

### ***Vehicles on Campus***

Vehicles parked on school property and property under school control are under the jurisdiction of the school and may be searched at any time if reasonable suspicion exists to believe that the search will result in evidence that school rules or other laws have been violated. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student shall be asked to unlock the vehicle and consent to a search of the vehicle. If the student refuses to permit the vehicle to be searched, the school may contact the student's

parents and/ or law enforcement officials. A student may be held responsible for and in possession of prohibited items found in his or her vehicle parked on school property or at a school-related event.

### ***Trained Dogs***

The school may use or contract for specially trained nonaggressive dogs to sniff out and alert school officials to the current presence of concealed prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. Such visits to the school may be unannounced. The dogs shall be used to sniff vacant classrooms, vacant common areas, the areas around student lockers, and the areas around vehicles parked on school property. The dogs shall not be asked to alert on students. If a dog alerts to a locker, a vehicle, or an item in a classroom, it may be searched by school officials. Searches of vehicles shall be conducted as described above.

### **Procedures for Use of Restraint and Time-Outs**

School employees, volunteers or independent contractors are authorized to use restraint in the event of an emergency and subject to the following limitations:

- Only reasonable force, necessary to address the emergency, may be used.
- The restraint must be discontinued at the point at which the emergency no longer exists.
- The restraint must be implemented in such a way as to protect the health and safety of the student and others.
- The student may not be deprived of basic human necessities.

At no time, however, may a student be placed in seclusion.

A student with a disability may not be confined in a locked box, locked closet or other specially designated locked space as either a discipline management practice or a behavior management technique.

### **School Visitors**

Visitors for educational purposes are welcome at the school. Visitors must sign in with the front office and present a valid photo ID upon arrival. Parents must also check in at the front office. Guests should not be brought to school without prior approval.

Visitors will not be allowed during the last two weeks of the semester or during the week prior to any school holiday. Parents or other visitors may

not walk in the cafeteria, hallways or to classrooms unless a visitor's form has been completed at least 24 hours in advance of the school to provide notice of the visit. This form must also be completed when a parent requests to observe a class.

The Principal may take the following actions whenever there is a school visitor: Require the visitor to display his or her driver's license or another form of identification issued by a governmental entity containing the person's photograph:

- Establish an electronic database for the purpose of storing information concerning visitors. Information stored in the electronic database may be used only for the purpose of school security, and may not be sold or otherwise disseminated to a third party for any purpose.
- Verify whether the visitor is a sex offender registered with the computerized central database maintained by the Department of Public Safety or any other database accessible by the school.

Any visitor identified as a sex offender shall be escorted by school personnel at all times during a school visit and shall have access only to common areas of the campus.

### **Disruptive Activity**

In order to protect student safety and sustain an educational program free from disruption, state law permits the school to take action against any person who:

- Interferes with the movement of people in an exit, entrance, or hallway of a school building without authorization from the Principal;
- Interferes with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building;
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly;
- Uses force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly;
- Interferes with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to school property;
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving school property without authorization from the Principal;
- Disrupts the conduct of classes or other school activities while on school property or on

public property that is within 500 feet of school property; or

- Interferes with the transportation of students in school vehicles.

"Disruption" includes making loud noises; enticing, attempting to entice, preventing, or attempting to prevent a student from attending a required class or school activity; entering a classroom without the consent of either the Principal or the teacher; and, through acts of misconduct or the use of loud or profane language, disrupting class activities.

### **Fire and Disaster Drills**

Fire, lock-down, evacuation, and tornado drill instruction will be discussed during the first week of each semester. Students need to understand and follow these procedures. Instructions will be posted on the in each teacher's room. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

### **Emergency Closings**

Weather conditions may occur which will make it necessary for campuses to be closed. Parents and students are advised to view website and listen to local radio or television for announcements that the school will be closed.

### **Skateboards**

Students and others are not permitted to use their skateboards, scooters and/or roller blades on campus grounds at any time. If a student uses any of these items as a means of transportation to or from school, he or she must walk and carry the item while on school property. These items should be kept in a locker or designated place approved by campus administration until the end of the school day.

### **Videotaping of Students**

For safety purposes, video/audio equipment may be used to monitor student behavior in classrooms and hallways, on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used. The Principal may review the tapes routinely to document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Use by Students Before and After School**

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 the 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, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately.

# SECTION III: ACADEMICS AND GRADING

## Report Cards and Grading Scales

SST issues progress reports to all students at the middle of each nine-week progress period within a semester. Report cards for all students are issued at the end of each nine-week reporting period within a semester.

Report cards are mailed to parents. Please notify the school office immediately if your address or contact information changes.

Parents are encouraged to schedule a conference with their child's teacher if the student is not making adequate progress.

All classes will follow a standard scale for assigning letter grades for nine-week periods and semester work. Individual teachers will follow the SST grading practices/guidelines for their classes, with grades corresponding to the following scale:

A = 90–100% B = 80–89% C = 75–79% D = 70–74% F = 69% and below

**Regular academic course letter grades have the following GPA weights:**

A = 4.0 B = 3.0 C = 2.0 D = 1.0 F = 0.0

**High School Pre-AP course letter grades have the following GPA weights:**

A = 4.5 B = 3.5 C = 2.5 D = 1.5 F = 0.0

**AP & Dual Credit course letter grades have the following GPA weights:**

A = 5.0 B = 4.0 C = 3.0 D = 2.0 F = 0.0

The report card for Kindergarten is evaluation style, and does not follow the traditional grading system.

For Kindergarten Grades the following system will be used;

MS = Meets Standards

AS = Approaching Standards

NS = Needs Support

XS = Not Assessed at this time

## Academic Dishonesty

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests and disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. High school students may be kept out of advanced courses such as Pre-AP, AP, Dual credit, or PLTW courses for repeated offences.

Academic dishonesty includes cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism, and unauthorized communication between students during an examination. The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher or other supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students.

## Examination Procedures

Formal examinations fulfill an important function in the assessment of each student's academic performance. Examinations are also helpful in assisting students to prepare for state-mandated assessment tests by providing exposure to examination conduct, procedures and techniques.

Consequently, the school has enacted a special Academic Code of Conduct pertaining to examinations:

- Students are to remain silent during all examinations, unless otherwise directed by the supervising teacher.
- Under no circumstances are students permitted to distract other students during examinations.
- Students must leave school bags at the front of or outside the examination room.
- Students are not permitted to take any paper – including worksheets and scratch paper into the examination room. Students are also not permitted to remove any paper – including the examination – from the examination room.

- Electronic devices, including cell phones, are not permitted in the examination room, and the use of any electronic device is strictly prohibited. Electronic dictionaries and calculators without internet connection and photographic capabilities might be used with certain policies.
- Students are not to be late for examinations and will NOT be permitted to leave early. Latecomers will not be granted extra time to complete the exam.
- Students are responsible for the collection of their work.
- Students who are absent from an examination are required to present themselves to the subject teacher immediately upon their return to school. All exams must be made up within three days of the return to school; however, the student must present a reasonable excuse to be eligible for a make-up exam or project.
- The school will notify the parents of students who are believed to have been academically dishonest during any examination.

Students violating these rules will, at a minimum, receive a grade of zero. Violations may also result in disciplinary consequences under the Student Code of Conduct

### **Homework Policy**

Homework is an essential part of each student's successful education. Homework assignments help to develop many valuable skills, including good study habits, time management, responsibility, and perseverance. Teachers will assign homework that fosters individual learning and growth and that is appropriate for the subject area. Homework is part of all students' regular evaluations. Each student is responsible for completing and turning in homework on time. The teacher's record is final in cases of conflict regarding homework assignments. If a student or parent has questions about homework, contact the teacher who assigned it.

### **Promotion**

A student may be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter of the course or grade level as stated under TEC §28.021(a). SST Public Schools shall consider the following in determining promotion as outlined under TEC §28.021(c).

#### **a) Yearly Average**

Students in grades 1-8 must achieve an overall cumulative average of 70 or above for all subject areas. For core subjects including Reading/English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science students in grades 1-8 must maintain an end of the year average of 70 or higher for promotion.

#### **b) NWEA MAP**

Students in grades 1-8 must score in both Reading AND Mathematics NWEA MAP testing at or above the 10th percentile at least once throughout the current school year. Campus may apply for a waiver for NWEA MAP promotion standard (as low as 7th percentile) within their district. If a student passes STAAR assessments in Reading and Mathematics then that student will be exempt from NWEA MAP promotion requirement.

#### **c) Satisfactory Performance on STAAR Assessments**

In accordance with the TEC §28.0211(a) students in grades 5 & 8 must perform satisfactorily on the Mathematics and Reading STAAR assessments, grade advancement tests. School reserves the right to retain a student failing STAAR Assessments for grades 3rd through 8th.

#### **d) Kindergarten Promotion**

For students in kindergarten promotion to the next grade shall be based on the evidence of satisfactory progress with an emphasis on reading and mathematics. Evidence for promotion may include assessment of the student's reading/math level, information from the student's daily work, report cards, anecdotal records, and teacher recommendation.

#### **e) High School Promotion**

In grades 9-12, grade-level advancement shall be earned by course credits. To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student in grades 9-12 must have met the following

- must have acquired at least six credits to be promoted to 10th Grade
- must have acquired at least twelve credits to be promoted to 11th Grade
- must have acquired at least eighteen credits to be promoted to 12th Grade.

#### **f) Transfer Students**

A student who has been promoted upon completion of a school year in a school other than a Texas public



school may be enrolled in that grade without regard to whether the student has successfully satisfied school's promotion standards. This does not limit the school's ability to appropriately place such a student.

#### **g) Limited English Proficiency Committee**

Limited English Proficiency determination does not change the promotion criteria, but it requires that GPS consult with the relevant LPAC member before making a promotion decision when English proficiency is a consideration. However, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) may lower NWEA MAP promotion standard depending on the English proficiency level.

#### **h) ARD Committee Decisions**

An IEP (Individualized Education Program) can modify the promotion criteria in whole or in part. Any modified promotion standards shall be determined by the pertinent admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee and documented in the individualized education program (IEP).

### **Retention**

Students in danger of consideration for retention will receive a written request for a mandatory conference between February and May.

#### **a) Kindergarten Retention**

In kindergarten, retention shall be considered only in unusual circumstances and with the approval of the student's parents. A written recommendation for retention, including suggestions for assistance for the student shall be signed by the student's teacher, parent, and the principal.

#### **b) Parental Notification**

Whenever the school is required to notify a parent or guardian about the requirements related to promotion and retention, the School shall make a good-faith effort to ensure that the notice is provided either in person or by regular mail, is clear and easy to understand, and is written in English or in the parent or guardian's native language.

#### **c) Grade Placement Committee**

After a student identified as at risk of failing, a GPC shall be established to prescribe the accelerated instruction the student is to receive. In accordance with 19 TAC 101.2006(d), decisions by the GPC shall be made on an individual student basis, address required participation of the student in accelerated instruction, and ensure the most effective instruction to support the student's

academic achievement on grade level. The GPC shall be composed of the Principal or the Principal's designee, the student's parent or guardian, and the student's teacher.

A decision to promote a student to the next grade level must be unanimous. If the decision is not unanimous, the student will be retained at his or her current grade level.

### **Retention and Appeal**

A student who fails to satisfy school's promotion standards shall be retained at the same grade level for the next school year. The parent or guardian may appeal the retention by submitting a request to the district office within five working days of receipt of the retention notification.

If an appeal is initiated by the parent or guardian, the district office may decide in favor of promotion only if the district office concludes, upon review of all facts and circumstances, and in accordance with standards adopted by the Board, that the student is likely to perform on grade level given additional accelerated instruction during the next school year.

The district office's decision regarding placement is final and may not be appealed.

### **State Assessments**

#### ***High School Students***

To receive a high school diploma, students must successfully pass state mandated tests. Test results will be reported to students and parents. Certain students may be eligible for exemptions or accommodations.

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, students in 9th grade are required to take 5 End-of-Course ("EOC") assessments during high school. These include the following EOC exams:

- English I, English II;
- Algebra I;
- Biology;
- U.S. History

If a student is in a special education program, the student's Admission, Review, and Dismissal ("ARD") Committee must determine whether any allowable modification is necessary in administering an assessment instrument to the student.

## ***Students with Disabilities***

Upon the recommendation of the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (“ARD”) Committee, a student with disabilities who is receiving special education services may be promoted and/ or permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her Individualized Education Program (“IEP”).

A student who receives special education services and has completed four years of high school, but has not met the requirements of his or her IEP, may participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a certificate of attendance. Even if the student participates in graduation ceremonies to receive the certificate of attendance, he or she may remain enrolled to complete the IEP and earn his or her high school diploma; however, the student will only be allowed to participate in one graduation ceremony.

### ***TELPAS***

The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (“TELPAS”) is a system of statewide assessment administered to all Limited English Proficient (“LEP”) students in K-12th grades. The TELPAS measures English ability based on the stage of language development of second language learners. These results will further the understanding of the educational needs of LEP students by providing a state-level measure of both their current academic English levels and their annual progress in English.

## **Special Programs**

### ***Bilingual/ESL Services***

In keeping with state and federal law, the school offers Bilingual/ English as a Second Language (“ESL”) services at all appropriate grade levels for English language learners who are limited in their English proficiency. The school’s goal is to provide additional English language assistance to students, enabling them to become academically successful in all classes. Students are assessed with state-approved Oral Language Proficiency and Norm-Referenced Tests to qualify for placement in the program. If test results indicate either limited oral or limited cognitive academic English ability, the student (with parent approval) is provided additional English language support.

## ***Aiding Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services***

For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts and open enrollment charter schools must consider 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 and charter schools to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individual(s) listed below to learn about the school’s overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine if the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

### **Special Education Referrals**

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for

special education services to the director of special education services or an administrative employee of the school district or open enrollment charter school, the district or charter school must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district or charter school must give the parent a prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards. If the school district or charter school agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

If the district or charter school decides to evaluate the student, it must complete the student’s initial evaluation and evaluation report no later than 45 school days from the day it receives a parent’s written consent to evaluate the student. However, if the student is absent from school during the evaluation period for three or more school days, the evaluation period will be extended by the number of school days equal to the number of school days that the student is absent.

There is an exception to the 45-school-day timeline. If a district or charter school receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, it must complete the written report and provide a copy of the report to the parent by June 30 of that year. However, if the student is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30th due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply.

Upon completing the evaluation, the district or charter school must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost. Additional information regarding special education is available from the district or charter school in a companion document titled Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process.

#### **Contact Person for Special Education Referrals:**

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services is:

Contact Person: See the following table for contact information.

Phone Number: See the following table for contact information.

#### **Section 504 Referrals:**

Each school district or charter school must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's or charter school's Section 504 program.

Districts and charter schools must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

#### **Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals:**

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is:

Contact Person: See the following table for contact information.

Phone Number: See the following table for contact information.

#### **Additional Information:**

The following websites provide information and resources for students with disabilities and their families.

- Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process  
<http://framework.esc18.net>
- Partners Resource Network  
<http://prntexas.org>
- Special Education Information Center  
<http://www.spedtex.org>
- Texas Project First  
<http://texasprojectfirst.org>

**Contact List for Special Education/504 Referrals**

**SST-Discovery District:**

Campus	Contact Person for Special Education/504 Referrals	Address	Telephone Number
SST-Discovery	Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator	5707 Bandera Road, San Antonio, TX 78238	210-543-1111
SST-Corpus Christi-Elementary	Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator	4737 Saratoga Blvd, Corpus Christi, TX 7841	361-851-2450
SST- Corpus Christi High School	Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator	6609 Evans Rd., Corpus Christi, TX 78413	361-225-0044
SST-Northwest	Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator	12042 Culebra Rd., San Antonio, TX 78253	210-763-1713
SST - Sugarland	Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator	10007 Clodine Road, Richmond, TX 77407	832-406-0955
SST-Advancement	Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator	10550 Westoffice Dr., Houston, TX 77042	713-266-2522
SST Hill Country	Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator	9100 TX-1604 Loop San Antonio, TX 78254	210-350-8943

**SST District:**

Campus	Contact Person for Special Education/504 Referrals	Address	Telephone Number
SST-San Antonio	Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator	1450 NE Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78209	210-804-0222
SST-Alamo	Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator	12200 Crownpoint Dr., San Antonio, TX 78233	210-657-6400
SST-Houston	Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator	16200 TX-249, Houston, TX 77086	346-270-2101
SST-Excellence	Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator	330 North Sam Houston Pkwy E., Houston, TX 77060	832-672-6671
SST Spring	Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator	2105 Louetta Road Spring, Texas 77388	346-857-3041

## ***Special Education Services***

The school has the responsibility of identifying, locating, and evaluating individuals with disabilities who are 4–21 years of age and who fall within the school’s jurisdiction. If you know or suspect that your child has a disability, please contact the Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator for information about available programs, assessments, and services.

Special education services are specifically designed to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. Each student who receives special education services has an Individual Education Plan (“IEP”) which is developed by the student’s Admission, Review, and Dismissal (“ARD”) Committee. The ARD Committee considers the student’s disability and determines appropriate accommodations, supplementary aids, and/or services that are necessary for the student to participate in the general curriculum.

All special education services are provided in the least restrictive environment which may be special education settings, general education settings, or a combination of both. All students receiving special education services are educated to the maximum extent appropriate with their non-disabled peers as well as participating in all school activities on the same basis as students who are not disabled.

The Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities can be obtained from the Special Education Coordinator.

### ***Section 504 Services***

SST Public Schools provides a free appropriate public education to each qualified student with a disability, regardless of the nature or severity of the student’s disability. A “student with a disability” is one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the student’s major life activities, has a record of having such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. A student with a disability is “qualified” if he or she is between the ages of three and 21, inclusive.

An appropriate education is the provision of regular or special education and related services that are (1) designed to meet the student’s individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of students who do not have disabilities are met; and (2) based on adherence to procedures that satisfy

federal requirements for educational setting, evaluation and placement, and procedural safeguards.

Qualified students with disabilities will be placed in the regular educational environment, unless the school demonstrates that education in the regular environment with the use of supplemental aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Should an alternate educational environment be necessary, the school shall comply with all legal requirements regarding least restrictive environment and comparable facilities for students with disabilities.

In providing or arranging for nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, the school shall ensure that a qualified student with a disability participates with students who do not have disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate.

To be eligible for services and protections against discrimination on the basis of disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, a student must be determined, as a result of an evaluation, to have a “physical or mental impairment” that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

If a student has or is suspected of having a disability, or requires special services, parents or teachers should contact the Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator for information concerning available programs, assessments, and services.

### ***Services for Title I Participants***

Information regarding the school’s Title I program may be obtained from the Principal.

### ***Tutoring***

Students are encouraged and may be required to see teachers or tutors for tutoring. Tutoring services are also available for students receiving special education services.

Private tutoring is the responsibility of a student’s parents. Teachers employed by SST Public Schools are not permitted to privately tutor their students for pay.

### ***Honor Rolls for K-8***

- Students at Grades K-8 who earn all “A”s will be named to the Distinguished Honor Roll.
- Students who earn “A”s and “B”s in all classes will be named to the Honor Roll.

- Students who have zero Discipline Points, no discipline referrals, and have not received a “N” or “P” in conduct will be named to the Excellent Character Honor Roll.

### **Honor Rolls for High School**

- High school students will be named to honor rolls based on the weighted GPA in that semester;
- Distinguished Honor Roll: 4.00 or above
- Honor Roll: 3.50 or above

### **Credit and Acceleration by Exam**

SST Public Schools uses examinations and guidelines established by the State Board of Education to offer credit and acceleration by exam.

#### **Credit by Examination with Prior Instruction**

A student in grades 6–12 will be given credit for an academic subject in which he or she has had some prior instruction if the student scores 70% or higher on a criterion-referenced test for the applicable course.

#### **Credit by Examination Without Prior Instruction**

SST Public Schools may approve examinations for acceleration to test a student’s essential knowledge and skills for each primary school grade level and for credit for secondary school academic subject.

A student in grades 1–5 will be accelerated one grade level if he or she meets the following requirements:

- The student scores 80% or above on a criterion-referenced test for the grade level to be skipped in each of the following areas: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies;
- A School representative recommends acceleration; and
- The student’s parent gives written approval for acceleration.

A student in grades 6–12 will be given credit for an academic subject in which he or she has had no prior instruction if the student scores 80% or above on a criterion-referenced test for the applicable test. Credits obtained through CBE (without instruction) will not be calculated for GPA and class rank.

Offerings for credit by examination are currently scheduled as:

August 8 - 24                      CBE / EA

November 1 - 16                      CBE / EA

March 13 - 29                      CBE / EA

May 1 - 17                      CBE / EA

Students are required to apply for testing at least one month prior to the first day of testing. A student may not attempt to earn credit by examination for a specific high school course more than two times. Students may take a specific exam only once during each testing window. A school district is prohibited from charging a fee for credit by examination.

### **Kindergarten Acceleration Procedure**

SST Public Schools (SST) adopted the following guidelines to address Kindergarten acceleration procedures as noted in SST policy PG-2.1.4.

#### **Qualifications for Testing**

In order to qualify for Kindergarten Acceleration, the student must meet the following qualifications

- The student must be 5 years of age on or before September 1st of the academic year.
- The student must be registered for Kindergarten for the academic year in SST Public Schools.

If qualifications above are met, then a parent/guardian may request that his/her child test for grade acceleration by the end of first quarter. After the written request received from the parent/guardian, a committee composed of parent(s), principal’s designee, and teacher(s) considers the following criteria to determine if testing for acceleration is the best option for the student.

- 1) Scores on readiness tests or achievement tests including but not limited to NWEA MAP and TPRI. (NWEA MAP scores should be above 90th percentile for both Reading and Mathematics)
- 2) Recommendation of the Kindergarten or preschool the student had previously attended.
- 3) Chronological age and observed social and emotional development of the student.
- 4) Effect of skipping a grade level on the student’s overall educational experience.
- 5) Academic rigor of first grade.

SST strongly encourages all learners to participate in Kindergarten due to the social, developmental,

emotional and academic benefits this grade level provides.

### **Testing**

In order to advance to first grade, the student must score 90% or above on the district approved CBE assessments in English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Mathematics. No retesting will be allowed during the same academic year due to failure.

### **Acceleration**

Parents will be notified about the acceleration decision. If kindergarten student is recommended for acceleration, it will be on a probationary basis. Should the school or teacher feel it is in the best interest of the child to be placed back into Kindergarten parent will be contacted.

### **Appeal**

Parents may appeal the decision to the campus principal.

### **Classification of Students (High School)**

The classification of a student depends upon the number of credits earned and not the number of years spent in high school. After the ninth grade, students are classified according to the following schedule:

- Sophomore : 6 completed units of credit
- Junior : 12 completed units of credit
- Senior : 18 completed units of credit

### **Honors Program**

The SST Public Schools maintain comprehensive Honors and Advanced Placement programs to make it possible for academically talented and high achieving students to increase the challenge of their studies. The instructional program offers in- depth study and is not intended to accelerate the date of graduation.

### **Advanced Placement Program (High School)**

The Advanced Placement (“AP”) Program enables students to receive college credit or placement by taking and passing exams. AP courses encourage critical and creative thought, fine-tune analytical skills, enhance reasoning abilities, and serve as an “academic bridge” to help smooth the transition from high school to college. When evaluating a

student’s high school transcript, universities place a great deal of importance on the rigor and success of an applicant’s academic program in high school, particularly in the junior and senior years.

Students may enroll in AP classes so long as prerequisite courses have been successfully completed and the student is willing to devote sufficient time and effort to participate in college-level classes. Refer to SST AP Policy for details.

AP examinations are structured to measure depth of knowledge, completeness of thought, and synthesis of ideas. Exams are graded on a five-point scale, with college credit usually given for scores of three or higher. Information about score requirements and credit/placement awards for specific universities can be accessed at [www.collegeboard.com/ap/creditpolicy](http://www.collegeboard.com/ap/creditpolicy). AP exams are administered in May of each school year.

### **Dual Credit Programs (High School)**

#### *How Do Students Qualify for Dual Credit?*

The Texas Administrative Code and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board outline the rules of eligibility for taking Dual Credit courses.

To enroll in dual credit courses, students must show college readiness in reading, writing, and/or math as applicable to the course(s) the student plans to take.

All students in Texas public colleges are required to demonstrate college readiness through the Texas Success Initiative (TSI), which is a state program designed to promote student success by assessing students’ academic skills through the TSI Assessment (TSIA). Students may either take the TSIA or show scores from other accepted assessments approved for placement. Approved assessments are the TSI, ACT, SAT, STAAR, PLAN/ACT Aspire.

- 1) TSI- TSI assessment is a program designed to help your institution determine if you are ready for college-level work in the general areas of reading, writing and mathematics. If you are an incoming college student in Texas, you are required to take the TSI Assessment – unless you are already exempt (read below) - to determine your readiness for college level work.

A high school student is eligible to enroll in Dual Credit with the following TSI Assessment Scores:

- Reading: score of 351-390
  - Writing: score of 340 -390 and 4 on essay or 310-339 and Level 4-6 on ABE Diagnostic and 5+ on essay
  - Math: score of 350-390
- 2) You may be exempt from taking TSI Assessment and be eligible for Dual Credit enrollment by meeting one of the following requirements:
- New SAT: A minimum score of 530 in Math and a minimum score of 480 in EBRW. There is no composite score requirement. Old SAT: Composite score of 1070 (math and reading), with a minimum score of 500 in Math and minimum score of 500 in Reading.
  - ACT: Composite score of 23 with a minimum of 19 in both the Math and English portions of the test.
  - STAAR (EOC): minimum score of Level 2 on the English III shall be exempt from the TSI Assessment required under this title for both reading and writing, and a minimum score of Level 2 on the Algebra II EOC shall be exempt from the TSI Assessment required under this title for the mathematics section. Scores must be less than 5 years old.
  - PLAN: a composite score of 23 on the PLAN with a 19 or higher in Mathematics and English.

### **PSAT/NMSQT (High School)**

SST Public Schools is dedicated to providing a comprehensive college preparatory program that facilitates each student’s ambition to pursue higher education at the nation’s top university and colleges. The most common reason for taking the PSAT/NMSQT is to receive feedback on student strengths and weaknesses so that students can focus their preparation on those areas that could most benefit from additional study or practice. This test also gives a student chance to enter National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) scholarship programs.

### **Honor Graduate Certificate (High School)**

The Texas Education Agency allows each public high school in Texas one “Honor Graduate Certificate.” This certificate will be presented to the highest-ranking graduate in the senior class. The recipient will receive a certificate and a declaration

document authorizing the president of any state supported college or university to provide a waiver for tuition as specified in Texas Education Code § 54.201.

The recipient of this honor must:

- Be enrolled in SST Public Schools for a minimum of three consecutive calendar semesters prior to graduation and meet state and school attendance.
- Be graduating under either the Recommended Distinguished Graduation Program; and
- Be the highest-ranking graduate with the highest GPA of all students meeting these criteria, with not less than a cumulative 3.7 GPA. Under no condition will the GPA be rounded up.

All calculations for this honor will be conducted at the end of the spring semester (before graduation) each school calendar year. An eligible student must have attended at least one of the calendar semesters during the school year that the honor is

### **National Honor Society, National Junior Honor Society, and National Elementary Honor Society**

Every chapter (school) might have different qualifications for membership. At minimum, high school students who have maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.00 are eligible for nomination to the school’s local chapter of the National Honor Society. Students seeking admission should contact the sponsor for admission guidelines. The student must have been enrolled in the current school for at least one semester. Selection for membership is based upon a student’s evidence of scholarship, service, citizenship, leadership, and character. Selection will be made by a faculty council appointed by the Principal. Discipline referrals and excessive absences will constitute evidence of deficiencies in character and leadership. Service contributions are determined by completion of a service form by the nominee and scored by the faculty council. Induction is held only once during each academic year.

Distinguished honor and honor students at middle grades may apply for National Junior Honor Society and elementary students may apply for National Elementary Honor Society.



## ***High School Graduation Requirements***

In order for a student to graduate from SST Public School, the student must fulfill:

- SST High School Credit Requirements
- Passing Score on Texas State Assessments (STAAR)
- Proof of admission by a 4-Year College
- Minimum 100 Community Service Hours\*

*\* 25 hours per year for transfer students*

## ***House Bill 5 and New Graduation Requirements***

In the spring of 2013, the 83rd Texas Legislature passed House Bill 5, which made substantial changes to the state's curriculum and graduation requirements, assessment program, and accountability system.

The new graduation plan mandated by House Bill 5 is called The Foundation High School Program, which is intended to provide students with more flexibility. Students who are freshmen in 2014-2015 will be the first class to fall under the graduation requirements in HB5. Students who are in grades 9th, 10th, or 11th in the 2013-2014 school year must be given a choice to graduate on the MHSP, RHSP, DAP, or Foundation High School Program.

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, each student, on entering ninth grade, must indicate in writing an endorsement that the student intends to earn. Students are permitted at any time, to earn an endorsement other than the endorsement the student previously indicated.

A student may graduate under the foundation high school program without earning an endorsement if, after the student's sophomore year:

- 1) the student and the student's parent or person standing in parental relation are advised by a school counselor of the specific benefits of graduating from high school with one or more endorsements; and
- 2) the student's parent or person standing in parental relation files with a school counselor written permission allowing the student to graduate under the foundation

high school program without earning an endorsement

House Bill 5 requires students to pass five State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) end-of-course exams to meet the new graduation requirements: Algebra I, English I (combined reading/writing), English II (combined reading/writing), Biology and U.S. History.

## **Foundation High School Program**

Foundation High School Program (FHSP) includes the following requirements:

- ELA – 4 credits
- Math – 3 credits
- Algebra II not required
- Social Studies – 3 credits
- Science – 3 credits
- Foreign Language – 2 credits
- Fine Arts – 1 credit
- Physical Education – 1 credit
- 5 Elective Credits

## **Foundation High School Program with Endorsements**

Foundation High School Program (FHSP) includes the following requirements:

Foundation Plan plus the following

- 4th Math Course
- 4th Science Course
- Endorsement Area Coursework (see endorsement section)

## **Distinguished Level of Achievement**

A student may earn a distinguished level of achievement by successfully completing:

- Foundation Plan
- A total of four credits in mathematics, which must include Algebra II
- A total of four credits in science
- The remaining curriculum requirements
- The curriculum requirements for at least one endorsement

A student must earn the distinguished level of achievement to be eligible for top 10% automatic admission.

## Foundation Graduation Plan Chart

Discipline	Foundation Only	Foundation + Endorsements	Distinguished Level of Achievement
<b>English Language Arts</b>	ELA I	ELA I	ELA I
	ELA II	ELA II	ELA II
	ELA II	ELA II	ELA II
	Advanced English (4 Credits)	Advanced English (4 Credits)	Advanced English (4 Credits)
<b>Mathematics</b>	Algebra I	Algebra I	Algebra I
	Geometry	Geometry	Geometry
	Advanced Math	Advanced Math	Algebra II
	Advanced Math (3 Credits)	Advanced Math (4 Credits)	Advanced Math (4 Credits)
<b>Science</b>	Biology	Biology	Biology
	Advanced Science	Advanced Science	Advanced Science
	Advanced Science	Advanced Science	Advanced Science
	Advanced Science (3 Credits)	Advanced Science (4 Credits)	Advanced Science (4 Credits)
<b>Social Studies</b>	US History	US History	US History
	Government/Economics	Government/Economics	Government/Economics
	World Geo. or World Hist. (3 credits)	World Geo. or World Hist. (3 credits)	World Geo. or World Hist. (3 credits)
<b>LOTE (Languages Other Than English)</b>	LOTE or Computer Programing (2 credits)	LOTE or Computer Programing (2 credits)	LOTE or Computer Programing (2 credits)
<b>Physical Education</b>	Physical Education (1 Credit)	Physical Education (1 Credit)	Physical Education (1 Credit)
<b>Fine Arts</b>	Fine Arts (1 Credit)	Fine Arts (1 Credit)	Fine Arts (1 Credit)
<b>Electives</b>	(5 credits)	(7 credits)	(7 credits)
<b>Total</b>	<b>22 credits</b>	<b>26 credits</b>	<b>26 credits</b>

\* "Students may opt out to Foundation - only after completing sophomore year with parent and campus approval"

## Performance Acknowledgements

Performance Acknowledgements may be earned in one or more of the following categories:

- AP test score of 3 or above;
- IB test score of 4 or above (transfer students only; IB is not available in SST);
- Qualifying PSAT score based on the 11th grade test;
- SAT combined critical reading and math score of 1250 or above;
- ACT composite score of 28 or above;
- Completion of a minimum of 12 hours dual credit college courses with final grades of A or B (3.0 GPA or above);
- Bilingualism and biliteracy; and
- Earning a nationally or internationally recognized business or industry certification or license.

## Endorsements

Students entering 9th Grade must choose from one of the following endorsements:

- STEM (Examples: Engineering, Computer Science) Business and Industry (Examples: Business, Finance, Accounting)
- Arts and Humanities (Examples: Literature, Art, Dance, Music)
- Public Services (Examples: Hotel Management, Psychology, Teaching, Health)
- Multidisciplinary Studies (Ex: Business, Sociology, Art)

Students may change their endorsement at any time prior to graduation.

To qualify as part of the top ten percent of their graduating class, students must successfully complete Algebra II.

A student must complete the Foundation High School Program (22 credits), one additional math credit, one additional science credit, and two additional elective credits while completing the specific requirements of his/her selected endorsement. Please review the following Endorsement Chart for more information.

## Endorsement Chart

STEM  
Science, Technology, Engineering & Math

Students may earn a STEM endorsement by selecting and completing the requirements from among these 5 options.

**Note:** Algebra II, Chemistry, and Physics are required for the STEM endorsement regardless of the option the student selects from below.

### Option 1: Computer Science

Students take three computer science courses.

Principles of Information Technology (CTE), Computer Programming (CTE), Advanced Computer, Programming (CTE), Fundamentals of Computer Science, Computer Science I, Game Programming and Design, Mobile Application Development, Robotics Programming and Design, AP Computer Science Principles, AP Computer Science A

### Option 2: CTE

Students earn four (4) CTE credits by taking at least two (2) courses in the same Area that lead to a final course in the STEM Area. At least one (1) of the courses must be an advanced CTE course (3rd year or higher course in a sequence).

### Option 3: Math

Students take Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II AND two (2) of the following courses for which Algebra II is a prerequisite.

- Pre-Calculus
- Calculus AB or BC
- Statistics AP
- Advanced Algebra
- College Algebra

### Option 4: Science

Students take Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, AND two (2) of the following courses.

- Chemistry AP
- Biology AP
- Anatomy & Physiology
- Environmental Science AP
- AP Physics 1
- AP Physics C
- Aquatic Science
- Astronomy
- Earth & Space Science
- Environmental Systems
- AP Physics II
- Forensic Science
- Engineering Design & Problem Solving

### Option 5: Combination

Students take Algebra II, Chemistry, and Physics, an additional math course, an additional science course, AND three (3) additional credits from Option 1 (Computer Science) and/or Option 2 (CTE) in the STEM endorsement.

Students may earn a Business & Industry endorsement by selecting and completing the requirements from among these 3 options.

Business & Industry

**Option 1: CTE**

Students earn four (4) credits by taking at least two (2) courses in the same Area in one of the following areas.

- Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
- Architecture and Construction
- Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communication
- Business Management and Administration
- Finance
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Information Technology
- Marketing

with at least one (1) advanced (3rd year or higher course in the sequence).

**Option 2: English**

Students take four (4) English elective credits that include three levels in one for the following areas.

- Advanced Journalism: Newspaper or Yearbook
- Public Speaking
- Debate

**Option 3: Technology**

Students take four (4) technology credits selected from of the following courses.

- Animation
- Advanced Animation
- Web Technology I
- Digital & Interactive Multimedia
- Computer Programming K
- Business Information Management
- Audio/Video Production

Students may earn a Public Services endorsement by selecting and completing the requirements from among these 2 options.

Public Services

**Option 1: CTE**

Students earn four (4) credits by taking at least two (2) courses in the same career Area in one of the following areas

- Education and Training
- Health Science
- Human Services

**Option 2: JROTC**

Student takes four (4) JROTC courses for 4 credits.

Students may earn an Arts & Humanities endorsement by selecting and completing the requirements from among these 4 options.

**Option 1: Social Studies**

Students take five (5) social studies courses for 5 credits.

**Option 2: Foreign Language**

Students take four (4) levels of the same foreign language.

OR

Students take two (2) levels of one foreign language AND two (2) levels of a different foreign language (two levels in each of two different foreign languages for 4 credits).

**Option 3: Fine Arts**

Students take four (4) courses in the same fine arts area for 4 credits.

OR

Students take two (2) courses in one fine arts area AND two (2) courses in a different fine arts area (two courses in each of two different fine arts areas for 4 credits).

**Option 4: English**

- English IV
- Literary Genres
- Creative Writing
- Research and Technical Writing
- Humanities
- AP English Literature & Comp
- Communication Applications

Arts & Humanities

Students may earn a Multidisciplinary Studies endorsement by selecting and completing the requirements from among these 3 options.

**Option 1: Four by Four ( 4 x 4 )**

Students take four (4) courses in each of the four core content areas.

- Four (4) English credits including English IV
- Four (4) math credit
- Four (4) science credits including biology and chemistry and/or physics
- Four (4) social studies credits

With a least one (1) advanced (3rd year or higher course in the sequence).

**Option 2: AP or Dual**

Students take four (4) Advanced Placement (AP) courses for four (4) credits in English, math, science, social studies, foreign language, or fine arts.

OR

Students take four (4) Dual credit courses for four (4) credits in English, math, science, social studies, foreign language, or fine arts.

**Option 3: Fine Arts**

Multidisciplinary Studies

Students take four advanced courses for four (4) credits that prepare them to enter the workforce or postsecondary education without remediation from within one endorsement area or among endorsement areas not in a coherent sequence.

## Valedictorian/Salutatorian (High School)

Selection method to determine the valedictorian for a

- 1) The student who is selected as the highest-ranking graduate eligible to receive the Honor Graduate Certificate and Declaration will also serve as valedictorian.
- 2) In the event no student meets the criteria to receive the Honor Graduate Certificate, a valedictorian will be selected who meets all of the following criteria:
- 3) To be eligible for senior class ranking, students must be enrolled for their junior and senior years in the same high school, and graduate in no fewer than eight regular semesters; and
- 4) By the date of graduation, the student must have met all Texas State Graduation Requirements applicable to him/her including meeting all state assessment requirements; and
- 5) The student with the highest cumulative weighted grade point average graduating under the Recommended or Distinguished Program will be selected as valedictorian, with the second ranking student serving as salutatorian. Under no circumstance will a student with a higher weighted GPA who is graduating under the Minimum Graduation Program rank higher than a student graduating under the Recommended or Distinguished Program; or
- 6) In the case where no students are graduating under either the Recommended or Distinguished Program, the student with the highest cumulative grade point average out of all graduating seniors will be selected valedictorian, and the student with the next highest GPA will serve as salutatorian.

All calculations for this honor will be conducted at the end of the spring semester of senior year. Grade Point Average will be calculated in accordance with the existing policy adopted by the Board of Directors.

## Cum Laude System

SST Public Schools recognize at graduation those students with weighted GPAs at or above specific benchmarks. Benchmarks may require occasional adjustments as changes in curriculum dictate. Currently, graduates are recognized as follows:

- Summa Cum Laude
- Weighted average\* of exactly 128.0 or higher
- Magna Cum Laude
- Weighted average of exactly 120.0 or higher
- Cum Laude
- Weighted average of exactly 112.0 or higher

*\* Weighted Average = (Weighted GPA) X (Number of Completed Credits)*

## Student Transcript/Academic Achievement Record (High School)

Each eligible high school graduate will be awarded a diploma. The student's transcript or academic achievement record, rather than the diploma, records individual accomplishments, achievements and courses completed, and displays appropriate graduation seals.

### *State and Local Credit Courses*

All courses, which are to be counted toward graduation, must be state approved courses. Local credit courses are courses in which a student may participate without receiving state credit towards graduation, unless the course is required by an ARD Committee for students receiving special education services. Local credit courses are, however, calculated as part of a student's GPA.

- SAT Lab Courses.
- Math/ELA
- TSI Lab Courses

### *High School Credits in Middle School*

- By Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §74.26. (b), districts may offer courses designated for Grades 9-12 in earlier grade levels. Students in middle school may be given high school graduation credit for passing courses offered in middle school that are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for each course. Credit for courses for

high school graduation may be earned only if the student received a grade which is the equivalent of 70 on a scale of 100 (TAC§74.26. (c)).

- Credits obtained in middle school will not be included in the GPA calculation and class rank.

### ***Transfer of Credit***

- A student transferring into the district from a public school or a regionally/nationally-accredited institution will receive the numerical grade earned in courses from that school. Weighted courses will be honored and converted to match our system.
- Students Transferring from Schools Outside of the United States: Students from other countries will receive Ps for passing in appropriate courses. Translation of out-of-country transcripts is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian. Awarding of credit will be determined by school administration after review of all documentation.
- Students from Home Schooling Programs or Private Schools: Credits earned through home schooling programs and private schools will not be calculated for GPA and class rank by the district. Students must provide documentation of enrollment and completion of courses in order to get credit.

### ***Course Weight***

A student's Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated by dividing the total amount of grade points earned by the total amount of credit hours attempted. All semester grades for courses attempted will count toward a student's GPA.

### **Course Weight**

Grade Range	Letter Grade	Advanced Placement(AP) / Dual Credit(DC)	Pre-AP	On-Level Course
A	90-100	5.0	4.5	4
B	80-89	4.0	3.5	3
C	75-79	3.0	2.5	2
D	70-74	2.0	1.5	1

F	Below 70	0.0	0.0	0
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### ***Awarding Credit***

Students earn one-half credit per semester and one credit per year for successful completion of a course. Courses vary from one to two semesters in length.

### ***Credit Recovery***

A high School student who fails one semester and passes the other semester of a two-semester course, the student will earn one whole credit if the average is a 70 or above for both semesters combined.

Otherwise, to receive credit in a core course, the student must utilize credit recovery to obtain a passing grade for any semester failed.

Credit recovery options include retaking the class, taking a correspondence course test, or receiving credit by examination with prior instruction.

Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses will be weighted as AP/ DC level course for certified campuses and other PLTW courses will be considered as a Pre-AP level.

### **College Days (High School)**

High school students who meet the following criteria will be allowed to have two excused days of absence for a college visit during their junior year and two excused days of absence for a college visit during their senior year:

- The student must have passed the required parts of the State mandated test for the previous year.
- The student must be on track to graduate on time.
- The student must be classified as a junior or senior based upon credits earned.
- The student must be passing all coursework.
- The student must have no truancy or other attendance problems.

Students must submit a written request to the school office at least two days prior to the day requested for a college visit so that eligibility criteria for an excused day of absence can be verified and approval granted prior to the student participating in a college visit. Approval will not be granted for a college visit on a day when major exams are scheduled, and no partial days will be approved.



## State Programs Supporting Students

Parents should be aware of the TEXAS Grant program, which awards financial assistance to students in need who are interested in pursuing a college education. Funds can be used to pay for tuition and fees. To be eligible, a student must have completed the Recommended High School or Distinguished Academic Achievement Program, enrolled in a non-profit public college or university in Texas within 16 months of graduation, and has accumulated no more than 30 semester credit hours (excluding those earned for dual or concurrent courses or awarded for credit by examination). For more information, consult a counselor or the “College for All Texans” website at [www.collegefortexans.com](http://www.collegefortexans.com)

### *Top 10% Automatic Admission*

Texas public colleges or universities must automatically admit a student if he or she graduated with a GPA in the top 10% of his or her graduating class, waits no longer than two years after graduating to apply for admission, and satisfied other criteria provided by the Texas Education Code. For more information, please check with your high school counselor or an admissions officer at the college or university you would like to attend.

### **Note**

Colleges may limit the number of first time freshmen eligible for admission due to enrollment caps. Although it is currently not a condition for admission under this program, it is advisable for high-achieving, college bound students to plan to graduate under the Recommended High School Program.

### *Texas Educational Opportunity Grant (TEOG)*

This program provides grant money for eligible students to attend public community colleges, public technical colleges, or certain public state colleges in Texas. To be eligible, an applicant must be a Texas resident, show financial need, enroll in the first thirty hours in college, and have not been convicted of a felony or a crime involving a controlled substance. Certain other requirements may apply. For more information, consult a counselor or the “College for All Texans” website at [www.collegefortexans.com](http://www.collegefortexans.com)

### *Other Texas Financial Aid Programs*

Other financial aid programs include the Loan Repayment Program for Teachers, Early High

School Graduation Scholarships, Tuition Rebate Program from the Texas Public Universities, and the Texas-B-On-Time Student Loan Program. See an administrator for additional information.

## Computer Resources & Chromebooks

To prepare students for an increasingly computerized society, the school has made a substantial investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher’s supervision and for approved purposes only. Students with access to the school’s computers and their parents are required to sign and follow the Student Acceptable Use policy found at the back of the Handbook. Violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of computer privileges and other disciplinary action. Electronic communications, such as e-mails sent from or received on school computers, are not private and may be monitored by school staff.

### **Chromebooks**

The Chromebook Handbook has been created as a resource for all students, parents, teachers, admin, and community members. Chromebook handbook, policy and documents can be found online at the campus web address.

## Commencement Ceremony

Students completing the SST Public Schools and State of Texas requirements for graduation will be granted a high school diploma. SST annually sponsors a graduation ceremony for students who have completed requirements established by both the SST and the State. Students who have not completed requirements may participate in graduation ceremony with an approval from principal and receive a certificate of attendance.

Even if the student participates in graduation ceremony to receive the certificate of attendance, he or she may remain enrolled to complete the SST requirements and earn his and her high school diploma; however, the student will only be allowed to participate in graduation ceremony. Ordering graduation cap and gown, announcements, or other senior memorabilia does not guarantee a student’s participation in graduation ceremonies. Graduation announcements are not invitations to the graduation ceremony. If a student does not attend and does not participate in the graduation ceremony practice, the student is ineligible to participate in the SST graduation ceremony. Rank

for graduation ceremony status is determined by the weighted GPA through the end of the first semester of senior year.

# SECTION IV: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

To function properly, education must provide an equal learning opportunity for all students by recognizing, valuing, and addressing the individual needs of every student. In addition to the regular curriculum, principles and practices of good citizenship must also be taught and modeled by school staff. This includes an appreciation for the rights of others. SST Public Schools is committed to helping every student fulfill his or her intellectual, social, physical, and emotional potential. To foster an orderly and distraction-free environment, SST Public Schools has established this Student Code of Conduct (“the Code”). The Code outlines prohibited behaviors and consequences for such behavior. SST Public Schools has the responsibility and authority to enforce the Code, question students, counsel them, and assign discipline when appropriate.

The Code does not define all types and aspects of student behavior. The Board of Directors and the Superintendent may establish written policies, rules, and regulations of general application governing student conduct in all schools. In addition, each Principal, within his or her own school, may establish certain rules and regulations not inconsistent with those established by the Board and the Superintendent.

Any conduct that causes or creates a reasonable likelihood that it will cause a substantial disruption in or material interference with any school function, activity, or purpose, or that interferes or creates a reasonable likelihood that it will interfere with the health, safety, or well-being or the rights of other students is prohibited.

A teacher may send a student to the Principal’s office to maintain effective discipline in the classroom. In addition, a teacher may remove from class a student:

- Who has been documented by the teacher to repeatedly interfere with the teacher’s ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student’s classmates to learn; or

- Whose behavior the teacher determines is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher’s ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student’s classmates to learn.

The Board of Directors has authorized detention, in-school and out-of-school suspension, and expulsion as methods of disciplining students. The Board of Directors has also given authority to the Superintendent or designee to use any of these disciplinary actions, which in his or her judgment, is appropriate for the violation.

**When students participate in student activities, they will also be expected to follow the guidelines and constitutions that further specify the organization’s expectations, student behavior and consequences.**

## Jurisdiction

The school may discipline a student:

For any violation of the Code committed while a student is

- 1) On school property;
- 2) In transit to and from school;
- 3) Attending any school-related or school-sponsored activity, so long as the student is under the direction of a school employee;
- 4) On the school property of another Texas school district;
- 5) Attending another district’s school-sponsored or school-related activity;
- 6) When a school employee or volunteer is a victim of retaliation no matter when or where it takes place; or
- 7) When a felony is committed.

## Note

In addition to disciplinary consequences, misdemeanor and felony offenses committed on campus will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

## Standards for Student Conduct

### *Classroom Rules*

Students shall:

- Be in assigned seat and ready to work before the tardy bell rings.
- Bring pencils, pens, paper, books and all assigned materials to class.
- Not disrupt classroom activities.
- Follow instructions and directives immediately.
- Not chew gum, bring food, or drink in the building, except in designated food service areas.
- Raise their hand until recognized before speaking. Stand to speak once recognized (excluding normal class discussions). Not leave class without permission. Any student leaving class must have a hall pass.
- Demonstrate courtesy at all times.
- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self- discipline and control.
- Attend all classes, regularly and on time.

### *School-Wide Rules*

Students shall:

- Demonstrate courtesy at all times.
- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self- discipline and control.
- Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
- Be prepared for each class.
- Follow dress code requirements
- Obey all campus and classroom rules.
- Respect the rights of others, including property and school facilities.
- Cooperate with and assist school personnel, including volunteers, in maintaining safety, order and discipline.
- Adhere to all requirements of the Code of conduct.
- Show high standards of behavior to create a positive and welcoming school atmosphere.

### *Responsibilities of Parents*

Parents are expected to:

- Serve as a model for students by showing respect for themselves, students, teachers, other parents, and school staff.
- Ensure their student's compliance with school attendance requirements, promptly

report, and explain absences and tardies to the school;

- Assist their student in being properly attired;
- Take an active interest in the overall school program; Communicate regularly with the school concerning their student's conduct and progress;
- Discuss report cards and work assignments with their student;
- Bring to the attention of school authorities any problem or condition which affects their student;

Maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers at the school;

Cooperate with school administrators and teachers in their efforts to achieve and maintain a quality school system; Respond promptly when notified by campus to pick up student due to medical or disciplinary problems.

Respond promptly when notified of student disciplinary matters

### **Elementary Discipline Management System**

Each campus will implement an effective behavior management program that rewards good behavior and educates students on how to make better choices. There will be a school wide behavior plan implemented for Kindergarten through 3rd grade at each campus. These programs will be based upon administrative discretion. Starting in 4th and 5th grade, students will adhere to the discipline point system. SST follows an age-appropriate progressive discipline process.

A student who is enrolled in a grade level below grade three may not be placed in out-of-school suspension unless while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property, the student engages in:

- 1) conduct that contains the elements of an offense related to weapons under Section 46.02 or 46.05, Penal Code;
- 2) conduct that contains the elements of a violent offense under Section 22.01, 22.011, 22.02, or 22.021, Penal Code; or
- 3) selling, giving, or delivering to another person or possessing, using, or being under the influence of any amount of marijuana or a controlled substance, as defined by

Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code, or by 21 U.S.C. Section 801 et seq.; a dangerous drug, as defined by Chapter 483, Health and Safety Code; or an alcoholic beverage, as defined by Section 1.04, Alcoholic Beverage Code.

***Students with behavior problems at school may receive the following consequences***

- Parent phone call/written notification
- Verbal reprimand
- Time out situation
- Removal from class mediation/counseling
- Behavior Contract
- Student/Parent/Principal meeting
- Restitution (campus clean up with parent approval, community service, detention, presentations to classes, reports, research paper, letters of apology, etc...)
- Parent attending school with student
- Suspension (ISS-In School Suspension or OSS-Out of School Suspension)
- Expulsion
- Restorative Discipline Practices

**Core Ethical Values Connection**

To promote good character, the campus may use and develop a Core Ethical Values Reflection Form or Positive Office Referral Form. The purpose of these forms is to allow the student to reflect on Campus Core Ethical Values for his/her behavior choices. Student completes the Reflection Form to designate if their performance displays or lacks one of the Campus Core Ethical Values or more. A student may be referred to Dean of office with the Positive Office Referral Form to be acknowledged about his/her good character.

**Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)**

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL, 2018)

CASEL five (5) Competencies

- 1) Self-awareness: Know your strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a “growth mindset.”

- 2) Self-management: Effectively manage stress, control impulses, and motivate yourself to set and achieve goals.
- 3) Social awareness: Understand the perspectives of others and empathize with them, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures.
- 4) Relationship skills: Communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed.
- 5) Responsible decision-making: Make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety, and social norms. (CASEL, 2018)

Along with focusing on academic excellence, SST strives to achieve in the Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) of each child. We believe that our efforts on focusing on the positive behaviors and rewarding the students when they are shown are a much more successful way to maintain a positive school culture instead of dealing with misbehavior through punishment.

**Discipline Point System**

SST Public Schools has implemented a Discipline Point System (“DPS”) in which students are given “DPS points” for unacceptable behavior. Parents will be notified when DPS is assigned and conduct results in consequences under the DPS system. The Discipline Point System will be used for 4th through 12th grade students.

***Rules of Discipline Point System***

- 1) Every unwanted behavior has a numerical point.
- 2) An accrual of 10–19 DPS points within a semester may result in assignment to Saturday or after School Detention.
- 3) An accrual of 20–29 DPS points within a semester may result in assignment to an additional session of Saturday or After School Detention. Students required to attend Saturday or After School Detention are rewarded five points for attending and obeying the rules of conduct for Saturday or After School Detention. Points will only be removed for Saturday Detentions served because of DPS. Students may receive more

DPS points, however, for unwilling behavior. Failing to attend a Saturday or After School Detention without any confirmed excuse may result in a one day out of school suspension.

- 4) Accrual of 30–49 DPS points within a semester may result in a one day in school suspension.
- 5) Accrual of 50–69 DPS points within a semester may result in one day out of school suspension.
- 6) Accrual of 70–89 DPS points within a semester period may result in a three day out of school suspension.
- 7) DPS points will be issued only once per class period for the same incident. If unacceptable behavior occurs more than once in a class period, the teacher will fill out a Discipline Referral Form and contact an Assistant Principal.
- 8) If a student with at least one discipline point does not receive any additional discipline points within one school day, the student’s discipline points will be reduced by one the following school day. The student must be present for all class periods with no tardies to receive.

### ***Discipline Point Cases***

Following is a list of student conduct that will result in the accrual of DPS points.

<b>CASE</b>	<b>POINT</b>
Lack of materials	2
Not wearing student ID	1
Inappropriate behavior towards another student	3
Sleeping in class	2
Running in hallway	1
Lack of cooperation	2
Leaning back in chair	3
Antagonistic behavior	2
Excessive talking	3
Inappropriate cafeteria behavior	2
Eating/drinking in class and/or common areas	3
Chewing gum	3
Tapping	2
Horse-playing	3

Throwing things in class/hallway/cafeteria	3
Not receiving any DPS points within a school day	-1
Not dressing for Gym class	4
Not being in assigned location	3
Dress code violation	3
Talking back to teacher	3
Gossiping/spreading tale	3
Backpack in the classroom	1
Humming/singing/making noises	3
Leaving the classroom without permission	5
Leaving paper/trash on the floor	2
Being in the hallway without a pass	1
Disturbing class	3
Disrupting an extra-curricular activity	2
Dishonesty	3
Vulgarity	2

### **Offenses and Consequences**

**Corporal punishment is never an acceptable disciplinary measure**

#### ***Level I Offenses***

The following behaviors are prohibited at all School and School- related activities:

- 1) Accessing restricted areas.
- 2) Late to Class 5-9 Tardies
- 3) Accumulating 10–49 DPS discipline points within a semester.
- 4) Late to Class 10-14 tardies
- 5) Any violations of “Standards for Student Conduct” listed in the Code of Conduct on page 56–page 57 of the Handbook.
- 6) Causing damage to School property in an amount less than \$50.
- 7) Disrespectful to staff such as rolling eyes, sucking teeth, etc.
- 8) Dress and grooming code violations (see “Dress and Grooming” on page 16 of the Handbook).
- 9) Engaging in offensive conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, directed toward another student or any other person.
- 10) Talking back to teacher.

- 11) Parking infractions or violations of campus vehicle operation regulations.
- 12) Possessing a laser pointer on School property or at School- sponsored events.
- 13) Possession of any electronic and/or telecommunication devices without permission during school hours (see “Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices” on page 20 of the Handbook).
- 14) Posting published materials or holding demonstrations or meetings on School property without School approval (see “Distribution of Published Materials,” pages 21–21 of the Handbook).
- 15) Profanity and/or obscene gestures toward other students.
- 16) Scuffling (engaging in a short, rough, unorganized struggle at close quarters)
- 17) Failing to comply with directives of School personnel
- 18) Typographical
- 19) Single acts of disruptive behavior, including non- compliance and insubordination.
- 20) Throwing objects not considered an illegal weapon that can cause bodily injury or property damage.
- 21) Unruly, disruptive, or abusive behavior that interferes with the teacher’s ability to effectively communicate with students.
- 22) Possession of a cellular phone/paging device during the school day.
- 23) Use of Skateboard, scooter, bikes, hover-boards, and/or roller blades while on school property.
- 24) Verbal or written abuse, i.e., name-calling, racial or ethnic slurs, or derogatory statements that may disrupt the school environment.
- 25) Loitering on campus 2-9 times per school year.
- 26) Unauthorized use of school or classroom phone.
- 5) Assignment of school duties such as scrubbing desks or picking up litter.
- 6) Behavioral contracts or individually developed behavior management plans.
- 7) Confiscation of cell phone; a fee of \$10.00 may be charged for the return of the phone. The school is not liable for lost or stolen cell phone. All confiscated phones must be turned in to the Campus Principal’s office immediately, if possible, or as soon as practicable the day the phone is confiscated.
- 8) Classroom management techniques.
- 9) Community service.
- 10) Cooling-off time or “time-out.”
- 11) Counseling by teachers, counselors, or administrative personnel.
- 12) Demerits.
- 13) Confiscation of electronic devices used during the instructional day.
- 14) Grade reductions for academic dishonesty.
- 15) Loss of computer privileges/Internet access.
- 16) Parent/guardian contracts to restrict home privileges.
- 17) Parent/guardian observations in student’s classes.
- 18) Parent/guardian conference with teacher or Campus Principal.
- 19) Peer mediation.
- 20) Placement in another appropriate classroom.
- 21) Restitution/restoration, if applicable
- 22) School-assessed and school-administered probation.
- 23) Seating changes within the classroom.
- 24) Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process.
- 25) Verbal correction.
- 26) Voluntary peer mediation/family management classes/ community service.
- 27) Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in extracurricular activities and eligibility for seeking and holding honorary offices, and/or membership in school- sponsored clubs or organizations.
- 28) Withdrawal of participation in school events such as field trips, assemblies, etc.

***Disciplinary Consequences (not in order of progressive disciplinary measures)***

- 1) Lunch Detention.
- 2) After School Detention.
- 3) Saturday Detention (3rd-12th grade)
- 4) In School Suspension.

## *Level II Offenses*

The following behaviors are prohibited at all School and School- related activities:

- 1) Abusing prescription and/or non-prescription drugs, giving a prescription drug to another student, or possessing or being under the influence of another person's prescription drug on School property or at a School-related event (except the possession of asthma or anaphylaxis medications, as allowed by "Administration of Medication" on page 27 of the Handbook).
- 2) Academic dishonesty (see "Academic Dishonesty" on page 39 of the Handbook).
- 3) Accumulating 15-20 tardies to class.
- 4) Accumulating 20 or more tardies to class.
- 5) Accumulating 50-89 DPS points within a semester.
- 6) Assault of another student or an adult that is not an expellable offense.
- 7) Being a member of, pledging to become a member of, joining, or soliciting another person to join, or pledge to become a member of a public school fraternity, sorority, or gang, meaning an organization composed wholly or in part of students that seeks to perpetuate itself by taking in additional members from the students enrolled in school on the basis of the decision of its membership rather than on the free choice of a student who is qualified to fill the special aims of the organization.
- 8) Bullying and/or cyberbullying as defined by the Student Handbook and/or Board policy (see amended "Freedom from Bullying and Cyberbullying" portion of the Handbook), as well as conduct including verbal or physical harassment or threat thereof, taunting, hazing, intimidating or any other action whereby one or more individuals deliberately single out another student for cruel, mean and/or humiliating treatment.
- 9) Causing damage to School property in an amount equal to or greater than \$50.
- 10) Crafting a "hit list," meaning a list of people targeted to be harmed using a firearm, knife, or other object to be used with intent to cause bodily harm.
- 11) Dating Violence or Retaliation (see Amended "Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation" portion of the Handbook).
- 12) Engaging in conduct similar to prohibited discrimination or harassment, even if that conduct does not rise to the level of harassment prohibited by law or School policy (see Amended "Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation" portion of the Handbook). (Level 1 Consequences for Elementary)
- 13) Failure to comply with School guidelines regarding In- School Suspension and/or missing more than one scheduled In-School Suspension assignment without a confirmed excuse (see "In School Suspension," pages 62-63 of the Handbook).
- 14) Failure to comply with School rules regarding student transportation (see "Transportation" on page 22 of the Handbook).
- 15) False accusation of the commission of a misdemeanor or felony.
- 16) Falsification and/or forgery of School records.
- 17) Fighting or arranging a fight. Students involved in fighting will, at a minimum, be suspended for the remainder of the day.
- 18) Flagrant violations of the SST Acceptable Use Policy or other actions that corrupt the educational value of the School's computers or Internet service (see "Student Acceptable Use Policy," beginning on page 79 of the Handbook).
- 19) Gambling or playing cards, including but not limited to card playing, dice shooting and/or sports pools and involves the transfer of money or other personal belongings or assistance from one person to another. Bringing, trading, or playing with any cards are prohibited. Playing cards will be confiscated (Level 1 Consequences for Elementary).
- 20) Gang activity.
- 21) Harassment, meaning threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student or staff member, engaging in sexually intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another student,



- subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety.
- 22) Hazing, meaning an intentional, knowing, or reckless act, occurring on or off School property, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization.
  - 23) Indecent exposure
  - 24) Inappropriate public displays of affection, including kissing, hugging, physical conduct, etc.
  - 25) Intentionally providing incorrect information to School officials.
  - 26) Knife possession.
  - 27) Skipping class or Leaving a School campus, classroom, or event without written permission from an administrator.
  - 28) Misdemeanor vandalism and/or criminal mischief.
  - 29) Possessing a razor, box cutter, chain, or any other object used in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury to another person.
  - 30) Possessing a stun gun, mace, or pepper spray.
  - 31) Possessing ammunition.
  - 32) Possessing, exhibiting, or threatening with a look-alike weapon, including without limitation, BB guns, CO2 guns, air pistols or rifles, pellet guns, or any other device designed to appear to be a firearm or other weapon.
  - 33) Possession of stolen property.
  - 34) Possession or use of fireworks or other explosive devices.
  - 35) Possession or use of tobacco or related products such as E-cigarettes, vapor pens or lighters on School property or at School-related events.
  - 36) Profanity/obscene gestures toward personnel.
  - 37) Refusal to follow directions from a School employee or administrator.
  - 38) Repetitive Level I Offenses – i.e., two or more Level I offenses within a semester.
  - 39) Secret society activity.
  - 40) Sending or posting abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, defamatory or illegal electronic messages, sexting.
  - 41) Stealing and/or theft.
  - 42) Threats against School personnel and/or other students.
  - 43) Using the Internet or other electronic communications to threaten students or employees, or cause disruption to the school program.
  - 44) Violating the School's examination procedures (see "Examination Procedures," page 41 of the Handbook).
  - 45) Loitering on campus 10 times or more per school year.
  - 46) Possessing, distributing, exhibiting, and/or transmitting obscene materials, including pornography.
  - 47) Computer system violations, including violations of the School's Acceptable Use policy (see "Student Acceptable Use Policy," beginning on page 79 of the Handbook).
- Disciplinary Consequences (not in order of progressive disciplinary measures)**
- 1) Any applicable Level I Disciplinary Consequence.
  - 2) Out-of-school suspension up to four days.
  - 3) Expulsion (upon Discipline Committee recommendation). Disciplinary actions may be used individually or in combination for any offense.
- Level III Offenses***
- The following behaviors are prohibited at all School and School- related activities:
- 1) Accumulating 90 or more DPS points within a semester.
  - 2) Aggravated assault.
  - 3) Aggravated kidnapping.
  - 4) Aggravated robbery.
  - 5) Aggravated sexual assault
  - 6) Any discretionary or mandatory expulsion violation under Texas Education Code, Chapter 37.

- 7) Any offense listed in Sections 37.006(a) or 37.007 (a), (b), and (d) of the Texas Education Code, no matter when or where the offense takes place.
- 8) Arson
- 9) Assault
- 10) Attempts to copy and/or modify another student's work files stored on a computer.
- 11) Burglary of a motor vehicle on campus.
- 12) Capital murder.
- 13) Commission of a felony offense listed under Title 5, Texas Penal Code.
- 14) Conduct punishable as a felony.
- 15) Criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder.
- 16) Criminally negligent homicide.
- 17) Death threats.
- 18) Deliberate destruction or tampering with school computer data or networks.
- 19) False alarm or report.
- 20) Felony criminal mischief against school property, another student, or school staff.
- 21) Gang activity (violent).
- 22) Inappropriate sexual conduct.
- 23) Indecency with a child.
- 24) Issuing a false fire alarm.
- 25) Manslaughter.
- 26) Murder.
- 27) Persistent Level I offenses – i.e., four Level I offenses within a semester.
- 28) Persistent Level II offenses – i.e., two or more Level II offenses within a semester.
- 29) Possessing, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of inhalants.
- 30) Possessing, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of a simulated controlled substance.
- 31) Public lewdness.
- 32) Required registration as a sex offender.
- 33) Retaliation against any school employee or volunteer at any time or place.
- 34) Setting or attempting to set fire on school property (not arson).
- 35) Sexual abuse of a young child or children.
- 36) Sexual assault.
- 37) Targeting another individual for bodily harm.
- 38) Use of the School's Internet access to engage in conduct that constitutes felony criminal mischief and/or deliberate attempts to bypass installed computer security software.
- 39) Use, exhibition, or possession of a firearm, location restricted knife, club, or prohibited weapon.
- 40) Use, sale, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of marijuana, controlled substances or illicit drugs, or alcoholic beverages on School premises or during any School activity, regardless of location.
- 41) Possessing and/or selling "look-alike" drugs.
- 42) Possession or use of alcohol on School property or at School- related events.
- 43) Suspicious drug/alcohol involvement.
- 44) Engaging in bullying that encourages a student to commit or attempt to commit suicide.
- 45) Inciting violence against a student through group bullying.
- 46) Releasing or threatening to release intimate visual material of a minor or a student who is 18 years of age or older without the student's consent. "Intimate visual material" means visual material that depicts a person (a) with the person's intimate parts exposed; or (b) engaged in sexual conduct.

**Disciplinary Consequences (not in order of progressive disciplinary measures)**

- 1) Any applicable Level I or Level II Disciplinary Consequence
- 2) Out of school suspension for five-ten days.
- 3) Expulsion.

**Consequences**

*Detention*

Detention may be held on each day during school for up to eight hours. Students who serve detention must make arrangements to be picked up from school. Parents may request in person a delay of the detention; no phone calls or notes will be accepted. There are two types of detention: school and Saturday.

### ***School Detention***

- 1) Students will bring materials to work on-homework or books to read from the library; only school acceptable materials are permitted. Classroom materials may be sent by a teacher.
- 2) Students will not be permitted to go to their lockers during detention; all materials must be brought to the detention room when reporting.
- 3) Sleeping is not permitted.
- 4) Do not address staff, teachers, or other students.
- 5) Students should use the restroom before detention starts and be prepared to stay in the detention room for the entire length of time, except during an emergency.
- 6) Students will follow all rules concerning classroom behavior. Failure to comply will mean suspension from school.
- 7) Any student assigned to the detention room must stay the entire time. Students refusing to sit their time will be suspended from school.
- 8) Detention time will be assigned within forty-eight hours of the Assistant Principal meeting with the student. This allows the parent time to make transportation arrangements.
- 9) Students placed on after school detention will not be permitted to participate in any extracurricular activities that day.
- 10) If a student arrives to detention room five minutes after designated time without a confirmed excuse, the student will not be allowed into detention room, and the miss will be considered unexcused. This will result in one day out of school suspension, and the student will be required to make up the detention.
- 11) If a student does not turn in a Parent Notification Form on the due date without a confirmed excuse, he or she will have another after school detention.

### ***Saturday Detention***

Saturday detention serves as an alternative to in school suspension for violation of school rules, and prevents students from losing instruction time. During the hours of detention, students work to

increase academic skills, engage in activities to improve self-concept, and address discipline issues.

Students who attend Saturday detention may receive academic assistance and may be given the opportunity to do homework, make-up or remedial work, under the supervision of a teacher. Each student may be given a behavior modification packet which may help students to understand why their misbehavior through introspection. This counseling will guide students toward acceptable behavior alternatives through goal setting exercises. Students may also do some physical exercises during detention.

Written notification of a Saturday detention is sent home with the student. This notification lists the cause for and date of the detention. The only acceptable excuse for not attending a Saturday detention is a verified (doctor's note) illness of the student. Saturday

#### ***Rules***

- 1) Detention will be held at the campus designated time and on school grounds. Parents are expected to provide transportation to and from detention, and students are required to wear their school uniforms. Should a student arrive late for a Saturday Detention without a note for an "emergency excuse," he or she will be assigned the next scheduled Saturday Detention. A second late arrival to an assigned Saturday Detention will result in in-of-school suspension beginning on the following Monday, plus attendance at the next Saturday Detention.
- 2) If an emergency arises and the student cannot attend, the parent must contact the Assistant Principal. If the reasons are acceptable, the detention will be rescheduled. If a student does not participate in scheduled Saturday detention without any confirmed excuse, the student will receive one day out of school suspension plus attendance at the next scheduled Saturday detention.
- 3) Students left at the school after 12:30 p.m. will be unsupervised. The school is not responsible for students who are left after 12:30 p.m.
- 4) Students may be asked to bring appropriate materials with which to work.

- 5) No radios, food, beverage, candy, comic books, etc. allowed during Saturday detention.
- 6) Students will be expected to work the entire time while at Saturday detention. Any student not working will be removed from the detention and referred to the Assistant Principal. Any student acting disruptively will be removed from Saturday Detention and be referred to the Assistant Principal for further disciplinary action. Parents will be notified regarding the infraction immediately.
- 7) No student is permitted to sleep during Saturday Detention.  
Lavatory privileges will be at discretion of the Saturday Detention administrator.
- 8) If a student does not turn in Parent Notification form on the due date without any confirmed excuse, he or she will have another Saturday Detention.

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in one day of out of school suspension, plus attendance at the next scheduled Saturday Detention or any other Level I offense.

### ***Suspension***

The school utilizes two kinds of suspension: in school suspension and out of school suspension.

#### ***In School Suspension***

The following rules and regulations apply to all students assigned to in school suspension. Students must report to the detention room at the start time of the school day. Students arriving 5 minutes after the start time will be counted as absent. In school suspension will be run from the first bell until dismissal time.

- 1) Students must report to the detention room by the time specified by the campus. Students arriving 5 minutes after the specified time will be counted as absent. In school suspension will run from the specified time until dismissal time.
- 2) Students will bring materials to work on, including an in school suspension assignment with their teachers' names, subjects, and assignments. Students are responsible for obtaining assignments from each teacher.

- 3) Students must sign in when reporting to the detention room, and sign out when the suspension period is over. Students may not leave the detention room without permission from an Assistant Principal. Without assistant principal permission, a student cannot go out of detention room. Students are to keep clean the detention room.
- 4) No talking or conversations. Students must be seated at all times. No physical contact of any kind between students is allowed.
- 5) Students will not be permitted to go their lockers. All materials must be brought to the room when reporting.
- 6) Students will not be permitted to go to lunch. They will have their lunch in detention room. Students may not bring food or drink into the detention room other than lunch time.
- 7) No disruptive behavior will be allowed.
- 8) Unexcused absences from suspension will be referred to the Assistant Principal.
- 9) No visits by parents, relatives or other students are allowed.
- 10) Sleeping is prohibited.
- 11) Transportation to the in-school suspension site is the responsibly of the student and his or her parent(s). Transportation arrangements must be made prior to arrival at the site. Telephones are not available for student use.
- 12) Students must abide by the provisions of this Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct during their suspension period.
- 13) A student who misses a scheduled in school suspension without a confirmed excuse will be assigned one day out of school suspension. The missed in school suspension period will be rescheduled. If a student misses more than one scheduled in school suspension without a confirmed excuse, he or she may be subject to expulsion.

Failure to follow these guidelines will be reported to the Assistant Principal for further action, which may include up to three days of out of school suspension or any other level me offense.

### ***Out of School Suspension***

Notice of suspension and the reasons for the suspension will be given to the student by the Assistant Principal after a discipline committee meeting. The student shall receive credit for work missed during the period of suspension if the student makes up work missed during the period of suspension within the same number of school days the student was absent on suspension. A suspension period shall not last longer than five days.

### **Disciplinary Process**

The Principal will designate one Assistant Principal as the campus Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will form a Discipline Committee to review decisions regarding student discipline at the request of the Principal. The Discipline Committee may review all offenses under the Code of Conduct and identify positive behavior interventions and supports that can be used to redirect the misbehavior. The Principal will review the Discipline Committee's recommendation and issue an appropriate consequence. For all decisions not involving out of school suspension lasting five or more days or expulsion, the Principal's decision is final. Special rules apply when the Discipline Committee recommends out of school suspension lasting five or more days or expulsion.

### **Conferences, Hearings and Appeals**

All students are entitled to conferences, hearings, and/or appeals of disciplinary matters as provided by state and federal law and school policy.

### **Process for Suspensions Lasting Under Five Days**

In addition to the above list of Code of Conduct violations, the Discipline Committee and/or Principal have the authority to suspend a student for a period of up to five school days for any of the following additional reasons:

- 1) The need to further investigate an incident,
- 2) A recommendation to expel the student, or
- 3) An emergency constituting endangerment to health or

### ***Prerequisites to Suspension***

Prior to suspending a student, the Principal or designee must attempt to hold an informal conference with the student to:

- 1) Notify the student of the accusations against him/her,

- 2) Allow the student to relate his or her version of the incident, and
- 3) Determine whether the student's conduct warrants suspension.

### ***Notification to Parents/Guardians***

If the Principal or designee determines the student's conduct warrants suspension during the school day, the Principal or designee will make reasonable effort to notify the student's parent(s) that the student has been suspended before the student is sent home. The Principal or designee will notify a suspended student's parent(s) of the period of suspension, the grounds for the suspension, and the time and place for an opportunity to confer with the Principal.

### ***Credit During Suspension***

A student shall receive credit for work missed during the period of suspension if the student makes up work missed during the period of suspension within the same number of school days the student was absent on suspension.

### **Process for Out-of-School Suspensions Over Five Days and Expulsion**

#### ***Notice***

When the Discipline Committee and/or the Principal determine that a student's conduct warrants suspension for more than five days or expulsion, but prior to taking any expulsion action, the Principal or designee will provide the student's parent(s) with written notice of:

- 1) The reasons for the proposed disciplinary action; and
- 2) The date and location for a hearing before the Principal, within five school days from the date of the disciplinary action.  
The notice shall further state that, at the hearing, the student:
  - 3) May be present;
  - 4) Shall have an opportunity to present evidence;
  - 5) Shall be apprised and informed of the school's evidence;
  - 6) May be accompanied by his or her parent(s); and
  - 7) May be represented by an attorney.

### ***Hearing Before Principal***

The school shall make a good faith effort to inform the student and the student's parent(s) of the time and place for the hearing, and the school shall hold the hearing regardless of whether the student, the student's parent(s) or another adult representing the student attends. The Principal may audio record the hearing.

Immediately following the hearing, the Principal will notify the student and the student's parent(s) in writing of his or her decision. The decision shall specify:

- 1) The length of the suspension or expulsion, if any;
- 2) When the expulsion is not permanent, the procedures for re-admittance at the end of the removal; and
- 3) The right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Area Superintendent.

The notice shall also state that failure to timely request such a hearing constitutes a waiver of further rights in the matter.

### ***Appeal to the Area Superintendent***

The student or his or her parent(s) may appeal the expulsion decision to the Area Superintendent by notifying the Principal in writing within seven calendar days of the date of receipt of the Principal's decision. The Area Superintendent will review the audio or transcribed record from the hearing before the Principal and notify the student and his or her parent(s) of the appeal decision, in writing, within ten calendar days of the date of the appeal.

### ***Appeal to the Board of Directors***

The student or his or her parent(s) may appeal the expulsion decision to the Board of Directors by notifying the Area Superintendent in writing within seven calendar days of the date of receipt of the Appeal Decision. The Board will review the audio or transcribed record from the hearing before the Principal and the appeal decision of the Area Superintendent at their next regular meeting after receiving the board appeal. The Board will notify the student and his or her parent(s) of its decision, in writing, within five calendar days of the board meeting.

The decision of the Board is final and may not be appealed.

Discipline consequences will not be deferred pending the outcome of an appeal of an expulsion to the Board.

### ***No Credit Earned***

Except when required by law, students will not earn academic credit during a period of expulsion.

### ***Emergency Placement and Expulsion***

If the Principal or designee reasonably believes a student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with a teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students in a class, with the ability of a student's classmates to learn, or with the operation of the school or a school-sponsored activity, the Principal or designee may order immediate removal of the student. Immediate suspension may be imposed by a Principal or designee if they reasonably believe such action is necessary to protect persons or property from imminent harm. At the time of such an emergency removal, the student will be given verbal notice of the reason for the action and appropriate hearings will be scheduled within a reasonable time after the emergency removal.

### **Placement of Students with Disabilities**

All disciplinary actions regarding students with disabilities shall be conducted in accordance with the most current federal and state laws.

### ***Suspension/Expulsion Requirement***

#### **10 or fewer days removal**

If your child violates the school's code of conduct, it would not be considered a change of placement for the school to remove your child from the current placement for ten (10) school days or fewer in a school year, just as it does when disciplining children without disabilities.

#### **More than 10 days removal**

A student with a disability shall not be excluded from his or her current placement pending appeal to the hearing officer (refer to the grievance policy) for more than ten days without ARD Committee action to determine appropriate services in the interim. Pending appeal to a special education hearing officer, a student with a disability shall remain in the alternative education setting, unless the school and parents agree otherwise. Please refer to Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process page 15 for more information.

## Gun-Free Schools Act

In accordance with the Gun-Free Schools Act, the school shall expel, from the student's regular program for a period of one year, any student who is determined to have brought a firearm, as defined by federal law, to school. The Principal may modify the term of expulsion for a student or assess another comparable penalty that results in the student's expulsion from the regular school program on a case-by-case basis.

For the purposes of this law, "firearm" means:

- 1) Any weapon – including a starter gun – which will, or is designed to, or which may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive from the frame or receiver of any such weapon;
- 2) Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer;
- 3) Any destructive device.; "Destructive device" means any explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than 1/4 ounce, device similar to any of the preceding described devices. It also means any type of weapon – other than a shotgun shell or a shotgun that is generally recognized as particularly suitable for sporting purposes – by whatever name known which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than 1/2 inch in diameter; and any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into a destructive device as described, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

## Positive Reinforcement System

SST Public Schools is excited to announce its new Positive Reinforcement System ("PRS")! PRS is specially designed to give students the opportunity to be recognized and rewarded for good behavior.

Each time a student is observed performing a random act of kindness, helping a classmate, or assisting a teacher, he or she may be rewarded with a PRS point. (In addition to these examples, there are several other ways to earn PRS points.) Points are accumulated throughout the school year, and

students can use them to participate in field trips, free dress days, and other fun activities. PRS points can even be used to reduce DPS points!

Please help us encourage your child to earn PRS points. A sample listing of PRS point-eligible behavior can be found in the chart below. Please read following to understand how PRS and DPS work:

There are 4 types of behavior items that can be given to a student:

- 1) PRS from teacher: Counts towards PRS. Cancels DPS which is given from that teacher only.
- 2) Negative points from teacher: Counts towards DPS.
- 3) Positive points from admin: Doesn't count towards PRS. Used usually for serving punishment or DPS cancellation. For example: Serving Lunch Detention (+5), or not receiving DPS point in 5 consecutive days (+5) etc.
- 4) It is the goal of SST to develop students to be intrinsically motivated to act in ways in accordance with excellent character. Therefore, character PRS points do not add up to extrinsic rewards but are instead used to indicate who has great character so those students can be celebrated by the entire school population. Recognition will be inclusive of members of the school community (e.g., recognizing the character strengths and unique qualities of each student in a classroom rather than having students earn the title "student of the month"). The school may recognize students or classrooms for outstanding behavior or service but refrains from excessive singling out of students or groups of students.

PRS point of a student is the total of all Positive points except for character PRS points that are given by each teacher (admin positive points do not count). DPS point of a student is the total of each teacher's (Negative Points-Positive Points) to that student. If this value is negative (More (+) than (-)) then this value is (0).

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PRS-Helping Teacher without being asked

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PRS-Perfect Hallway Behavior

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PRS-Perfect Dress code
PRS-Honesty
PRS-Turning all work in on time for a three-week period
PRS-Having all supplies during a random supply check
PRS-Helping a fellow student without being asked
PRS-Volunteering in any school activities or events
PRS-Random act of Kindness
PRS-Going above the requirements of a project/assignment
PRS-Behavioral Improvement
PRS-Active Participation
PRS-Donation to the school
PRS-Saturday Detention
PRS-Being a positive role model
PRS-Academic Improvement

### Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

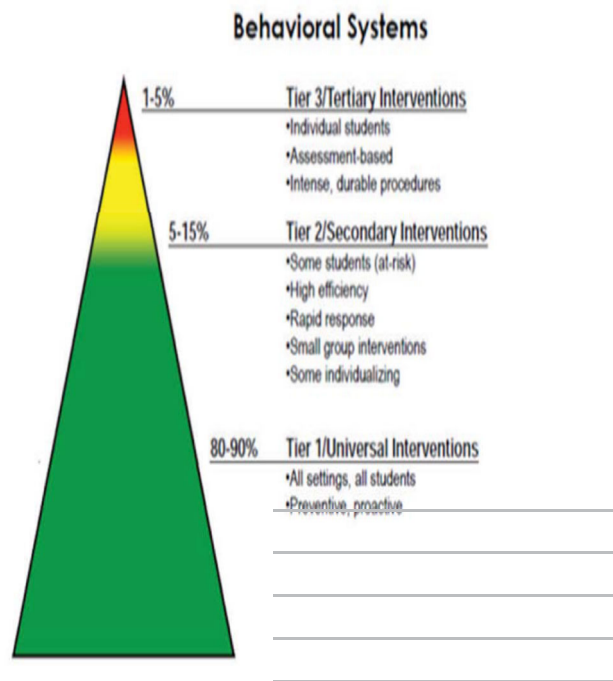
SST Public Schools we strive to give all of our students a quality education. Our staff will foster a positive student centered learning environment where each student receives the behavior support needed to be successful. Once the student enrolls, he or she is automatically considered a tier 1 student, which means he or she will receive quality, research based classroom management. During the first marking period, the teacher will identify students who show behavior difficulty. The teacher will provide differentiated classroom techniques for struggling students and monitor students' progress. Specifically, the teacher may color code the learners based on data such as but not limited to: written warning, student discipline referrals, parent requests, medical information, attendance/ tardy

record, informal/formal observations, et cetera and so forth. Behavioral disabilities can manifest at any age and Brita should not be withheld due to the student being young in age. Students may also be placed in a tier by the request of the parent, teacher, or administrator.

In the Behavior Response to Intervention (BRTI) process all students behaviorally will be supported at a specified level. Furthermore, a student is more than the identified tier or level. At no point in the process would we encourage an adult or staff member to merely refer to the student solely by his or her label.

This is a support process to help the student to become successful. We do not want the student to internalize any negative messages.

The Administration will lead the school-wide BRTI and observe the classroom to ensure proper school wide behavior expectations are taking place in alignment with the RTI process.





# SECTION V: STUDENT & PARENT ENGAGEMENT

## Student Engagement & Support

### *Extracurricular Activities, Student Clubs & Organizations*

Extracurricular Activities: Participation in school activities and student engagement programs provides an opportunity for youth and peers to form a positive connection with the school, its faculty, and values that may be otherwise unavailable. Involving students in extracurricular activities may enhance their connectedness with school, which may lead to positive academic and psychosocial outcomes. School engagement also takes time away from risky opportunities, provides learning in constructive activities, and increases the possibility to establish positive social networks.

Extracurricular activities are school sponsored or non-school sponsored such as UIL and 4H. These activities may or may not be an extension of the classroom curriculum but must meet the stated criteria developed to meet the SST Philosophy and Mission Statement.

All extracurricular activities are centered on the goals of developing the character for each student involved. Each sponsor/coach orients students and parents about their particular activity. The sponsor/coach provides each participant with a permission slip and a participation agreement to be signed by both student and parent.

Student Clubs: Below you will find a comprehensive list of all major rules and regulations that clubs and club leaders are expected to abide by. For more information, please refer to SST Student Clubs & Organizations Handbook.

- Students may not independently submit a student club proposal. If a student wishes to form a new club that does not already exist on campus, the student must find a faculty member willing and able to serve as the club advisor.

- Students who have failing grades are not eligible to participate in student clubs & organizations without Campus Empowerment and Engagement Coordinator's written permission.
- Students should submit a membership application to join an existing student club.
- Students should return a signed Parent/Guardian Club Consent Form to the club advisor before participating in any club or activity.
- Students may not participate in more than two clubs unless the Campus Empowerment and Engagement Coordinator gives written permission.
- Students must abide by the Student Code of Conduct while participating in any student club or activity.
- Students must abide by SST and campus rules.
- Students who have lost privileges to participate in extra-curricular activities effective immediately upon disciplinary action without refund.
- Students must maintain the attendance rate stipulated in the club's syllabus.
- Students must notify the club advisor in advance of any absence or tardy and include the reason.
- Club attendance is subject to a need for academic tutorials, or academic concerns. Students must provide a teacher note to be excused for academic needs.
- All club students must attend all competitions in order to maintain participation in the club if the club is a competition based.
- School attendance on club meeting, activity, or competition days is required in order to participate in those events.

## ***Student Mentoring Programs***

Mentoring, in the center, ensures the young generation that they are not alone, gives them the confidence to deal with the obstacles, to empower them in that matter. It is proven that this help creates a connection that have beneficial outcomes on the young people.

### ***The College Readiness & Leadership Program (CLRP)***

CRLP is a mentorship program designed to model academic and social skills that will prepare SST students for successes in higher education. Skills modeled for and expected of CRLP participants include:

Personal and Academic Development

- Voluntary Public Service
- Expedition and Exploration, and
- Physical Fitness

These skills, which are also highlighted in the United States Congress' Congressional Award program, are recognized by SST's CRLP as vital to the real-world experiences SST students will encounter once they leave high school.

The mentoring program goals include:

- Improved academic performance (usually defined through grades or standard test scores)
- Improved relations with peers, teachers, and other school personnel
- Increased exploration of, or acceptance to, secondary education opportunities
- Improved job placement or career exploration

A student selection procedure should apply based on the College Readiness & Leadership Program (CRLP) handbook. Not all SST campus principals will choose to offer a CRLP.

However, CRLP membership is open to all middle and high school students at campuses where the program is offered where the program may be offered to one or a combination of grade levels, according to local needs, conditions, or traditions.

Any student attending a SST school for at least one full academic year may apply to the CRLP if the program is being offered at his or her campus. A student who has successfully completed the CRLP the previous school year will be, upon reapplication, admitted for the following year. The CRLP Advisory

Committee oversees admission process according to procedure highlighted in CRLP handbook criteria will select new applicants.

Students admitted to CRLP program are required to attend regular weekly, monthly, yearly meetings and activities with their mentor(s). For more information about the College Readiness & Leadership Program (CRLP), please refer to SST CRLP Handbook.

### ***Summer Leadership STEM Camps***

SST Public Schools offers summer learning opportunities for students to try and learn new things, and build social skills that last forever.

For middle schools, SST provides various enrichment activities such as aquatic study, archery, canoeing, geocaching, geology, trail of painted ponies, owl science, wilderness survival, writing in nature, reading time, art classes, and character building opportunities. Guest speakers are invited to introduce different academic and social contents.

For high schools, SST provides academic, leadership and social based activities such as 3D Animations using Alice, Java and C++ Programming, Cyber Security, Mobile Apps using MIT App Inventor, Drawings using JavaScript, SAT/PSAT Prep, Hands-on with Robots, basketball, soccer, leadership talk series etc... For more information, please see your Campus' Empowerment and Engagement Coordinator.

### ***Educational Trips & Study Abroad Programs***

With SST Public Schools' Study Abroad programs, high school students have the incredible opportunity to see the world and increase their global awareness. Traveling abroad can have beneficial outcomes to students who get the privilege. It gives them a different perspective and a better understanding of history. It shows diversity, differences in languages and gives people insight to the rest of the world around them.

SST Public Schools facilitates study abroad programs operated by third party organizations, however supervised by SST teachers. The following rules apply to educational trips and study abroad programs:

- All school rules are in effect during educational trips and study abroad programs. Misconduct will be handled through the school's regular disciplinary process.

- The school administration will determine the number of sponsors necessary.
- A student must have written permission from the parent/ guardian to participate.
- Clothing worn is at the discretion of the school administration. Students must wear modest swimwear on all trips that involve water activities. For example, boys are expected to wear mid knee-length, properly fitting swim trunks, and girls are expected to wear one- piece bathing suits.
- It is the student's responsibility to obtain and complete all assignments before the trip commences.
- Students with excessive absences, academic, or behavioral problems may be required to remain on campus.
- For transportation, please refer "General Information" section of these handbook.
- For field trips, please refer "General Information" section of these handbook.

### ***Educational Trips & Study Abroad Programs Cancellation Policies***

This trip policy applies to all trips, trips for athletics and artistic competitions, leadership trips, etc. Once parents have signed up their children to the educational trip or study abroad program, the parents assume full responsibility for all payments due on the trip including timely payment of deposit and installments. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the trip sponsor and/or the campus in writing if the student is being removed from the trip or is unable to attend the trip for any reason. Because the school will have already secured group travel arrangements based on the parents' commitment, the parents will forfeit all funds paid to date for the trip. Further, all unpaid funds will be due from the parent unless another student is able to be substituted. In the event of entire trip cancellation, SST Board policy will be followed.

### ***Performing Arts***

The performing arts program helps to enrich students' performing arts skills, their understanding and celebration of diversity and the community they are a part of. SST Public Schools offers folk dance, singing and glee clubs for students. Students can engage in their chosen field. These activities or clubs are very important for students' long-term social, emotional and cognitive development.

Students enrolled in the dance and music clubs have the opportunities to join the stage performances and competitions in SST campuses, national and international festivals.

### **Parent Engagement & Support**

Education is at its best when all stakeholders involved share a common vision and passion to see students thrive in and out of the classroom. Families, teachers and school staff all play vital roles to ensuring excellence in education within the SST Public Schools system. SST believe creating partnerships between school, home and community to increase student success is essential to the whole child education approach. Parental involvement helps;

- to motivate students to more positive behavior, better academic performance
- to decrease in discipline problems, decrease in parenting stress,
- to increase in social support, self-efficacy, child oral health practices, and healthy feeding practices in preschool and elementary level.
- to increase in student attendance
- parents to become a part of the school environment.
- parents become more involved and informed.

- Leung, Tsang, & Heung, 2015; Stetson, Stetson, Sinclair, & Nix, 2012

### **Parent Teacher Home Visit Project**

To ensure our students received the wrap-around support needed for their success, SST Public Schools launched its Home Visit Program nearly a decade ago. The program is designed to build unity and trust between families and SST staff, giving teachers and parents the insight into student development needed to provide students educational support.

Building a relationship is the main purpose of the home visit in our engagement & support system. Our staff focus on a student's interests, needs and his/her hopes and dreams as well as their academic and social progress and needs during a first visit.

Also, we visit to inform parents and give them a big picture of their children shows that where the children are and where they should be at academically and socially.

According to research on teachers' perspective on home visits;

- 84% said home visits positively affected their relationship with parents
- 84% said home visits positively affected their relationship with student
- 75% reported improvement in student's classroom behavior after home visits
- 76% reported improved student work habits as a result of home visits
- 78% reported improved student academic achievement as a result of home visits\*

\* Survey by Ranae Stetson, Elton Stetson, Becky Sinclair, & Karen Nix

### **SST Parent Volunteer Program - VOLY**

SST Public Schools is committed to building community by engaging and equipping families and stakeholders to be our students' strongest supporters. Volunteering in a school is an experience and a privilege for both the school and the volunteer. It is designed to promote and maintain a supportive relationship with the students, teachers, and school staff.

By providing a quick, easy way for people to find volunteer opportunities, SST will increase the strength of not only your child's school but the community surrounding it. In order to do this effectively, SST provides an easy-to-use volunteer management system: VOLY (SST.voly.org) which helps parents and schools to easily identify and register for volunteer hours.

There are many volunteer opportunities available at your campus, some of the ways you can help: monitor playground/cafeteria, chaperone field trips, tutor students, read aloud to students, assist with dismissal, be a judge for school/district science fair, and many more.

Parents and community member may become a volunteer at SST with four easy steps:

- Create account at SST.voly.org
- Fill out background check application form
- Complete online orientation
- Sign up for an opportunity and come on board!

### **Parent Activities**

Parent engagement in schools is defined as parents and school staff working together to support and improve the learning, development, and health of children and adolescents. We believe parents play a significant role in supporting their children's education, guiding their children successfully

through school processes, and advocating for their children and for the effectiveness of schools.

SST Public Schools organizes events to make a positive connection with parents and provides a variety of activities and frequent opportunities to fully engage parents including school picnics, back to school BBQs, parenting workshops, academic nights, family science fairs, in and out-of-state trips, coffee with the principal, muffins with moms, donuts with dads, cookies with grandparents, family board game nights, SST Parent Academy, monthly learning night, career days, talent shows and many more.

### **SST Parent Academy**

SST Parent Academy is an important initiative designed to strengthen school, home, and community partnerships that equip families with the necessary tools to be strong advocates at home and in their communities. Families have the opportunity to learn about various tools and skills they need in order to support their family and students on the road to college and beyond.

Through a series of workshops and videos designated to refine specific student support skill sets, SST Parent Academy participants will acquire knowledge to enhance their role as a student advocate within the learning community. For more information, please contact your Campus Empowerment and Engagement coordinator.

### **College and Career Success (CSS) Program**

CCS program mission is to build a strong and sustainable college and career bound atmosphere throughout our schools by connecting SST seniors with SST alumni and increasing their career, leadership, social and emotional readiness for their college and career. Program vision is to raise responsible, caring, and productive citizens who are college, career, and life ready.

College and Career Success program goals are:

- To build a sustainable college bound school culture that promotes the importance of higher education by linking seniors with successful alumni college goers.
- To create a smooth transition from high school to college for seniors by providing engagement and networking opportunities with campus alumni.

- To help and support alumni to increase campus college enrollment and completion rates.
- To foster a network of successful alumni whom future alumni and students will be able to access and depend on.

#### Major program areas

- College Transition
- Curriculum
- Mentoring
- Scholarships

#### ***College Transition Programs***

The College Transition Program is designed to link graduating SST seniors to current college attendees, bridging the educational achievement gap among underserved communities statewide. Major programs and their yearly timeline are as follows:

#### **Seniors-Alumni College Networking Event (Dec-Jan)**

Senior-Alumni college networking events are great opportunities for seniors receive information about the college experience and build lifelong relationships with current alumni college students.

#### **Senior College Transition Events (Jan-May)**

These events are offered to all seniors during the month of April and May in their senior year to help finalize their college decisions and meet with other SST seniors who are most likely going to be their college classmates as an additional support.

- Individual college transition advising
- Pre-college orientation by SST Alumni Student Organizations (SASO)
- Senior-Alumni college networking event  
College transition events, workshops and seminars for seniors
- College panel

#### **Summer Melt Prevention (Jun-Aug)**

Summer Melt refers to the difference between the number of college-intending high school graduates and the number of students who enroll in any post-secondary educational program the fall following graduation. SST implements following strategies suggested by Harvard University.

- Continuing college advising to seniors over the summer
- Sending reminders through social media and text messaging

- Connecting seniors with alumni opportunities
- Organizing summer bridge programs
- Following a college enrollment checklist with seniors

#### **Fall College Check-Ins (Sep-Oct right after SST graduation)**

Purpose of college check-ins is to visit recent high school graduates on college campuses to check how they are transitioning and adjusting to their colleges.

- Visit incoming freshmen in college to ensure enrollment
- Connect incoming freshmen with SST alumni in their college
- Frequent involvement with SST alumni college student organizations to increase their self-efficacy and motivation.

As our students said: “We leave SST, but SST never leaves you.”

#### ***College and Career Success (CCS) curriculum***

All students deserve academic and social support to help prepare them for the challenges they must face after high school graduation. The College and Career Success course is designed to help students focus on developing the habits and skills that are expected in college study and the workforce and continue to develop social/emotional, personal/interpersonal and cognitive skills that are essential to productivity in both the collegiate and business worlds.

#### ***College and Career Success (CCS) Mentoring Programs***

SST mentoring program aims to pair SST seniors with SST alumni mentors from similar backgrounds who will help them navigate the college application, admission, transition and teach real life skills on how to succeed in college.

#### ***Scholarships***

SST Public School believes that our role in a student’s life doesn’t end upon high school graduation. It is our hope that we can continue assisting them through college and life through appropriate resources and support. There are two scholarships available

- Honors Scholarship by Charter School Solutions
- College Leaders Scholarship by SST Public Schools

For more information, students and parents can visit [www.alumni.sstx.org](http://www.alumni.sstx.org)

# SECTION VI: ESPECIALLY FOR PARENTS

## Surveys and Activities

Students will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation – funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education – that concerns:

- 1) Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent(s).
- 2) Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family.
- 3) Sexual behavior or attitudes.
- 4) Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior.
- 5) Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship.
- 6) Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians and ministers.
- 7) Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents.
- 8) Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student’s eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

Parents will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis or evaluation.

### *“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities*

Parents have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for their child’s participation in:

- 1) Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- 2) School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing or selling that information.

- 3) Any non-emergency, 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.

## Notification of Teacher Qualification

The School will provide parents with the qualifications of each teacher employed by the School. Parents may also request, and the School will provide in a timely manner, information regarding the professional qualifications of their student’s classroom teachers. Information provided in response to a parent request will include, at a minimum:

- 1) Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- 2) Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
- 3) Is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher; and
- 4) Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

Additionally, the School will provide timely notice that a student has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

## Communication

Communication between parents and school staff is a key component of student success. Parents are responsible for notifying the school of any change of address, telephone number, or e-mail address.

Parents may contact school staff by using several methods, including:

Calling a teacher's extension during school hours (8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.). Teacher phone extensions are available at the front desk. If the teacher is conducting class, please leave a voice message. The teacher will respond as soon as possible.

Sending an email to teachers. Teacher e-mail addresses are available at the front desk.

Checking a student's progress and conduct on-line by viewing the school website and logging into your child's database account.

Checking the weekly mail envelope, and signing and returning included documents and having your student timely return them to their homeroom teacher.

Checking the "Letters and Messages to Parents" board in the front office.

Checking the school marquee in front of the school, if available.

### **Classroom Visit or Observation**

To meet with school personnel, please make an appointment ahead of time by contacting the staff member directly. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher, and such visits are not permitted if the duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment. Observers in classrooms are limited to no more than one hour unless the principal approves an extended classroom observation. All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted. Trespassing on school premises is strictly prohibited in accordance with Section 37.107 of the Texas Education Code.

### **Parent and Student Complaints and Concerns**

#### ***Informal Conferences***

Parents and students are encouraged to discuss their concerns through informal conferences with the appropriate teacher, principal, or other appropriate campus administrator. If the parent or student is not satisfied with the results of the informal conference, he or she may submit a written grievance form pursuant to applicable Board policy. Parents and students should make their concerns

known as soon as possible, and attempt to reach an informal resolution within five school days from the time the parent or student knew or should have known of the event(s) giving rise to the complaint.

#### ***Formal Process***

The formal complaint process provides parents and students an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, parents and students can bring concerns or complaints to the Board, as outlined below.

Student and/or parental complaints shall be submitted in writing on a form provided by the school. Copies of documents that support the complaint shall be attached to the complaint form or presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted unless their existence was unknown to the complainant before the Level One conference. A complaint that is incomplete may be dismissed.

For purposes of the formal complaint process, "days" shall mean school business days, and announcement of a decision in the student or parent's presence shall constitute communication of the decision. SST administrators addressing parent and student complaints are expected to resolve these complaints at the lowest possible level. Therefore, if an administrator determines that additional time is needed to complete a thorough investigation of the complaint and/or to issue a response, the administrator shall inform the complainant in writing of the necessity to extend the time of response and a specific date by when the response will be issued.

#### ***Level One, Level Two, Level Three & Level Four***

##### **Level One**

The student or parent shall request, in writing, a conference with the Campus Principal or designee within the later of (1) five days from the time the event(s) causing the complaint were or should have been known, or (2) within five days after the date a letter is mailed or e-mailed to the parent or student after completion of the informal grievance process notifying the parent or student of the formal complaint process. The Campus Principal or designee will schedule a conference with the complaining parent or student within ten days after receiving the Level One complaint. Following this conference, the Campus Principal shall have ten days to issue a Level One decision and to provide



written notice of that decision to the student or parent complaining.

### **Level Two**

If the student or parents is not satisfied with the Level One decision, or if no decision is provided, the student or parent may request in writing a conference with the Area Superintendent or designee. The request must include a signed statement of the complaint, any evidence supporting the complaint, and the date and results of the conference with the Campus Principal. The request must be filed within ten school days of the Level One decision or the response deadline if no decision is made.

The Area Superintendent or designee shall hold a conference within ten school days of the request. The Area Superintendent or designee shall have ten school days following the conference to issue a Level Two decision and to provide written notice of that decision to the student or parent complaining.

### **Level Three**

If the student or parent is not satisfied with the Level Two decision, or if no decision is provided, the student or parent may request in writing a conference with the Superintendent of Schools or designee. The request must include the documentation submitted to Area Superintendent or designee, and the date and results of the Level Two conference. The request must be filed within ten days of the Level Two decision or the response deadline if no decision is made.

The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall hold a conference within ten days of the request. The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall have ten days following the conference to issue a Level Three decision and to provide written notice of that decision to the student or parent complaining.

### **Level Four**

If the student or parent is not satisfied with the Level Three decision, or if no timely decision is provided, the student or parent may submit to the Superintendent of Schools or designee in writing a request for a hearing before the Board of Directors. The request must be filed within ten days of the Level Three decision or the response deadline if no decision is made. The student or parent shall be informed of the date, time, and place of the hearing.

The Board of Directors shall hear the student or parent complaint, and may set a reasonable time limit for presenting the complaint. Only written documentation and issues previously submitted and presented by the student or parent and the school will be considered. An audiotape recording of the hearing shall be made.

The Board of Directors shall communicate its decision, if any, orally or in writing before or during the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If no decision is issued by the end of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, the last decision below shall be upheld. The Board may not delegate its authority to issue a decision, and any decision by the Board of Directors is final and may not be appealed. The Board or designee shall inform the student or parent complaining of the Board's decision in writing.

If the complaint involves concerns or charges regarding an employee, it shall be heard by the Board of Directors in closed meeting unless the employee to whom the complaint pertains requests that it be heard in public.

### ***Additional Complaint Procedures***

This Parent and Student Complains and Concerns Process does not apply to all complaints:

- 1) Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, gender, national origin, disability, or religion shall be submitted in accordance with Board Policy PG-3.41 (discussing procedures for reporting prohibited conduct).
- 2) Complaints concerning retaliation related to discrimination and harassment shall be submitted in accordance with Board Policy PG-3.41 (discussing procedures for reporting prohibited conduct).
- 3) Complaints concerning bullying or retaliation related to bullying shall be submitted in accordance with "Freedom from Bullying and Cyberbullying," see page 28.
- 4) For complaints concerning loss of credit on the basis of attendance, see page 12.
- 5) For complaints concerning disciplinary expulsions, see page 59.
- 6) Complaints concerning identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability within the scope of Section 504, shall be submitted in

accordance with Board Policy PG-3.30 (Parent and Student Complaints and Grievances), subject to the time limitations referenced in Board Policy PG-3.11 (Equal Educational Opportunity) and the procedural safeguards handbook. In accordance with PG-3.11 (Equal Educational Opportunity), Level One complaints concerning identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability within the scope of Section 504 shall be filed within fifteen (15) school days of the time the event(s) causing the complaint were or should have been known.

- 7) Complaints concerning identification, evaluation, educational placement, or discipline of a student with a disability within the scope of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act shall be submitted in accordance with Board Policy 3.26 (Student Discipline: Students with Disabilities) and the procedural safeguards provided to parents of all students referred to special education.
- 8) For complaints regarding the Free and Reduced Price Meal Program, see Board Policy 3.30.

### **Annual Notice of Parent and Student Rights (Annual FERPA Confidentiality Notice)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (eligible students) certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. These rights include the following:

#### ***The Right to Inspect and Review***

Parents and/or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

If circumstances effectively prevent the parent or eligible student from exercising the right to inspect and review the student's educational records, the school shall provide the parent or eligible student

with a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or eligible student to inspect and review the requested records.

The school shall not destroy any educational records if there is an outstanding request to inspect and review the records under this section. The school may charge a reasonable fee for a copy of an education record that is made for the parent or eligible student, unless the imposition of a fee effectively prevents a parent or eligible student from exercising the right to inspect and review the student's education records. The school will not charge a fee to search for or to retrieve the educational records of a student.

If the educational records of a student contain information on more than one student, the parent or eligible student may inspect and review or be informed of only the specific information about that student.

#### ***The Right to Seek Amendment of the Student's Educational Records***

Parents and/or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student. Such a request must be made to the Principal in writing, clearly identify the part of the record the parent or eligible student wants changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. The school will decide whether to amend the record as requested within a reasonable time after the school receives the request. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, it will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.

If, as a result of the hearing, the school decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student, it shall amend the record accordingly and inform the parent or eligible student of the amendment in writing.

If, as a result of the hearing, the school decides that the information in the educational record is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student, it shall inform the parent or eligible student of the right to place a statement in the record commenting on the contested information in the record or stating why he or she disagrees with the decision of the school,

or both. If the school places an amended statement in the educational records of a student, it is obligated to maintain the amended statement with the contested part of the record for as long as the record is maintained and disclose the statement whenever it discloses the portion of the record to which the statement relates.

### ***The Right to Consent Prior to Disclosure***

Parents and/or eligible students have the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A "school official" is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board of Directors; a person or company with whom the school has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another open-enrollment charter school, school district, or private school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

### ***The Right to File a Complaint***

Parents and/or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. These complaints should be addressed as follows:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

### ***Access to Medical Records***

Parents are entitled to access their students' medical records.

### **Parent Notice and Directory Information Release**

According to the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) a Federal law, and the Texas Public Information Act, SST Public Schools must, with certain exceptions, obtain written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records. However, the school may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless a parent or eligible student has advised the school, in writing, to the contrary. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the school to include this type of information from a student's education records in certain school publications. If you do not want SST Public Schools to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing by the end of the first ten days of instruction. SST Public Schools has designated the following information as directory information:

- For school sponsored purposes - Directory information shall include student name, address, telephone listing, email address, photograph, date and place of birth, honors and awards received, dates of attendance, most recent educational institution attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of members of athletic teams.
- For Military recruiters and institutions of higher education—Directory information shall include name, address and telephone number of secondary students enrolled in SST Public Schools.
- For all other purposes - Directory information shall include student name, address, honors and awards received, and grade level.

### **School Sponsored Purposes:**

SST Public Schools utilizes directory information for District publications such as newsletters, yearbook and the like; selected photography companies supporting campus pictures, and for use in school materials (yearbook, newsletters, awards, brochures, etc.).

### **Military Recruiters and Higher Education (pertains to secondary students):**

SST Public Schools releases directory information to military recruiters and institutions of higher education according to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Federal law requires districts receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide a military recruiter or an institution of higher education, on request, with the name, address, or telephone number of a secondary student unless the parent has advised the district that the parent does not want the student's information disclosed without prior written consent.

### **For all other purposes:**

SST Public Schools releases directory information to any person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform the special task of placing students on the School's waiting list in available charter school. Slots and a Texas Local Education Agency ("LEA") that has adopted a student record (FERPA) policy authorizing the School to access their student directories as directory information.

### **Technology Mission Statement**

The school is committed to utilizing the maximum potential of technology to enhance student learning and increase teacher effectiveness by providing students with technology-related experiences. Recognizing the ever-changing influences of technology on all aspects of our lives, the school is dedicated to providing an integrated technological curriculum for all students and staff members. Students will have access to the technology necessary to produce, manage, communicate and retrieve information in an efficient manner for educational use. In the attainment of both present and future goals, the school will provide a continually evolving staff development program oriented toward the integration of technology in areas of curriculum.

### ***Instructional Resource***

The school is proud to bring network and Internet access to school employees and students, and believes the Internet offers many diverse and unique resources to both students and staff. The school's goal in providing this service to staff and students is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovative teaching, and communication skills.

Students and staff have access to numerous research oriented and instructional resources via the Internet. On-line encyclopedias, professional journals, and databases filled with timely information on thousands of topics are just a few of the resources provided. On-campus computers have the technology necessary to support student research and to promote academic achievement.

### ***Student Safety***

The school is aware that resources which are inappropriate or not designed for use in the educational setting may be accessed on the Internet. To protect students and staff from such inappropriate material, the school's Internet access is filtered with one of the highest-rated Internet filtering systems available. However, users must recognize that it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial material and individuals must be responsible for their own actions in navigating the network.

### ***Purpose***

The purpose of this policy is to ensure school-level compliance with all procedures and regulations regarding the local area network and Internet usage. All students, parents, teachers, administrators and school employees who obtain their Internet access through the school are expected to use these services appropriately.

### ***User Responsibilities***

The use of the Internet is a privilege. Abusive conduct will lead to the privilege being revoked. The school is providing Internet resources for educational purposes only. Student/staff use of Internet resources must be related to an expressed educational and/or administrative goal or objective.

- 1) The use of the school's Internet and computer network must be in support of educational goals, research, and class assignments and be consistent with the educational objectives of the school.
- 2) Users must have a valid, authorized account to access the network, and use only those computer resources that are authorized. Accounts may be used only in accordance with authorized purposes.
- 3) Individual accounts may be used only by the owner of the account except where specifically authorized by the school administration. In the case of class

accounts, all use must be under the supervision of the sponsoring teacher/supervisor.

- 4) The user is responsible for safeguarding the computer account. Users are expected to protect access to accounts by periodically changing the password and keeping it confidential. They must respect the privacy of others by not tampering with their files, passwords or accounts.

### ***Policy -- Terms and Conditions***

#### **Acceptable Use**

Users are to properly use school network resources for educational and/or administrative purposes. Respectful and responsible network etiquette and behavior should be in keeping with the school's mission statement. Students and staff are expressly prohibited from accessing obscene, profane, vulgar, or pornographic sites or materials.

Students are prohibited from sending or posting electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation or illegal. This prohibition applies to conduct off school property if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd or otherwise illegal images or other content will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct and may, in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement.

#### **Monitored Use**

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications system by students and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated school staff to ensure appropriate use for educational or administrative purposes. Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic mail messages is prohibited. Only the school's authorized IT Manager may read, delete, copy or modify the electronic mail of other system users.

#### **Vandalism**

Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, disrupt or destroy data of another user of the school's network or any other agencies or networks that are connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses. Any of these actions may be

viewed as violations of school policy, administrative regulations and, possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Users must respect the privacy of other users, and will not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify any file, data, or password belonging to another user, or represent themselves as another user unless explicitly authorized. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance and/or degrade, disrupt or bypass system security are violations of school policy and administrative regulations, and may constitute criminal activity under applicable laws.

Any prohibited behavior under this policy will result in the cancellation of technology privileges. The school will, in accordance with school policy, cooperate with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the school's network.

#### **Network Etiquette**

Each network user is expected to:

- 1) Be polite (i.e., an all-caps message implies shouting);
- 2) Use appropriate language;
- 3) Refrain from any activity that may be considered "cyber bullying," including but not limited to threats of violence, extortion, obscene or harassing messages, harassment, stalking, child pornography, and sexual exploitation;
- 4) Maintain confidentiality of the user, colleagues, and students;
- 5) Respect copyright laws; and
- 6) Be respectful in all aspects of network use.

#### **Consequences**

Violation of the school's policies and procedures concerning use of the computer on the network will result in the same disciplinary actions that would result from similar violations in other areas of school policy, including the Student Code of Conduct. Any or all of the following consequences may be enforced if a student violates the terms of this policy:

- 1) Loss of computer privileges/Internet access, with length of time to be determined by campus administration.
- 2) Any campus-based disciplinary consequence, including suspension, as deemed appropriate by the administration.

- 3) Suspension may be considered for flagrant violations or violations that corrupt the educational value of the computers or the Internet.
- 4) Expulsion may be considered in instances where students have used the school's Internet access to engage in conduct that constitutes felony criminal mischief, and/or have deliberately attempted to bypass installed security software or copy/modify another student's work files.

***SST Public Schools Acceptable Use Agreement Acknowledgement Form***

I have read and agree to abide by the SST Public Schools Student Acceptable Use Policy. I further understand that any violation of this policy may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my Internet and computer access privileges may be revoked, and school disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

(If you are under the age of 18 a parent or guardian must also read and sign this agreement.)

As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the SST Public Schools Student Acceptable Use Agreement. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. SST Public Schools has taken precautions to eliminate controversial material. However, I also recognize it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold the school responsible for materials transmitted on the network. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision if and when my child's use is not in a school setting. I hereby give permission to issue an account for my child and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

***SST Public Schools Electronic Communication Device Commitment Form (Regulation of Electronic Communication Devices)***

Electronic communications at school and at school-related functions are subject to regulation by the school.

This Electronic Communication Device Commitment Form grants authority and permission to the school to regulate electronic communication devices when these devices are brought to and/or used while on school property or when attending

school related functions and events. Such communication devices include but are not limited to cellular phones, pagers, PDAs, and pocket computers. These regulations are made necessary in light of the unique opportunities these devices create for violations of law, school policies and to perpetrate conduct disruptive of an educational environment essential to the school's educational program. These concerns are exacerbated by electronic security protections and the personal size of these devices which are often carried concealed in pockets and purses.

Therefore, all students who would possess or use such devices on school property or at school-related activities are required to sign this form together with their parent, guardian or other adult person having the authority of a parent for school purposes.

Each of you, by your signature below, agrees to the following:

- 1) The possession and use of cellular phones, pagers, PDAs and other electronic communication devices by a student on school property or at school-related events is a privilege and not a right.
- 2) Students are required to keep all electronic communication out of sight and turned off during school hours.
- 3) In consideration for the privilege to possess and use such devices on school property and at school-related events, the school is authorized and has my full consent to confiscate, power on or off, manipulate and do all things necessary to search my device and recover or intercept communications (including but not limited to text messaging) when reasonable suspicion exists that such device has been used to transmit or receive communications in violation of law, the Student Code of Conduct, school policy or regulation.

I further understand, agree and consent that an electronic communication device used or possessed in violation of law, the Student Code of Conduct, school policy or regulation is subject to confiscation and may cause the loss of the privilege to possess and use such devices on school property and at school-related events for an indefinite period of time.



## School Responsibilities Regarding Truancy

### EXHIBIT A

