



# **EXCEL ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**

## **Education Transition Center**

# **Student Handbook**

**2022 - 2023**



### **Harris County Commissioners' Court**

Lina Hidalgo  
Rodney Ellis  
Adrian Garcia  
Steve Radack  
R. Jack Cagle

County Judge  
Commissioner, Precinct 1  
Commissioner, Precinct 2  
Commissioner, Precinct 3  
Commissioner, Precinct 4

### **Harris County Juvenile Board**

Honorable Lina Hidalgo  
Honorable Natalia Oakes  
Honorable Michelle Moore  
Honorable Leah Shapiro  
Honorable Lucia Bates  
Honorable Danilo Lacayo  
Honorable Julia Maldonado  
Honorable Tonya Garrison

Harris County Judge  
Judge, 313<sup>th</sup> District Court  
Judge, 314<sup>th</sup> District Court  
Judge, 315<sup>th</sup> District Court  
Justice of the Peace, Pct. 3, Pl. 2  
Judge, 182<sup>th</sup> District Court  
Judge, 507<sup>th</sup> District Court  
Judge, 157<sup>th</sup> District Court

### **Harris County Juvenile Probation Department**

Henry Gonzales, Executive Director  
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### **A Balanced Approach to Juvenile Justice**

Harris County Juvenile Probation Department  
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## **Harris County Juvenile Probation Department**

### **Mission Statement**

The Harris County Juvenile Probation Department is committed to the protection of the public, utilizing intervention strategies that are community-based, family-oriented and least restrictive while emphasizing responsibility and accountability of both parent and child.

### **Core Values**

- We value the belief that everyone is to be treated with dignity and respect.
- We value the belief that each person has innate worth, dignity and the capacity for positive change.
- We value services that are ethical, effective and culturally competent.
- We value and promote a positive image of the department, the employees and our role within the community.
- We value an environment that promotes initiative, productivity, teamwork and professional growth.
- We value an atmosphere which stresses tolerance and is free of discrimination.
- We value developing collaborative efforts with judicial, legislative and community partners.

## **Education Services Division**

### **Vision Statement**

The staff of the Education Services Division believes every child is a unique and special individual who can learn. It is our responsibility to serve as facilitators who nurture and develop every child's maximum academic, physical, social and emotional potential. We are committed to providing opportunities which will assist the students in making self-directed, realistic, and responsible decisions in our multi-cultural ever-changing world.

Ultimately, each student will benefit from the effort he/she exerts. It is critical for teachers, parents, guardians, and administrators to communicate openly and frequently to increase academic success.



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## **Preface Parents and Students:**

Welcome to the new school year! Education is a team effort. Students, parents, teachers, and other staff members working together will make this a successful year. The Education Transition Center Student Handbook is a general reference guide that is divided into two sections:

Section One: Parental Rights describes certain parental rights as specified in state or federal law.

Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students is organized alphabetically by topic.

Note: Unless otherwise noted, the term “parent” refers to the parent, legal guardian, any person granted some other type of lawful control of a student, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

The Student Handbook is designed to align with law, board-adopted policy, and the Student Code of Conduct, a board-adopted document intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. The Student Handbook is not meant to be a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules in any given circumstance.

In case of conflicts between board policy (including the Student Code of Conduct) and any Student Handbook provision, the district will follow board policy and the Student Code of Conduct.

Therefore, parents and students should become familiar with the Education Transition Center Student Code of Conduct. State law requires that the Code of Conduct be prominently displayed or made available for review at each campus.

The Student Handbook is updated annually; however, policy adoption and revisions may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed policy changes by attending board meetings and reviewing newsletter and other communications explaining changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions. The district reserves the right to modify the Student Handbook at any time. Notice of revisions will be provided as is reasonably practical.

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

Complete and return to the student's campus the following forms (provided in the forms packet distributed at the beginning of the year or upon enrollment):



- Both students and parents are required to sign an acknowledgement that they Understand that the handbook contains important information and that the students will be held accountable for infractions of the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents are required to acknowledge that they accept responsibility for accessing and reviewing the handbook.

## **Section One: Parental Rights**

This section describes certain parental rights as specified in state or federal law.

### **Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights**

#### **Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation or Provide a Mental Health Care Service**

Unless required under state or federal law, a district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, screening, or treatment, without obtaining prior written parental consent.

The district will not provide a mental health care service to a student except as permitted by law.

The district has established procedures for providing a parent with a recommendation for an intervention for a student with early warning signs of mental health concerns or substance abuse or who has been identified as at risk of attempting suicide. The campus counselor will notify the student's parent within a reasonable amount of time after learning that a student has displayed early warning signs and a possible need for intervention and provide information about available counseling options.

The district has also established procedures for staff to notify the campus counselor regarding a student who may need intervention. The campus counselor can provide further information regarding these procedures as well as educational materials on identifying risk factors, accessing resources for treatment or support on- and off-campus, and accessing available student accommodations provided on campus.

For further information, see Mental Health Support on page 77.

Note: An evaluation may be legally required under special education rules or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

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

Teachers may display a student's work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement without seeking prior parental consent. These



displays may include personally identifiable student information. Student work includes:

- Artwork,
- Special projects,
- Photographs,
- Original videos or voice recordings, and
- Other original works.

However, the district will seek parental consent before displaying a student's work on the district's website, a website affiliated or sponsored by the district (such as a campus or classroom website), or in district publications, which may include printed materials, videos, or other methods of mass communication.

**Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law**  
**State law permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission when it:**

- Is to be used for school safety,
- Relates to classroom instruction or a cocurricular or extracurricular activity,
- Relates to the promotion of student safety as provided by law for a student receiving special education services in certain settings.

In other circumstances, the district will seek written parental consent before making a video or voice recording of a student.

**Electronic Communications between Students and District Employees**

The district permits teachers and other approved employees to use electronic communications with students within the scope of professional responsibilities. Employees must limit all electronic communication to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities.

Employees are prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page or site; employees may create a separate social network page ("professional page") for the purpose of communicating with students and must obtain prior written principal approval. Employees must enable administration and parents to access employees' professional pages, and private messaging on such pages is prohibited.

Employees do not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.



A parent who does not want his or her child to receive one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee should contact the campus principal.

### **Religious or Moral Beliefs**

A parent may remove his or her child temporarily from the classroom if a scheduled instructional activity conflicts with the parent's religious or moral beliefs.

The removal may not be used to avoid a test and may not extend for an entire semester.

### **Tutoring or Test Preparation**

A teacher may determine that a student needs additional targeted assistance for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills based on:

- Informal observations,
- Evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests, or
- Results from diagnostic assessments.

The school will attempt to provide tutoring and strategies for test-taking in ways that prevent removal from other instruction as much as possible.

### **Right of Access to Student Records, Curriculum Materials, and District Records/Policies**

#### **Instructional Materials**

A parent has the right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered.

A parent is also entitled to request that the school allow the student to take home instructional materials the student uses. The school may ask the student to return the materials at the beginning of the next school day.

A school must provide printed versions of electronic instructional materials to a student if the student does not have reliable access to technology at home.

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

A noncustodial parent may request in writing that he or she be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to his or her child's misconduct that may result in expulsion.





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

In accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a parent may request information regarding any federal, state, or district policy related to his or her child's participation in required assessments.

## **Student Records**

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

A parent may review his or her child's records. These records include:

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,
- Teacher and school counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns,
- Records relating to assistance provided for learning difficulties, including information collected regarding any intervention strategies used with the child, as the term "intervention strategy" is defined by law,
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to the child, and
- Teaching materials and tests used in the child's classroom.

1. Parents have the right to request an amendment of records and the right to a hearing if program staff cannot agree to amend the records.
2. When a student is transferred to another school program, a transfer of records will occur.
3. Release of records to other agencies other than the School District and Juvenile Court will occur only by written consent of parents and guardians.

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

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and eligible students certain rights regarding student education records.



For purposes of student records, an “eligible” student is anyone age 18 or older or who attends a postsecondary educational institution. These rights are the right to:

- Inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access;
- Parents have the right to receive a response from program staff due to a reasonable request to explain and interpret their child’s record.
- Request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA;
- Provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student’s records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent; and
- File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements. The office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202

Both FERPA and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights of privacy.

Before disclosing personally identifiable information from a student’s records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information.

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

Inspection and release of student records is restricted to an eligible student or a student’s parent—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school



receives a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student's education records.

Federal law requires that control of the records goes to the student as soon as the student:

- Reaches the age of 18,
- Is emancipated by a court, or
- Enrolls in a postsecondary educational institution.

However, the parent may continue to have access to the records if the student is a dependent for tax purposes and, under limited circumstances, when there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records without written consent of the parent or eligible student:

- When school officials have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records.
- Legitimate educational interest may include:
  - Working with the student;
  - Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities;
  - Compiling statistical data;
  - Reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility; or
  - Investigating or evaluating programs.
- School officials may include:
  - Board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals;
  - Teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including



district health or medical staff);

- A person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a specific institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third-party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, school resource officer, or volunteer);

FERPA also permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information without written consent:

- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, the Texas Education Agency, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or, in certain cases, other child welfare representatives.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, district/system, or postsecondary educational institution to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which the student already is enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses directory information-designated details. Release of personally identifiable information to any other person or agency—such as a prospective employer or for a scholarship application—will occur only with parental or student permission as appropriate.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. A parent or eligible student who wants to inspect the student's records should submit a written request to the records custodian identifying the records he or she wants to inspect.



Records may be reviewed in person during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will be available to explain the record and to answer questions.

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

A parent or eligible student may inspect the student's records and request a correction or amendment if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights.

A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the appropriate records custodian. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If after the hearing the records are not amended, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to place a statement in the student's record.

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

### **A Student with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances Children of Military Families**

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children entitles children of military families to flexibility regarding certain district and state requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements;
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement;
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities;
- Enrollment in the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN); and
- Graduation requirements.

The district will excuse absences related to a student visiting a parent, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who is:

- Called to active duty,
- On leave, or



- Returning from a deployment of at least four months.

The district will permit no more than five excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment.

Additional information may be found at Military Family Resources at the Texas Education Agency.

### **Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments**

#### **Multiple-Birth Siblings**

State law permits a parent of multiple-birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets) assigned to the same grade and campus to request in writing that the children be placed in either the same classroom or separate classrooms.

Written requests must be submitted by the 14th day after the students' enrollment.

#### **Safety Transfers/Assignments**

The board or its designee will honor a parent's request to transfer his or her child to another classroom if the district has determined that the child has been a victim of bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by Education Code 37.0832.

The board may transfer a student who has engaged in bullying to another classroom.

The board will consult with the parent of a child who has engaged in bullying before deciding to transfer the child.

#### **Student Use of a Service/Assistance Animal**

A parent of a student who uses a service/assistance animal because of the student's disability must submit a written request to the principal before bringing the service/assistance animal on campus. The district will try to accommodate a request as soon as possible but will do so within ten district business days.

#### **A Student in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)**

A student in the conservatorship (custody) of the state who enrolls in the district after the beginning of the school year will be allowed credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year.

A student in the conservatorship of the state who is moved outside the district's or school's attendance boundaries—or who is initially placed in the conservatorship of the state and moved outside the district's or school's boundaries—is entitled to remain at the school the student was attending prior to the placement or move until the student reaches the highest grade level at that particular school.



If a student in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets its graduation criteria.

For a student in the conservatorship of the state who is eligible for a tuition and fee exemption under state law and likely to be in care on the day preceding the student's 18th birthday, the district will:

- Assist the student with the completion of applications for admission or financial aid;
- Arrange and accompany the student on campus visits;
- Assist in researching and applying for private or institution-sponsored scholarships;
- Identify whether the student is a candidate for appointment to a military academy;
- Assist the student in registering and preparing for college entrance examinations, including (subject to the availability of funds) arranging for the payment of examination fees by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS); and
- Coordinate contact between the student and a liaison officer for students formerly in the conservatorship of the state.

### **A Student Who Is Homeless**

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

- Proof of residency requirements;
- Immunization requirements;
- Educational program placement (if the student is unable to provide previous academic records or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness);
- Credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year (if the student enrolled in the district after the beginning of the school year), per State Board of Education (SBOE) rules;
- Awarding partial credit when a student passes only one semester of a two-semester course;
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities; and
- Graduation requirements.

Federal law allows a student who is homeless to remain enrolled in the "school of origin" or to enroll in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing.

If a student who is homeless in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, state law allows the student



to request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

### **A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services**

For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts 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 to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individuals 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 whether 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 to a district administrative employee of the school district, the district must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district must give the parent prior written notice of whether it agrees or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards. If the district agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

Note: A request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally; it does not need to be made in writing. Districts must still comply with all federal prior-written notices and procedural safeguard requirements as well as the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of having a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district to respond within the 15 school-day timeline.

If the district 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. 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 the district 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 30 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 must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

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

Contact your campus Special Education Teacher at (832)454-4934, or Vivian Hutchinson at (713) 222-4466 regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services.

#### **Section 504 Referrals**

Each school district must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's Section 504 program. Districts 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 the campus Special Education Teacher at (832)454-4934, or Dr. Vivian Hutchinson at (713) 222-4466. Visit these websites for information regarding students with disabilities and the family:

- Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process
- Partners Resource Network
- Special Education Information Center
- Texas Project First



### ***Notification to Parents of Intervention Strategies for Learning Difficulties Provided to Students in General Education***

In accordance with state law, the district will annually notify parents if their child receives assistance for learning difficulties. Details of such assistance can include intervention strategies. This notice is not intended for those students already enrolled in a special education program.

### **Section Two:**

#### **STUDENT RIGHTS**

All students enrolled in the ETC have certain rights. These are clearly defined and both students and school personnel shall be familiar with them.

1. Students have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
2. Students have the right to expect fair and impartial treatment.
3. Students have the right to be informed of the policies, procedures, and schedules concerning the operation of the school.
4. Students have the right to an environment that is conducive to learning and free from negative and harmful influences.
5. Students have the right not to be discriminated against because of race, national origin, color, religious belief or practice, or physical handicap.
6. Students have the right to proper medical attention.
7. Students have the right to participate in classroom and school-related activities.
8. Students have the right to report any problem or complaint they have while in the school without fear of punishment in accordance with established grievance procedures.

#### **STANDARDS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT**

1. Demonstrate courtesy even when others do not.
2. Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising-discipline (this includes all off-campus activities, i.e. testing)
3. Attend all classes and be on time.
4. Be prepared to learn and participation all classes.
5. Adhere to all expectations outlined in the Student Code of Conduct's.
6. Obey all school and bus-expectations.
7. Respect the rights and privileges of other students and staff.



8. Never bully other students, staff or visitors.
9. Never harass other students, staff or visitors.
10. Never make or participate in the making of a hit list.
11. Respect the property of others, including the school property
12. Cooperate with and assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order and discipline
13. Obey the Student Code of Conduct

### **ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Texas Education Code 25.085(a) and the Texas Juvenile Justice Division Standards—348.7(g) (1) (c), requires that a child attend school each day for the entire period that a school's program of instruction is provided. Attendance is compulsory for a child at least six years of age, or who is younger than six and has been previously enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reached age 18. The Education and Family Codes contain "truancy" laws to enforce the compulsory attendance requirement.

#### **Program Hours:**

- 9:00 a.m. through 3:00 p.m., Monday-Thursday
- 9:00 a.m. through 12:00 p.m., Friday
- Parent/guardian must pick up their child by 3:00 p.m.

**\*Doors open at 9:00 AM**

#### **Per Rule A of Harris County Juvenile Probation, (this applies to students on probation):**

"I will not violate any laws of state of Texas, including the Texas Compulsory Attendance Law."

#### **Excused Absences:**

Excused absences will only be given for the reasons stated in the Education Transition Center's Handbook. The Education Transition Center's Attendance Coordinator or School Administrator should only permit absences to be excused for the following reasons:

- Illness of the student (Doctor's note is required for the absence to be counted as excused);
- A student medical, dental, chiropractic, optometric, or other valid professional appointments (Doctor's note is required for the absence to be counted as excused). However, routine dental or doctor appointments should be scheduled NOT to conflict with school hours.



- A death in the immediate family or funerals of close relatives; Proof of deceased funeral services is required. Immediate family includes a spouse, children, stepchildren, foster children or any other ward legally placed by the State of Texas, father, stepfather, mother, stepmother, brother, stepbrother, sister, stepsister, grandparent, grandchild, parents of the student's spouse.
- Quarantine of the student and/or their family;
- Court ordered or other verified legal appointments;
- Observed Religious Holidays (parental letter is required)
- Circumstances found reasonable and proper by the School Administrator.

Prior to excusing the absence, the staff member should ensure that the excuse has been turned into the school within three (3) school days of the student's return to school, and that the excuse contains the required signatures. Each excuse should include the student's name, reason for the absence, and the telephone number and signature of the parent/legal guardian or health care professional.

Excuses should be maintained in the Education Transition Center's attendance office and shall be available for review and inspection by Harris County Juvenile Probation Department and court staff.

#### **Unexcused Absences:**

An unexcused absence is an unauthorized absence from the school, not meeting one of the Excused Absence criteria above. The Education Transition Center's Attendance Coordinator and/or the Juvenile Probation Officer(s) at the school shall ensure that the student's parents/guardian are contacted regarding the unexcused absences from school for every day a student is not present and warned of the consequences of any further unexcused absences from school. Unexcused absences of students on probation should be communicated with the assigned Juvenile Probation Officer. Parents should also contact the school as soon as they have knowledge that the student will be absent. The Education Transition Center's staff will contact the parent/guardian and the assigned Juvenile Probation Officer if the student leaves campus early without authorization. If the student arrives to school under the influence of a substance, the parent/guardian will be notified by phone to pick up their youth from school. The assigned Juvenile Probation Officer will also be notified of the incident. This day may be listed as an unexcused absence.

#### **Excessive Absences:**

Students who have been referred to the Education Transition Center are subject to compulsory school attendance as required by the laws of the State of Texas and must attend school every day. If a student misses ten (10) consecutive days, he or she will be withdrawn from the program. Absence notes must be submitted to the attendance clerk no later than three (3) days after a student returns from an absence. Failure to submit an absence note within three days will result in the absence(s) being reported an unexcused absence.



### **Consequences for Truancy:**

- Truancy Prevention Measures will be implemented when a student fails to attend school without excuse on 3 or more days or part of days within a four week period and when a student fails to attend school without excuse for 10 or more days or part of days within a six month period. Truancy Prevention Plans will be shared with students assigned JPO.
- Truancy can also result in a removal from the Education Transition Center.
- Failure to attend school regularly can result in a delay in student GED testing.

### **Positive Approach to Student Success Class**

For students who are struggling in their regular classroom on any given day, or are in violation of school rules, will have an opportunity to move to the Positive Approach to Student Success (PASS) classroom for more intensive coaching, and given the chance to self-correct their behavior. This class is meant to prevent students being sent home for disruptive behavior in the school environment, and allow staff to better address their needs. Instruction and schoolwork will still occur in this classroom, however, students will only receive credit for attendance when they are receiving instruction, and participating in classwork.

**The Education Transition Center encourages the parent/guardian and/or assigned Juvenile Probation Officers to contact the school regularly to check on the youth's attendance. It is important that the youth attends school daily to improve his/her efforts in participating in the GED Examination or earning credits through the Optional Flexible School Day Program.**

### **School Discipline Guiding Principles**

- 1. Clear, High Expectations** – At the ETC, we clearly spell out all expectations so the students know exactly what is expected of them. There is no ambiguity; our expectations are clear, documented and transparent. Our expectations are incredibly high because we have ambitious goals and there is no time to waste on misbehavior. To successfully climb the mountain to college, our students will need to establish excellent habits and exceptional character.
- 2. Compliance** – The ETC expects students to meet the expectation of 100% compliance. We expect students to follow directions quickly, completely, and with a positive attitude. If a student is non-compliant, there will be consequences, practice, and support to ensure that the student changes their behavior. These expectations are set and enforced by every staff member.



- 3. Accountability & Consistency** – Accountability is the bedrock of our system. We will not make excuses for ourselves, but instead hold each other and our students accountable so that we are constantly improving. We consistently follow through on what we say we are going to do and we expect the same from our students. Consistency creates a culture that is predictable and fair to students and “de-personalizes” disciplinary action. Straightforward rules coupled with consistently applied consequences make clear to students what is expected and what is unacceptable. At the ETC, we use a TEAM approach to ensure that there are common expectations. Studies show that it is not the severity of the consequence that deters people from breaking rules, but quick and consistent accountability.
- 4. Rewards and Consequences** –Part of growing up is learning that life has natural rewards and consequences...both intrinsic and extrinsic. We want students to think purposefully about their behavior and to accept responsibility for their actions (good or bad.) We believe that school discipline will help students achieve self-discipline, a trait necessary for success.
- 5. Love & Belief** – The students at the ETC must know that we love them. We will show in actions and words, in deeds and lessons, in tone and in body language that we love our students. The students must know that our love and belief will not waver, even in challenging circumstances, even on bad days and especially not in the face of major behavior issues. Our staff members work hard to build to strong relationships with scholars. It is our job to earn the trust and respect of our students and their families.

### **Progressive Discipline**

The ETC prides itself on being an efficient, joyful and calm learning environment for students. Those who repeatedly fail to meet the high expectations held for them face a range of consequences that increase in severity. We want our students to grow into self-motivated young adults. However, one cannot achieve without self-discipline and we cannot progress toward intrinsic motivation until we achieve compliance. The discipline system at the ETC is consistent and fair. Consistency creates a culture that is predictable and fair to students and “de-personalizes” disciplinary action. Systems never replace relationships. Relationships never trump the system. Misconduct will be labeled and handled on a scale of level 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 infractions. Please see below:



## Verbal Redirection - Level 1 Infractions

|    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
| L1 | Sagging Pants                            | Pants are below one's waist (regardless of whether they are tucked in)                        |
| L1 | Other Minor Uniform                      | Being out of compliance with dress code.  |
| L1 | Working on other work                    | Not doing work directly related to the class at hand  |
| L1 | Unprofessional Communication             | Communicating in a way that would not be acceptable in a workplace (slang, street talk, etc.) |
| L1 | Excessive Volume                         | Yelling; hooting; hollering; singing  |
| L1 | Out of Seat Without Permission           | Getting out of seat without permission  |
| L1 | Side Conversation                        | Talking to a peer in class when not allowed   |
| L1 | Not Following class or school procedures | Not following a class or school procedure   |
| L1 | Sleeping                                 | Head down, eyes closed, during class hours.   |

## Automatic Referral - Level 2

|    |                         |   |
|----|-------------------------|---|
| L2 | Refusing to participate | Refusing to complete work or answer questions in class  |
| L2 | Persistent Sleeping     | More than one verbal redirection for sleeping during class hours (SEE NOTE ON EXCESSIVE SLEEPING) |
| L2 | Inappropriate Contact   | Putting hands on another student in any form  |



| Automatic Referral - Level 2 |                                 |  |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| L2                           | Phone/Electronics               | Having a phone or any form of electronics in sight                                 |
| L2                           | Ignoring/Refusing               | Refusing to comply with teacher directions   |
| L2                           | Leaving Early                   | Leaving school early for a reason not medically necessary or preapproved           |
| L2                           | Disrespect to Peer              | Undermining the dignity or emotional safety of another student                     |
| L2                           | Disrespect to Adult             | Undermining the dignity, authority, or emotional safety of an adult                |
| L2                           | Hands-on                        | Play-fighting, rough housing, etc.   |
| L2                           | Verbal Altercation              | Verbal arguments between students  |
| L2                           | Insubordination                 | Repeatedly refusing to follow directions (a more severe form of ignoring/refusing) |
| L2                           | Throwing Items                  | Throwing anything during class   |
| L2                           | Deliberate Derailment of Lesson | Intentionally attempting to disrupt or derail a lesson                             |
| L2                           | Swearing                        | Using any form of profanity  |
| L2                           | Skiping Class                   | Skiping class  |
| L2                           | Out of Assigned Area            | Walking out of class/assigned area without permission                              |





### Level 3 Infractions (Meeting with Admin)

|    |                                      |  |
|----|--------------------------------------|--|
| L3 | Bullying/Harassment                  | Repeatedly teasing another scholar or being mean-spirited in a way that assails the dignity of another individual  |
| L3 | Deliberate Derailment of Lesson      | Repeated Intentionally attempting to disrupt or derail a lesson  |
| L3 | Egregious Disrespect                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yelling at a staff member</li> <li>▪ Profanity in response to consequence</li> <li>▪ Other highly disruptive reactions</li> <li>▪ Purposefully damaging property, graffiti, etc.</li> <li>▪ Hate words</li> </ul> |
| L3 | Graffiti                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tagging or defacing school property</li> </ul>  |
| L3 | Threatening (regardless of intent)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Threatening a student or adult member(i.e. "If you __ then I'll __", "I'll kill you!")</li> </ul>   |
| L3 | Hate Speech                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Using language that undermines the dignity of a race, sexual orientation, religion, etc.</li> </ul>   |
| L3 | Destruction of property              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Damaging school property in a way that requires replacement or repair</li> </ul>  |
| L3 | Removed from PASS                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being asked to leave PASS or leaving without permission</li> </ul>  |
| L3 | Refusing Pat down and/or search      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Refusing or avoiding a pat down at any time.</li> </ul>   |
| L3 | Repeated L1s and L2s (3+ in a class) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 3 or more L1s and/or L2s in a class</li> </ul>  |



**Level 4 Infractions (Suspension) Some of the incidents may require law enforcement notification, school leadership will make this determination.**

- ❖ Persistent bullying / threatening / harassment
- ❖ Physical aggression – any pushing, fighting, etc.
- ❖ Major dishonesty: stealing
- ❖ Any toy weapons, water gun, pellet gun, etc.
- ❖ Minor Sexual Misconduct – Inappropriate comment, harassment, mimicking sexual behavior, kissing, etc.
- ❖ Consistently Leaving school building / campus without permission
- ❖ Any repeated or chronic disregard for the rules
- ❖ Destruction of school or other's property; any "tagging" or suggestive graffiti
- ❖ Any Illicit Materials (tobacco, alcohol, pornography)
- ❖ Sexual Misconduct: Any overt sexual harassment, sexual threatening or bullying; any sexual act
- ❖ Physical assault (including sexual assault)  
Other egregious behavior as defined by school on or off school property and on the internet

**Level 5 Infractions (The below offenses warrant an expulsion from the ETC program) These incidents will require law enforcement involvement.**

- ❖ Any Weapons
- ❖ Any Drugs / Illegal substances
- ❖ Physical assault of any staff member
- ❖ Engaging in bullying that encourages a student to commit or attempt to commit suicide.
- ❖ Inciting violence against a student through group bullying.

**\*NOTE ON SLEEPING IN CLASS:**

If a student has been redirected for sleeping in class more than two times, they will be sent to the PASS classroom. Should the student continue to sleep in PASS, the guardian will be contacted to come pick their child up, and the student will not be able to return to school until a conference is had with the parent, student, school leader, field officer, and student support specialist.

## **Suspension**



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

1. Notify the student of the alleged violation of behavior as outlined in the student handbook;
2. Allow the student to relate his/her version of the incident; and/or prepare a written statement, and
3. Determine whether the student's conduct warrants suspension.

A student's suspension shall not last longer than three school days.

Notification to Parents/Guardians: If the School Leader or designee determines the student's conduct warrants suspension during the school day, the School Leader or designee will make reasonable efforts to notify the student's parents/guardians that the student has been suspended before the student is sent home. . If the School Leader is unable to get ahold of parent by 5 pm on the next business day after the infraction, a letter will be sent via certified mail or electronically. The School Leader or designee will notify a suspended student's parents/guardians of the period of suspension, the grounds for the suspension, and the time and place for an opportunity to confer with the School Leader. The parent or guardian must sign the discipline record for the suspension prior to the student leaving the campus. If a parent does not respond to a school's request to pick up a child, the school may call emergency contacts.

All suspensions shall be tracked in a suspension log.

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. Absences because of suspension are unexcused.

## **Expulsion**

When the School Leader determines that a student's conduct warrants expulsion, the student shall be entitled to a disciplinary hearing. Prior to taking any action, the School Leader will provide the student's parents/guardians, the JPO of record, and the Deputy Director of Education with written notice of:

- 1) The reasons for the proposed expulsion; and
- 2) The date and location for a hearing, which will occur within five (5) school days from the last date of suspension for the incident



The notice shall further state that, at the hearing, the student:

- 1) may be present;
- 2) shall have an opportunity to present evidence;
- 3) shall be apprised and informed of the school's evidence;
- 4) may be accompanied by his/her parents/guardians; and
- 5) may be represented.

The school shall make a good faith effort to inform the student and the student's parents/guardians of the time and place for the hearing, and the school shall hold the hearing regardless of whether the student, the student's parents/guardians, or another adult representing the student attends. The hearing will be recorded. The student may be represented and may ask questions of the school's representative(s). As soon as possible following the hearing, the School Leader will notify the student and the student's parents/guardians in writing of his/her decision. The decision shall specify:

- 1) The length of the expulsion/alternative placement, if any;
- 2) When the expulsion is not permanent, the procedures for re-admittance at the end of the expulsion period; and
- 3) The right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent.

The notice shall also state that failure to timely request such a hearing constitutes a waiver of further rights to any appeal of the discipline. The expulsion is effective immediately regardless of any appeal.

ETC may expel a student who has been identified as a qualified student with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) only after a duly constituted Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee makes a determination pursuant to Federal law that the behavior leading to the expulsion is not a manifestation of the student's disability.

| <b>Restorative Actions – Suggested ways to make it right and give back to the school community</b>   |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classroom apology</li><li>• Mentoring a younger student who is engaging in similar self-destructive behavior.</li><li>• Supporting the creation of a support group for students engaging in similar self-destructive behavior</li><li>• Creating a video, spoken word performance, or other art project around lessons you have learned from your mistakes so that other students can learn from it.</li></ul> |



- Helping organize an assembly or school activity to promote a specific kind of transformative behavior that you are now engaging in or are trying to engage in as a result of the lessons you have learned from your mistakes
- Leading a fundraiser for the school
- Cleaning Classrooms after school or during lunch
- Doing a school property restoration or beautification project

I. **Disciplinary Consequences for Major Infractions may include but are not limited to:**

- Referral to JPO of record
- Referral to In School Suspension (ISS)
- Arrest
- Referral to Juvenile Detention
- Other disciplinary consequences determined as appropriate by ETC staff
- Suspension or removal from school.

II. **Use of Force/Physical Restraint**

The use of force and initiation of a restraint shall be STRICTLY governed by the following criteria:

1. Only law enforcement officers or trained juvenile probation officers in the scope of duty may use mechanical restraints.
2. Restraints shall only be used for
  - Protection of the person being restrained, and/or
  - Protection of others
3. Restraints shall only be used for protection, and should not be used for the purpose of changing behavior in situations where no protective need is present.
4. Restraints shall also be used only as a last resort when all other techniques have been exhausted;
5. Use of restraints shall be terminated as soon as the student's behavior indicates that the threat of imminent self-injury or injury to others has subsided;
6. Under no circumstances will physical force be utilized or imposed on a student for the purposes of punishment, intimidation, or discipline; and
7. Students are strictly prohibited from assisting staff in the discipline or physical restraint of other students.

III. **Prohibited Sanctions**



The following disciplinary sanctions discussed will be strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated at the ETC:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Corporal Punishment
- Physical Abuse
- Any Act Intended to Degrade or Humiliate a Student
- Hazing
- Deprivation of Food, Water, Clothing, and Medical Needs
- One Student Sanctioning Another

#### IV. **Student Discipline Glossary and Terms**

##### **Definitions**

**Assault-** An assault is a violent physical or verbal attack; A threat or attempt to inflict offensive physical contact or bodily harm on a person that puts the person in immediate danger of or in apprehension of such harm or contact.

**Bullying** – Engaging in written expression, verbal expression or physical contact that will have the effect of physically harming a student, staff member or visitor, damaging their property or placing them in reasonable fear of harm to their person and/or damage to their property; or is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment.

**Contraband-** Contraband is considered as goods or merchandise whose importation, exportation, or possession is forbidden.

**Gang** -A gang is a group of recurrently associating individuals or close friends with identifiable leadership and internal organization, identifying with or claiming control over territory in a community, and engaging either individually or collectively in violent or other forms of illegal behavior. Gang Affiliation- Self reported or identified as having close association with gangs (see gangs)

**Harassment** – Threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, 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.



**Graffiti/Tagging**- Graffiti is writing or drawings that have been scribbled, scratched, or sprayed illicitly on a wall or other surface, often in a public place. [1] Graffiti ranges from simple written words to elaborate wall paintings.

**Major Infraction** – Infraction that violates the Student Code of Conduct, city ordinance, state, or federal law.

**Minor Infraction** – Infraction of repeated misbehavior after warnings and documented interventions.

**Hit List** – Means a list of people targeted to be harmed, using a firearm, knife or any other object to be used with the intent to cause bodily harm

## **DRESS CODE**

- ETC t-Shirt is to be worn daily, and visible at all times.
- Appropriate clothing shall cover midriff, shoulders and upper chest.
- No pajamas or undergarments shall be visible at any time.
- Closed-toe shoes. Inappropriate shoes include, but are not limited to, shower shoes, house slippers, and slides.
- Pants must be worn at waist. Shorts, skirts and dresses must extend beyond the fingertips.
- See-through clothing is prohibited.
- Smart watches are prohibited, and will be stored in locker.
- Any non-religious head coverings are not allowed to be worn on campus during school hours. ETC school beanies may be purchased from the school store and worn on campus.
- Students engaged in virtual learning/virtual conferencing are required to adhere to dress code during virtual classroom times.
- In the event of a pandemic facemasks may be required at all times within the school building, CDC and government official guidance and orders will be followed.
- Clothing/hair styles, which in the judgement of the building administrators, pose a health or safety hazard and/or disrupt the educational process are not permitted.

**Note:** All ETC students will receive two ETC t-shirts upon enrollment. The first time a student is not in their school shirt, they will wear a loaner shirt, and receive a write-up. The second time a student is not in their school shirt, they will wear a loaner shirt and be sent to the PASS class. The third time a student is not in their school shirt, they will be sent home from



school, and marked absent. Multiple absences will result in truancy prevention procedures.

Students who have perfect attendance Monday – Friday of each week, and no write-ups, will be allowed to have “Free Dress Day” on Friday. Students are still expected to adhere to dress code on these “Free Dress Days”.

### **CONTRABAND**

No contraband, cigarettes/cigars, electronic cigarettes, cigarette lighters/matches and gang related items are allowed on campus. Glass containers are not allowed on campus. These items will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to the student. Cell phones must be stored in locker upon arrival.

### **GANG ACTIVITY**

No gang attire/signs/symbols, gang graffiti, gang conversations, gang hand gestures, gang recruiting is allowed on Harris County Property or ETC related activities.

### **BULLYING**

House Bill 1942 defines bullying as engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the district and that: (1) has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to student's person or go damage to a student's property; or (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for a student.

Conduct is considered bullying if it (1) exploits an imbalance in power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and (2) interferes with a student's educational or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

Any youth who makes an allegation, witnesses an incident or feels he or she has been a victim of bullying has a right to report this information. The youth may disclose this information to any agency staff or another adult. All ETC youth shall be informed of their right to report during the orientation process.

### **SAFETY**

The safety of our students, staff and visitors is of utmost importance. In the interest of promoting student safety and drug-free schools, school officials may occasionally





conduct searches. School officials may search students, their belongings, and their vehicles in accordance with law and district policy.

Searches of students will be conducted without discrimination, based on, for example, reasonable suspicion or voluntary consent or pursuant to district policy providing for suspicion-less security procedures, including the use of metal detectors. The ETC staff reserves the right to search students at any time. All students will be subject to a pat-down search as well as search by a metal detector or wand upon entry onto the campus. In the event of a pandemic, searches will be adapted for the safety of students and staff.

In accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, students are responsible for prohibited items found in their possession, including items in their personal belongings or in vehicles parked on district property.

If there is reasonable suspicion to believe that searching a student's person, belongings, or vehicle will reveal evidence of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, a school official may conduct a search in accordance with law and district regulations.

During time of a local health crisis or pandemic CDC guidance will be followed, and additional screening and protocols will be utilized. Such as temperature screenings and facemasks. Requirements will be communicated to students and parents/guardians.

### **Emergency Situations:**

In the event of an emergency situation, school officials must act quickly and students must act responsibly. This is not a time for horseplay or games.

During an emergency situation, staff will:

- Be alert and ready to give instructions to students
- Conduct headcounts to ensure the safety of all their students
- Help manage the crisis in order to limit chaos and confusion
- Complete any necessary paper work (witness statements, incident reports etc.)

During emergency situations, students will:

- Follow all instructions given to them by all program staff
- Act responsibly
- Be a team player



## **TRANSPORTATION**

Students will be picked up in a county-issued van that has been properly inspected and maintained according to the County, State and Federal standards. Transportation of students is provided by the **ETC**. However, students and parents should realize that riding the ETC van shuttle is a privilege and not a right. Students that do not follow the transportation rules are subject to having their riding privileges suspended for a few days or indefinitely. Transportation is critical to the success of students attending school. Therefore, the following transportation options are utilized:

- **Harris County Juvenile Probation Van-A.M. & P.M. Services**
- **Public Transportation**
- **Parent/Guardian**

### **I. A.M. VAN SERVICE:**

Students needing to utilize the A.M. van service will be picked up at the following locations:

- 1811 Gregg St at approximately 8:00 AM
- 101 S. Richie at approximately 8:15 AM
- 1721 Pech Rd at approximately 8:15 AM
- 9111 Eastex Frwy at approximately 8:15 AM
- 3511 Reed Rd at approximately 8:20 AM
- 2525 Murworth at approximately 8:40 AM

If students miss the van, they are still expected to attend school by using an alternate method of transportation. This time is subject to change based on the needs of the youth.

### **II. P.M. VAN SERVICE:**

Students will load the van after being dismissed from school and dropped off at the above locations.



### III. BUS PASS DISTRIBUTION:

Based on individual needs, students are given 1 or 2 bus passes to assist with their travel home.

### III. PARENT/GUARDIAN:

Transportation to and from school may be provided by a parent or guardian.

**Note:** Students may only park on Harris County Property if they can provide a current state-issued driver's license and proof of insurance and registration (in their name).

### IV. VAN EXPECTATIONS:

- Students will be pat searched prior to their entry on the van. In the event of a pandemic, searches will be adapted for the safety of students and staff
- Students will only be transported to their guardian approved drop-off location
- Students are to sit properly in their seats
- Staff will designate student seating on van
- Students must remain seated on the van at all times
- Students must maintain a low voice volume and follow the directions of the driver and supporting staff
- Students must not engage in any inappropriate behavior on the van (fighting, gang related or sexually explicit conversation or gestures, etc.)
- Students are prohibited from bringing contraband items on the van (cigarettes, lighters, e-cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, etc.)
- Confiscated contraband items will not be returned
- Students must wear headphones when listening to music or other electronic devices while on the van
- Students are expected to keep the van clean
- Any student who smells of marijuana will not be allowed on the van
- During time of a local health crisis or pandemic CDC guidance will be followed, and additional screening and protocols will be utilized. Such as temperature screenings and facemasks.

### V. CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATING TRANSPORTATION RULES:



- All van violations are considered infractions according to the Student Code of Conduct and will result in appropriate consequences
- Law violations occurring on the van will be referred to the PO, school administrator, parent and if necessary law enforcement
- Verbal warning
- Staffing with probation officer, parent and school personnel
- Suspended riding privileges: Suspensions may range from:
  - 1-3 days
  - 3-5 days
  - Indefinitely

### **FIELD TRIPS AND OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES**

Students will be transported to and from off-campus activities in a county van. If other means of transportation is to be used, parents will be notified in advance of the scheduled trip or activity. Van expectations are to be followed on field trips and off-campus activities.

### **STUDENT CHAIN OF COMMAND AND GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

ETC will provide students with an orderly process for the prompt and equitable resolution of grievances whenever a student believes his/her rights have been violated by staff, policy, or other students. It is preferable that general complaints be resolved at the lowest possible level. General complaints or questions regarding campus level decisions should be addressed through the procedure below.

1. Students should make an honest effort to discuss and resolve problems being experienced by utilizing staff-assisted measures.
2. If student is unable to resolve the problem through informal measures, the student may request to complete and submit a handwritten "Grievance Report" to the ETC supervisor.
3. A copy of the grievance submitted by the student shall be provided to the student's parent/guardian within two (2) days of submission.



4. The ETC Supervisor will review the grievance report, attempt to resolve the grievance, document efforts on the Grievance Review form, and distribute copies to appropriate parties (including the Supervisor, Title 1-Director.)
5. If the student wishes to appeal, the Title 1-Director will submit the appeal to the Deputy Director of Education Services for review. Once the appeal process is finalized copies will be distributed to all parties involved.
6. The Deputy Director of Education Services, will review the grievance reports, all appeals, and will meet with the student if necessary, to assure that due process was afforded. All grievances, resolved or unresolved, will be brought to the attention of the Education Services Division. The Title-1 Director is recognized as the Juvenile Board's designee to supervising and resolving grievances concerning ETC Excel Academy.

**All students will be protected against any form of retaliation. The grievance procedure is as follows:**

- Obtain a copy of the grievance form from any staff member
- Complete the form in as much detail as possible explaining what happened, when it happened, and any staff who may have been involved. **THIS IS TO BE DONE OUTSIDE OF INSTRUCTIONAL TIME.**
- Be certain to complete the first half of the grievance form. This is your opportunity to describe what actions you believe would have been better.
- Give the grievance form to the Administrator. Depending on the severity, it may take up to 24 hours to discuss the situation with you, inform you of the other side of the conflict and make a decision on how to resolve the grievance.

## **MEDICAL**

Any student who is ill or injured has a right to be evaluated by a staff member trained in first aid. Based on the evaluation, the student may be sent back to class or the parents/legal guardian may be called to pick the student up (in the event the student cannot perform with the rest of the group). In emergency situations, students may be transported to local hospitals; parents will be notified.

Any student who requires medication during school hours is required to have all necessary documentation completed and the **parent/legal guardian must bring the medication to school and check it in with the designated individual (Under no circumstances will students be allowed to transport medication to school)**. Once this has taken place, the designee will ensure that the student receives their medication at the appropriate time.



If medication is left over or if the medication must be sent home, each parent/legal guardian must come to school and retrieve the medication. **No medication will be sent home with the student.**

### SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In the event of bad weather or disaster, the ETC will follow the closing of Houston ISD. School closings may be broadcast on local television and radio stations.

### MEALS

All daily meals (breakfast and lunch) and snacks will be provided to the student. Accommodations for dietary restrictions will be made when notified in writing by parent or guardian.

### School Contact Information

|   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Stacie Brady</b><br><i>Instructional Leader</i><br>713-222-4429<br>Stacie.Brady@hcjpd.hctx.net         | <b>Vanessa Ramirez</b><br><i>Strategic Partnerships Manager</i><br>346-221-8272<br>Vanessa.Ramirez@hcjpd.hctx.net | <b>Laura Lopez</b><br><i>Project Coordinator</i><br>713-854-7421<br>Laura.Lopez@hcjpd.hctx.net                 | <b>Destinee Alowde</b><br><i>CYS</i><br>713-201-9150<br>Destinee.alowde@harriscountytexas.gov          |
| <b>Joshua Calip</b><br><i>Turning Point</i><br>832-385-3445<br>Joshua.calip@tppi.net                      | <b>Madeleine Werner</b><br><i>School Based Therapist</i><br>713-539-9117<br>Madeleine.werner@hcjpd.hctx.net       | <b>Edward Williams</b><br><i>Campus Behavior Coordinator</i><br>281-808-0813<br>Edward.Williams@hcjpd.hctx.net | <b>Jewel Murray</b><br><i>Data Specialist</i><br>713-274-1897<br>Jewel.Murray@hcjpd.hctx.net           |
| <b>Damika Captain</b><br><i>RLA Instructor</i><br>832-450-7335<br>Dcaptain@hcjpd-edu.org                  | <b>Marvin England</b><br><i>Science Instructor</i><br>832-450-2349<br>Marvin.England@hcjpd.hctx.net               | <b>Kim McCurdy</b><br><i>Math Teacher</i><br>713-449-1265<br>Kim.McCurdy@hcjpd.hctx.net                        | <b>Karen McGhee</b><br><i>Special Education Teacher</i><br>832-454-4934<br>Karen.McGhee@hcjpd.hctx.net |
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## ADDENDUM

### Virtual Conferencing/Learning Attendance Requirements

For the 2022-2023 school year, students are eligible for virtual conferencing if they meet the following requirements:

- The student is unable to attend school because of temporary medical condition.
- The total amount of remote conferencing instruction does not exceed more than 20 instructional days over the entirety of the school year.

In addition, one of the following requirements must be met:

In addition, one of the following must be met:

- The student's temporary medical condition is documented by a physician licensed to practice in the United States. The documentation must include a statement from the physician that the student is to remain confined to their home or to a hospital.
- The student is being excluded from on campus attendance because of a test result, formal diagnosis, or suspicion of having a communicable condition, as outlined in 25 TAC §97.7, and the conditions for readmission outlined therein have not yet been met.



- The student has been identified as a close contact for COVID-19 either by public health, by the school, or by the parent.

Virtual classes will have the same expectations as in-person learning, and attendance will be taken for each class period. Students should treat the virtual classes as if they were sitting in-person in class. This means being appropriately dressed and present in a space that is supportive of learning.

To be marked present during virtual learning students must:

- Log-in/call in to their synchronous classes via the Zoom link provided at their scheduled class times.
- Use their first and last names on the name identifier of their Zoom call.
- Students should have their camera on and/or interact with the instructor. If a student is unable to use a camera for the class, they should make the instructor aware of that.

Should a student not remain in the Zoom class for the duration of the class period, the time the student left will be documented via internal Zoom reports.