



STUDENT HANDBOOK

2017-2018

Approved by District August 15, 2017

PREFACE.....	1
Section I—REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS.....	1
Section II—INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS	1
SECTION I: REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS.....	2
Statement of Nondiscrimination	2
Additional Notices	2
Please take some time to review these notices and other important information contained in the Student Handbook. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.....	3
Working Together.....	3
PARENTAL RIGHTS	4
“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities	4
Displaying a Student’s Artwork and Projects.....	4
Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff.....	4
Reviewing Instructional Materials.....	5
Inspecting Surveys.....	5
Accessing Student Records.....	5
Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student.....	6
Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom	6
Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags.....	6
Excusing a Student from Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence	6
Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct	6
Requesting Transfers for Your Child.....	6
Requesting Classroom Assignment for Multiple Birth Siblings.....	7
OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS	7
Parents of Students with Disabilities	7
Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education.....	7
Services for Title I Participants.....	8
Student Records	8
Directory Information	10
Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes.....	10
Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education	11
Bacterial Meningitis.....	11

SECTION II: INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS	13
ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE	13
Compulsory Attendance.....	13
Attendance for Credit.....	14
Parent’s Note after an Absence.....	15
Doctor’s Note after an Absence for Illness.....	15
Driver License Attendance Verification	15
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS	15
AWARDS/HONORS.....	15
BULLYING	16
CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS.....	16
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	16
CLASS RANK / TOP TEN PERCENT / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT.....	16
GPA.....	16
LOCAL GRADUATION HONORS	17
VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN	17
AUTOMATIC ADMISSION	18
EARLY GRADUATION.....	19
CLASS SCHEDULES	19
COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES.....	19
COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS	20
COMPUTER RESOURCES.....	20
CONDUCT	20
Applicability of School Rules.....	20
Corporal Punishment	20
Disruptions.....	21
Electronic Devices	21
Lost, Damaged, or Stolen Personal Items	22
Social Events.....	22
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS	22
CORRESPONDENCE COURSES.....	22
COUNSELING	23
Academic Counseling.....	23

Personal Counseling.....	23
Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment	23
CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Taken the Course.....	23
CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course.....	24
DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION	24
Dating Violence	24
Discrimination.....	25
Harassment.....	25
Sexual Harassment.....	25
Retaliation	26
Reporting Procedures	26
Investigation of Report	26
DISCRIMINATION	26
DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS	26
School Materials	26
Non-school Materials...from students	27
Non-school Materials...from others	27
DRESS AND GROOMING	28
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS	31
FEES	31
FUND-RAISING	32
GRADE CLASSIFICATION	32
GRADING GUIDELINES	32
GRADUATION	33
Requirements for a Diploma.....	33
Graduation Programs	33
Certificates of Coursework Completion	34
Students with Disabilities	34
Graduation Activities	34
Graduation Expenses	34
Harassment.....	34
HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS	35
Physical Activity for Students in Elementary and Middle School	35

School Health Advisory Council	35
Physical Fitness Assessment.....	35
Vending Machines	35
Other Health-Related Matters	35
Tobacco Prohibited	35
Asbestos Management Plan	35
Pest Management Plan.....	35
HOMELESS STUDENTS	36
HOMEWORK.....	36
IMMUNIZATION	36
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES	36
Questioning of Students	36
Students Taken Into Custody	37
Notification of Law Violations	37
MAKEUP WORK	38
Routine and In-depth Makeup Work Assignments.....	38
DAEP or In-school Suspension Makeup Work	38
MEDICINE AT SCHOOL.....	38
Psychotropic Drugs.....	39
NONTRADITIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS	39
PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS.....	39
PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE.....	40
PRAYER.....	40
PROMOTION AND RETENTION.....	40
RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL	41
REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES	41
RETALIATION	42
SAFETY	42
Accident Insurance.....	42
Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies.....	42
Fire Drill Bells	42
Tornado Drill Bells	42
Emergency Medical Treatment and Information	43

Emergency School-Closing Information	43
SAT, ACT, AND OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS	43
SCHOOL FACILITIES	43
Use by Students Before and After School	43
Conduct Before and After School.....	44
Use of Hallways During Class Time	44
Cafeteria Services	44
Library Media Center.....	44
Meetings of Non-curriculum Related Groups.....	45
SEARCHES	45
Students’ Desks and Lockers	45
Vehicles on Campus	45
Trained Dogs.....	46
Metal Detectors.....	46
Drug-Testing:	46
SPECIAL PROGRAMS	46
STEROIDS	46
SUMMER SCHOOL	47
STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness).....	47
TARDINESS.....	47
TEXTBOOKS.....	48
TRANSFERS	48
TRANSPORTATION.....	48
School-Sponsored Trips.....	48
Buses and Other School Vehicles	48
VANDALISM.....	49
VIDEO CAMERAS.....	49
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL	49
General Visitors	49
Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students.....	49
WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL	50
GLOSSARY	51
MEMORANDUM	53

APPENDIX II <i>Use of Student Work in District Publications</i>	54
APPENDIX III.....	55
NOTICE REGARDING FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)	55
APPENDIX IV.....	56
Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education.....	56
Appendix V.....	57
Requirements to obtain a Parking Permit:	57
Student Parking Permit Form 2016-2017	58

PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2016-2017! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students.

The Taft ISD Student Handbook is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. In an effort to make it easier to use, the handbook is divided into two sections:

Section I—REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS—with notices that the district must provide to all parents, as well as other information to assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook; and

Section II—INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS—organized alphabetically by topic for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

Please be aware that the term “the student’s parent” is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Taft ISD *Student Code of Conduct*, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found as a separate document sent home to parents, posted at www.taftisd.net or available in the principal’s office.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the *Student Code of Conduct*. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters and other communications.

In case of conflict between board policy or the *Student Code of Conduct* and any provisions of the Student Handbook, the provisions of board policy or the *Student Code of Conduct* that were most recently adopted by the board are to be followed.

After reading through the entire handbook with your child, keep it as a reference during this school year. If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact the school principal.

Also, please complete and return to your child’s campus the following required forms included in this handbook.

1. Parental Acknowledgment Form;
2. Student Directory Information Form;
3. Release of Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Learning; and
4. Consent/Opt-Out Forms.

[See **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights**]

Please note that references to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. A copy of the district's policy manual is available for review in the school office or online at www.taftisd.net.

SECTION I: REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

This section of the Taft ISD Student Handbook includes several notices that the district is required to provide to you, as well as other information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Taft ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following district staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex: Executive Director of Human Resources, 400 College St. Taft TX 78390, 361-528-2636 Ext 2241.
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Executive Director of Human Resources, 400 College St. Taft TX 78390, 361-528-2636.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: Executive Director of Human Resources 400 College St. Taft TX 78390, 361-528-2636.

Additional Notices

Other important notices in the Student Handbook cover the following topics:

- Student participation in a survey, analysis, or evaluation;
- Opting out of surveys and data collection activities;
- Requesting the professional qualifications of teachers and staff;
- Requesting a transfer of your child to a safe public school;
- Assistance to students who have learning difficulties;
- Student records;
- Bacterial meningitis;
- Career and technology programs;
- Homeless students; and
- School lunch programs.

Please take some time to review these notices and other important information contained in the Student Handbook. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Working Together

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements of the graduation programs with your child, if your child is entering ninth grade.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** and **Academic Programs**]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. Upon arriving at the school, visitors must show identification and sign in and out [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences**]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policies at GKG and contact the school principal.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations. Please contact the school principal for further information.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB, and contact Executive Director for Curriculum and Instruction, 361-528-2636 Ext 2230.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction. [See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and information in this handbook at **School Health Advisory Council**]
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies at BE and BED for more information.]

PARENTAL RIGHTS

Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights

Your child 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:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent.
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family.
- Sexual behavior or attitudes.
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship.
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents.
- 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.

You will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation. [For further information, see policy EF(LEGAL).]

“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities

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

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

Displaying a Student’s Artwork and Projects

As a parent, you have a right to provide consent before the district can display your child’s artwork, special projects, photographs taken by your child, and the like on the district’s Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication.

Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff

You may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child’s teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels

and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

Reviewing Instructional Materials

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

Inspecting Surveys

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

Accessing Student Records

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

- Attendance records,
- Standardized test data, including intelligence, aptitude, interest, personality, and social adjustment ratings,
- All achievement records, as determined by tests, recorded grades, and teacher evaluations,
- Disciplinary records which include verified reports of serious or recurrent, behavior patterns,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Admission data, personal and family data, including certification of date of birth,
- Health services record, including: (a). the results of any tuberculin tests required by the district;(b). the findings of screening or health appraisal programs the District conducts or provides; and/or (c). immunization records [See FFAB],
- Other medical records,
- Teacher and counselor evaluations,
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.
- Fitness testing results,
- All information in student PRC,
- All documentation regarding a student's testing history and any accelerated instruction he or she has received, including any documentation of discussion or action by a grade placement committee convened for the student,
- Records transferred from other districts in which the student was enrolled,
- Copies of correspondence with parents and others concerned with the student,
- Records pertaining to participation in extracurricular activities,
- Information relating to student participation in special programs,
- Records of fees assessed and paid,
- Records pertaining to student and parent complaints,
- Other records that may contribute to an understanding of the student,

- Records of teacher or administrative conferences with the student or pertaining to the student; and
- Student questionnaires.

[See **Student Records**]

Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student

As a parent, you may grant or deny any written request from the district to make a video or voice recording of your child. State law, however, permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:

- When it is to be used for school safety;
- When it relates to classroom instruction or a co- curricular or extracurricular activity; or
- When it relates to media coverage of the school.

Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom

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

Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags

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

Excusing a Student from Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence

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

Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct

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 your child's misconduct that may involve placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) or expulsion. [See policy FO (LEGAL) and the *Student Code of Conduct*.]

Requesting Transfers for Your Child

As a parent, you have a right:

- To request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the board or its designee to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. [See policy FDB.]

[See **Bullying**, and policy FFI (LOCAL).]

- To request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds that the student attends. [See policy FDD (LOCAL).]
- To request the transfer of your child to another campus or a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. [See policies FDD (LEGAL) and (LOCAL).]

Requesting Classroom Assignment for Multiple Birth Siblings

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

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Parents of Students with Disabilities

Parents of students with learning difficulties or who may need special education services may request an evaluation for special education at any time. For more information, see **Special Programs** and contact the school counselor.

Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention. The implementation of Response to Intervention has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of school districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent of his or her rights if the parent disagrees with the district. Additionally, the notice must inform the parent how to obtain a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities.

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education should be the school counselor.

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that any other student residing in the household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus. [See policy FDB(LOCAL).]

Services for Title I Participants

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs is Ricardo Trevino and may be contacted at 361-528-2636 Ext 2241.

Student Records

Both federal and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights. For purposes of student records, an “eligible” student is one who is 18 or older OR who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

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

- The parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student’s education records. Federal law requires that as soon as a student becomes 18, or is emancipated by a court, or is attending an institution of postsecondary education, the rights accorded to, and consent required of parents transfer from the parent to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes. [See FL(LEGAL)]
- District staff members who have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records. “Legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student’s case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; or investigating or evaluating programs. Such persons would include school officials (such as board members, the superintendent, administrators, and principals); school staff members (such as teachers, counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff); a person or company with whom the district has contracted to provide a particular service (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official or staff in the performance of his or her duties.
- Various governmental agencies.
- Individuals granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.

- A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she subsequently enrolls.

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

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The principal is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. The records custodian shall use reasonable procedures to verify the requestor's identity before disclosing student records containing personally identifiable information.

Records may be reviewed in person by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours without charge upon written request to the records custodian. For in-person viewing, the records custodian or designee shall be available to explain the confidential nature of the student's record and to answer questions. The confidential nature of the student's records shall be maintained at all times, and records to be viewed shall be restricted to use only in the principal's office, superintendent's office, counselor's office, or other restricted area designated by the records custodian. The original copy of the record or any document contained in the cumulative record shall not be removed from the school. If circumstances prevent inspection during these hours, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records. The address of the superintendent's office is 400 College St, Taft TX 78390.

The addresses of the principals' offices are:

Woodroe Petty Elementary – 401 Peach Street Taft TX 78390 phone 361-528-2636 ext. 5627
Taft Junior High – 1150 Gregory Street, Taft TX 78390 phone 361-528-2636 ext. 4321
Taft High School – 502 Rincon Road, Taft TX 78390 phone 361-528-2636 ext. 3421

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the principal. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. Within fifteen (15) district business days of the record custodian's receipt of a request to amend records, the district shall notify the parents in writing of its decision on the request, and if the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If a hearing is requested, it shall be held within ten (10) district business days after the request is received. Parents shall be notified in advance of the date, time, and place of the hearing. An administrator who is not responsible for the contested records and who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing shall conduct the hearing. The parents shall be given a full and fair opportunity to present evidence and at their own expense, may be assisted or represented at the hearing. The parents shall be notified of the decision in writing within ten (10) district business days of the hearing. The decision shall be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing and shall include a summary of the evidence and reasons for the decision. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly

recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG (LOCAL). [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences, Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns** for an overview of the process.]

Copies of student records are available at a cost of ten cents per page, payable in advance. Copies of records must be requested in writing. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price lunches and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, one copy of the record shall be provided at no charge upon written request of the parent.

The district's policy regarding student records found at FL(LOCAL) is available from the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's Web site at www.taftisd.net.

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

Please note:

Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with federal law regarding student records. The complaint may be mailed to:

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

Directory Information

The law permits the district to designate certain personal information about students as “directory information.” This “directory information” will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

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

Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes

The district often needs to use student information for the following school-sponsored purposes:

The District may release directory information if it has given public notice of:

1. The types of personally identifiable information that it has designated as directory information.
2. The right of the parent to refuse to permit the District to designate any or all of that information about the student as directory information.

3. The period of time within which the parent must notify the District in writing that he or she does not want any or all of those types of information about the student designated as directory information.

An educational agency or institution may disclose directory information about former students without satisfying the public notice conditions above.

For these specific school-sponsored purposes, the district would like to use your child's "Directory information" means information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Directory information includes the student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, grade level, enrollment status, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, honors and awards received, and the most recent educational agency or institution attended. This information will not be released to the public without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

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

Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education

The district is required by federal law to comply with a request by a military recruiter or an institution of higher education for students' names, addresses, and telephone listings, unless parents have advised the district not to release their child's information without prior written consent. A form has been attached for you to complete if you do not want the district to provide this information to military recruiters or institutions of higher education.

Bacterial Meningitis

State law specifically requires the district 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.

Children (over 1 year old) 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 children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body.

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

- How serious is bacterial meningitis?

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

- How is bacterial meningitis spread?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. 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 when there is 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 percent). **MCV4 is required for all students entering 7th grade.** 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 school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Department of State Health Services office to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the Web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>.

SECTION II: INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Topics in this section of the handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is conveniently organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact the school principal.

ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE

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

Compulsory Attendance

State law requires that a student between the ages of six and 18 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

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

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year and is subject to compulsory attendance laws, if the student is under 21 years old. In addition, if a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester the district may revoke the student’s enrollment. The student’s presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. [See FEA]

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

A court of law may also impose penalties against both the student and his or her parents if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student:

- Is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, or
- Is absent on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period.

If the student is over age 18, the student's parents shall not be subject to penalties as a result of their child's violation of state compulsory attendance law. [See FEA(LEGAL)]

Attendance for Credit

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered otherwise credit will be denied. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the approval of the judge presiding over the case will also be required before the student receives credit for the class. All attendance must be made up within the same school year in which the credits denied were to be earned. For example if credits are denied in 2015-2016, attendance must be made before the start of the 2016-2017 school year. Make up attendance will be done through digital curriculum delivery, or any other service pre-approved by campus attendance committee's to meet the instructional requirements of the class. Students will be responsible for documenting make up attendance on campus issued forms.

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

In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

- All absences will be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for religious holy days and documented health-care appointments will be considered days of attendance for this purpose. [See policies at FEB.]
- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district. For a student transferring into the district after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.
- In reaching a decision about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student's parent could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the board of trustees by filing a written request with the superintendent in accordance with policy FNG (LOCAL).

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

Parent's Note after an Absence

When a student is absent from school, the student—upon returning to school—must bring a note, signed by the parent with the date of absences, phone number and reason for absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older. All excuses must be submitted to the office within 3 days of the absence and must be approved by the principal. Only 3 parent notes will be allowed per semester, all others will remain unexcused absences.

Doctor's Note after an Absence for Illness

A student attending any part of a school day who leaves for a doctor appointment and returns with a Doctor's note will not receive an absence for that missed school time. Upon return to school, a student absent for more than 5 consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. [See FEC (LOCAL).]

Driver License Attendance Verification

To obtain a driver license, a student between the ages of 16 and 18 must provide to the Texas Department of Public Safety a form obtained from the school verifying that the student has met the 90 percent attendance requirement for the semester preceding the date of application. The student can obtain this form at the Taft High School campus office.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The school counselor provides students and parent's information regarding academic programs to prepare for higher education and career choices. [For more information, see policies at EIF.] [See **Academic Counseling**]

AWARDS/HONORS

Each year awards will be given to overall outstanding students. The awards are presented at the Awards Assembly near the end of the school year.

Each grading period, those students who have excelled in the classroom will be acknowledged in the form of the Superintendent's, Principal's, or AB Honor Rolls.

The Superintendent's Honor Roll will be comprised of those students who make a grade of A (90+) in all subjects.

The Principal's Honor Roll will be awarded as A's (90+) and B's (80-90), with no more than two B's.

Only numerical grades will count toward Honor Roll in the elementary grades.

In grades 3-12, a student who receives 2 or more I's or any U's will not be placed on the Honor Roll.

BULLYING

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students directs written or verbal expressions or physical conduct against another student and the behavior results in harm to the student or the student's property, places a student in fear of harm to himself or his property, or is so severe that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit bullying and to respond to reports of bullying. [See FFI (LOCAL).]

CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS

The district offers career and technology programs in Manufacturing; Business and Information Technology; Human Services; Education and Training; Arts, A/V Technology and Communication, Agriculture and Health Science. Depending on needs/requests, career clusters may be added or removed. There are 16 career cluster options.

Taft ISD will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

CLASS RANK / TOP TEN PERCENT / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT

GPA

For GPA (class ranking) purposes, any course approved for state credit, shall be included in calculating GPA's, including band, choir, theatre arts, PE, and athletics. Any course credit recovered or completed using the districts online curriculum and any transfer course credits that are offered by Taft, will count towards GPA calculations.

GPA is officially run twice a year after the end of semester 1 and semester 2.

CALCULATION

The District shall include in the calculation of class rank grades earned in all high school credit courses taken.

EXCLUSIONS

The calculation of class rank shall exclude grades earned for local credits; a course for which a pass/fail grade is assigned; and credit awarded in a nonaccredited instructional setting.

WEIGHTED GRADE SYSTEM

The District shall categorize and weight courses as dual credit, honors (including gifted/talented, advanced placement, Pre-advanced placement), regular, and modified content in accordance with provisions of this policy.

WEIGHTED NUMERICAL GRADE AVERAGE

The District shall assign weights to grades earned in eligible courses and shall calculate a weighted numerical grade average in accordance with the following scale:

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>
Dual Credit	Add 10 GPA points to raw score
Honors	multiplied by 1.1
Regular	multiplied by 1

The District shall record unweighted numerical grades (Raw scores) on student transcripts.

TRANSFERRED GRADES

When a student transfers grades from an accredited school of properly documented and eligible courses, the District shall assign weight to those grades based on the categories and grade weight system used by the District if the same, similar, or equivalent courses are offered in the District. For GPA purposes only, weighted courses not offered at the District high school shall receive grade points on the regular scale.

Grades from courses taken at an unaccredited school shall not be used in the calculation of weighted grade average or class rank.

A student transferring letter grades shall have those grades converted to number grades using the following guidelines:

1. The mid-point, without rounding off, of the sending school's numeric range for a letter grade shall be used. Credit for grades below 70 awarded by the sending school shall be honored; however, no grade points for grades below 70 shall be awarded.
2. If the sending school does not have or will not furnish its grading scale, the following conversion shall be used:

A+ = 98	B+ = 88	C+ = 79	D+ = 73
A = 95	B = 85	C = 76	D = 71
A- = 92	B- = 82	C- = 74	D- = 70

LOCAL GRADUATION HONORS

For the purposes of determining honors to be conferred during graduation activities, the District shall calculate class rank using term grades available at the time of calculation after the 5th grading period, including spring dual credit grades. The official determination date shall be determined by the campus administrator.

For the purpose of applications to institutions of higher education, the District shall also calculate class ranking as required by state law. The District's eligibility criteria for local graduation honors shall apply only for local recognitions and shall not restrict class ranking for the purpose of automatic admission under state law. [See EIC (LEGAL)]

VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN

The valedictorian shall be the student with the highest grade point average based on the GPA average.

The salutatorian shall be the student with the second highest grade point average based on the GPA average.

To be eligible for such recognition, a student must:

1. Have been continuously enrolled in the District high school for the four semesters immediately preceding graduation, and be eligible to graduate at the end of the spring semester and
2. Have completed the Recommended Program or the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program for graduation.

BREAKING TIES

In case of a tie in weighted grade averages, the District shall compute the weighted grade average to a sufficient number of decimal places until the tie is broken.

If a tie for valedictorian is not broken by applying this method, the District shall recognize co-valedictorians, and no salutatorian shall be declared. However, the student with the most advanced and weighted courses shall be named the “official valedictorian” for highest honor graduate recognition and honors. If a tie for salutatorian is not broken by applying this method, the District shall recognize all students involved in the tie as sharing the honor and title.

AUTOMATIC ADMISSION

Each higher education institution [see Education Code 61.003(3)] shall admit an applicant for admission to the institution as an undergraduate student if the applicant:

1. Graduated with a grade point average in the top ten percent of the student’s high school graduating class in one of the two school years preceding the academic year for which the applicant is applying for admission [see CLASS RANK, below];
2. Graduated from a public high school in Texas accredited by a generally recognized accrediting organization; and
3. Submits an application before any application filing deadline established by the institution.

High school rank for students seeking automatic admission to a higher education institution on the basis of their class rank is determined and reported as follows:

1. Class rank shall be based on the end of the eleventh grade, middle of the twelfth grade, or at high school graduation, whichever is most recent at the application deadline.
2. The top ten percent of a high school class shall be rounded to the nearest whole number.
3. The student’s rank shall be reported by the applicant’s high school or school district as a specific number out of a specific number total class size.
4. Class rank shall be determined by the Texas school or school district from which the student graduated or is expected to graduate.
5. The student must be enrolled and complete their Junior and Senior year at Taft High School to be considered for Valedictorian or Salutatorian.

For two school years following his or her graduation, a district student who graduates in the top five to ten percent of his or her class, pending institution guidelines and acceptance, is eligible for automatic admission into four-year public universities and colleges in Texas if the student:

- Completes the Recommended or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program; or
- Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT.

Students and parents should contact the counselor for further information about the application process and deadlines. [For further information, see policies at EIC.]

EARLY GRADUATION

A student's class ranking shall be determined with the graduating class of the school year in which the student completes all requirements for a diploma, regardless of the number of years the student is enrolled in high school. For ranking purposes, a school year begins on the first day of the school year and ends the last day of summer school. A student wishing to graduate in fewer than four years shall complete and submit a written request through the school counselor's office approximately a year before their desired graduation date and before the start of the school year in which he/she plans to graduate. To be eligible to graduate early, the student shall complete all coursework and meet state testing requirements. If a student completes his/her graduation requirements early but did not request to be an early graduate as stated above, he/she will be ranked but will not be eligible for Top 10% recognition or honors.

CLASS SCHEDULES

Petty Elementary – PK-2 classes are self-contained; 3-5 are departmentalized
Junior High classes are scheduled in a 7 or 8 period day. High School students will be expected to have a minimum 8 period day. Exceptions will be determined by campus administration in collaboration with counseling staff.

COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES

Students in grades 9–12 may earn college credit, a maximum of 6 hours per student per semester. Any hours exceeding 6 hours per semester will be paid for by the student and parent/guardian before the end of the semester. If a student does not pass the course or has an unpaid balance, they will not be allowed to continue taking dual credit courses. Additionally students will be required to reimburse the district for the cost of any failed or dropped courses. She/he will not be allowed to enroll in an honors or dual credit course in that same subject area. If a student wishes to continue taking college credit hours after failing, they will be responsible for payment of half the tuition of those dual credit courses upon registration and payment in full by the completion of the course. Attendance requirements at any off campus class is determined by the campus of instruction. If the instructing campus holds classes on a day which is not a Taft High School day, the student must attend class. Transportation will be provided.

Del Mar College Contact information: High School College and Career Counselor 361-528-2636
Ext 3733

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

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

In general, the student or parent should submit a written complaint and request a conference with the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

COMPUTER RESOURCES

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these computer resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these resources; violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and their parents should be aware that an e-mail using district computer is not private and will be monitored by district staff. [For additional information, see policies at CQ.]

CONDUCT

Applicability of School Rules

As required by law, the board has adopted a *Student Code of Conduct* that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior—both on and off campus—and consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the *Student Code of Conduct*, as well as campus and classroom rules. In the event of any conflict between this handbook and the *Student Code of Conduct*, the *Student Code of Conduct* shall govern.

To achieve the best possible learning environment for all students, the *Student Code of Conduct* and other campus rules will apply whenever the interest of the district is involved, whether on or off school grounds, in conjunction with classes and school-sponsored activities.

Taft High School students may be issued Student Identification Cards. These identification cards may be required for various purposes. Replacement cost for an ID card is \$15 or a Saturday Service.

Corporal Punishment

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

Disruptions

As identified by law, disruptions include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.
- Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district.

Electronic Devices

No electronic devices will be permitted from the time the student arrives on campus, until they exit the building after the final bell. Any device must be turned off and cannot be visible or on their person. Students who are using Electronic Devices without authorization will result in confiscation of the device and result in a \$15 administrative fee.

High School: Students will be allowed to use electronic devices before/after school and during lunch. Students who are using Electronic Devices without authorization will result in confiscation of the device and result in a \$15 administrative fee. Students may work off the \$15 administrative fee with 2 hours of approved school based community service. Students who refuse to surrender the electronic devices when asked, shall be subject to additional consequences.

Any Electronic Device used on campus or at school sanctioned events to harass or instigate staff or students may be confiscated for investigative purposes. Abuse of Electronic Device directives will result in the loss of privileges.

****No Electronic Devices will be permitted during state testing. Secondary students caught with an Electronic Device during testing will receive an AEP placement. Elementary students will be placed in ISS ****

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess cell phones. The use of cell phones in locker rooms, athletics, gym, and restroom areas is strictly prohibited. During classroom instruction, Electronic Devices must be powered off and placed out of sight. Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the ***Student Code of Conduct*** and may include confiscation of

the device. The school may charge the owner for the release of certain telecommunications devices [See policy FNCE.]

Any electronic device that is confiscated may only be picked up after a \$15 fee is paid. If the student has a device confiscated three times, the item will be kept until the end of the school year.

Lost, Damaged, or Stolen Personal Items

Students are responsible for their own personal belongings while on campus or at a school-related or school-sponsored event. Students should be discouraged from bringing or wearing expensive clothing, sunglasses, or jewelry/watches to school. Taft ISD is not responsible for personal items which are lost, damaged, or stolen.

Social Events

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

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

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. Parents/Guardians shall pick up their child as soon as possible if the student exhibits symptoms of communicable conditions. A physician's statement may be required before a student is allowed to return to school.

Students are expected to be free of fever (temperatures less than 100 degrees) and free of communicable disease in order to attend school. Parents/guardian shall pick up their child as soon as possible if the child develops a fever (temperature greater than 100 degrees) at school. Parents/guardians are encouraged to keep their students home until the child is fever-free for 24 hours without anti-fever medication. This minimizes the spread of potentially contagious illnesses at school and encourages adequate rest and recuperation before the student returns to school.

The school nurse or the principal's office can provide information from the Department of State Health Services regarding these diseases.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

The district permits high school students to take correspondence courses—by mail or via the Internet—for credit toward high school graduation.

[For further information, see policies at EHDB

COUNSELING

Academic Counseling

Students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn more about course offerings, graduation requirements, and early graduation procedures. Each spring, students in grades 8 through 11 will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next school year and other information that will help them make the most of academic and vocational opportunities.

To plan for the future, each student should work closely with the counselor in order to enroll in the high school courses that best prepare him or her for attendance at a college, university, or training school, or for pursuit of some other type of advanced education. The counselor can also provide information about entrance exams and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission to state colleges and universities, financial aid, housing, and scholarships.

Personal Counseling

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues, or substance abuse. The counselor may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns. A student who wishes to meet with the counselor should request an appointment in the counselor's office.

Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment

The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent. Parental consent is not necessary when a psychological examination, test, or treatment is required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

[For more information, refer to FFE (LEGAL) and FFG (EXHIBIT).]

CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Taken the Course

Students in grades 8-12 may use credit by examination with prior instruction to demonstrate mastery to earn or to regain credit in selected academic courses with the prior approval of the appropriate administrator. Such examinations shall assess the student's mastery of the essential knowledge and skills and shall be approved by the Superintendent or designee. To be eligible to earn credit by examination, a student shall obtain written approval from the principal; demonstrate he or she has had prior instruction in the course obtain written approval from the parent or guardian; score at least a 70 in the course failed in order to gain credit by such examination. Prior instruction may include, for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, correspondence courses, or independent study supervised by a teacher. To receive credit, a student must score at least 70 on the examination. Passing scores earned on credit by examination shall be recorded in the student's academic achievement record. The examination taken will be recorded as a course attempted but will not count for grade point average (GPA) purposes.

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

A student may not use this exam, however, to regain eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities.

[For further information, see the counselor and policies EHDB

CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course for which the student has had no prior instruction. The dates on which exams are scheduled during the 202017-2018 school year include:

Dates Scheduled:

A student will earn credit with a passing score of at least 85 on the exam. No Credit by Exam scores will be used in calculations of GPA unless over 90.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the principal no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. The district may honor a request by a parent to administer a test on a date other than the published dates. If the district agrees to administer a test other than the one chosen by the district, the parent must purchase a test from a university approved by the State Board of Education. [For further information, see EEJB (EHDB

Placement or credit granted based on the score obtained from the assessment shall be recorded on the permanent school record for grades 1-8 and on the academic achievement record for grades 9-12. If the student passes the credit by exam with a 90 or better the course grade will be computed in the student's grade point average earned and the actual grade earned shall be recorded in the student's academic achievement record (AAR) unless the parent/guardian declines credit in written form within 30 days of being notified.

DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION

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

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. [See policy FFH]

Dating Violence

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe,

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

Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to, physical or sexual assaults, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the student 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.

Discrimination

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

Harassment

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office or on the district's Web site at www.taftisd.net.

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

Sexual Harassment

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

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

In accordance with House Bill 1041, enacted by the 81st Texas Legislature, the District adopted and implemented a policy addressing the sexual abuse of children. The policy is included in the district improvement plan. [See FFG policy]

The district will not provide instruction in human sexuality to district students.

Retaliation

Retaliation of a student occurs when a student receives threats from another student or an employee or when an employee imposes an unjustified punishment or unwarranted grade reduction. Retaliation does not include petty slights and annoyances from other students or negative comments from a teacher that are justified by a student's poor academic performance in the classroom.

Retaliation against a person, who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is prohibited. A person who makes a false claim or offers false statements or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment is also prohibited.

Retaliation against a school employee for any reason is prohibited. Students found to retaliate against an employee will receive mandatory DAEP placement for a semester.

Reporting Procedures

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

Investigation of Report

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law. Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated. The district will notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct by an adult associated with the district.

In the event prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parents of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy.

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

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

DISCRIMINATION

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**]

DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS

School Materials

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

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with the prior approval of the principal. Such items may include school posters, brochures, flyers, etc.
[See **Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes**]

Non-school Materials...from students

Students must obtain prior approval from the principal before posting, circulating, or distributing written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. The decision regarding approval will be made in five school days.

The principal has designated a location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing by students. See the school principal for further information. [See policies at FNAA.]

A student may appeal a principal's decision in accordance with policy FNG (LOCAL). Any student who posts non-school material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*. Materials displayed without the principal's approval will be removed.

Non-school Materials...from others

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by policies at GKDA. To be considered for distribution, any non-school material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the principal for prior review. The principal will approve or reject the materials within five school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies at DGBA, FNG, or GF.]

Prior review will not be required for:

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

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

DRESS AND GROOMING

The district's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following:

Dress Code Policy

**All Pre-Kindergarten through eighth grade will be required to follow the dress code policy:
(Board Policy FNCA Local)**

1. All District students in prekindergarten–grade 8 shall be required to wear clothing as described by the Board.
2. Clothing shall be the appropriate size for each student (not too small and not too large).
3. Shirts shall be hunter green, gray, black, or white polo style, with no logos and no more than three buttons. Shirts shall be tucked in at all times. District-approved spirit shirts may be worn any day and must follow the colors of uniform shirts (hunter green, gray, black, or white).
4. Undershirts may be worn under the polo shirts. They must be white, tucked in, and with no logos.
5. Slacks, shorts, skirts, skorts, capris, and jumpers shall be dark khaki in color or denim and sit at the waist and shall not sag or be baggy. Denim shall not have designs, be tattered or torn, and shall be blue jean or black in color.
6. Skirts, shorts, skorts, and jumpers are to be worn to the knee or just above the knee (no more than 2.5 inch or dollar bill height) to be of appropriate length. Wind, basketball, or boxer shorts shall not allowed for any student.
7. Belts shall be worn appropriately at all times with all slacks and shorts and shall not be hanging in front of pants. Prekindergarten shall be exempt from wearing belts and tucking in shirts.
8. Students may wear regular dress shoes or tennis shoes. No sandals, Crocs, or flip flops shall be allowed.
9. Students may wear hoodies, jackets, or coats with no inappropriate logos or wording, and of the appropriate size. Students shall be allowed to wear sweatshirts and turtleneck shirts in the approved colors. The sweatshirt shall be worn over the uniform shirt with the collar of the uniform shirt showing. Turtleneck shirts shall be worn under the uniform shirt.
10. Junior high cheerleaders shall be allowed to wear their uniforms on game day or special days designed by the principal.
11. All jewelry shall be worn inside the shirt.
12. Writing on clothing shall be considered a logo.
13. Leggings shall be considered undergarments and must be covered by a dress code-approved outer garment of appropriate length. Leggings shall be solid in color (black, white, grey, or hunter green).

14. Caps, hats, or hoods from jackets or sweatshirts cannot be worn indoors at any time.
15. Sunglasses may not be worn indoors.
16. Mouth grills may not be worn on any campus.
17. Boys shall not be allowed to wear earrings. Additionally, all students shall be prohibited from having visible piercings (eye, tongue, navel, nose, and the like). Covering those items with bandages is not acceptable.
18. All students' hair shall be kept neat, clean, and well-groomed. Extreme hair styles, such as Mohawks, shall not be allowed. Hair shall be kept out of the face. Boys' hair shall be cut around the ear and not exceed the top collar of a collared shirt. Two-tone or unnatural colored hair shall not be allowed.
19. The discretion of the principal or designee shall prevail.

BOYS DRESS CODE

Slacks	Dark Khaki, Denim Blue Jeans or Denim Black Jeans
Shirts	Hunter Green, Gray, Black or White
Belts	Required on Garments with Belt Loops
Shorts	Dark Khaki
Shoes	Dress Shoes or Tennis Shoes

GIRLS DRESS CODE

Slacks	Dark Khaki, Denim Blue Jeans or Denim Black Jeans
Shirts	Hunter Green, Gray, Black or White
Belts	Required on Garments with Belt Loops
Shorts/Jumpers/Skorts/Capris	Dark Khaki
Shoes	Dress Shoes or Tennis Shoes

High School

1. Student appearance will be judged by neatness, cleanliness, and appropriateness.
2. Special dress and appearance codes may be approved for special cases.
3. Male students' faces are to be free of facial hair. Sideburns will not be below the ear lobe. Eye brows must not be shaved vertically.
4. All students' hair shall be kept neat, clean, and well-groomed. Extreme hair styles such as Mohawks are not allowed. Extreme is defined as any presentation of hair style (boy or girl) that causes a distraction in either style or is an unnatural color. Hair coloring is limited to only natural hair colors.
5. All shirts/dresses must have sleeves. No shoulders or undergarments should be exposed.

6. High school students' shirts may be untucked but the torso of the student must be covered while standing or sitting. A tucked in undergarment must be worn with shirts/blouses that do not cover the torso.
7. Appropriate shoes will be worn.
8. No Baggy or Sagging pants will be allowed. Pants must be worn appropriately at the waist.
9. At administrator's discretion, male students shall be allowed to wear appropriate earrings.
10. Caps, hats or hoods from jackets or sweatshirts cannot be worn indoors at any time. Items will be taken up and returned at the end of the day. Items which are part of a uniform will be returned to the sponsor at the end of the day. Repeated offenses may result in confiscation until the end of the semester.
11. Sunglasses may not be worn indoors.
12. Mouth grills may not be worn on any campus.
13. Inappropriate tattoos must be covered at school and school-sanctioned activities.
14. All visible body piercing jewelry such as navel, nose, tongue, eyebrow, etc. is prohibited. Covering of such items is not allowed. Repeat occurrences will result in confiscation of the jewelry for the remainder of the school year.
15. House shoes, pajamas, and blankets are not appropriate attire and are not permitted at school.
16. Leggings are not allowed as a substitute for pants or other bottom garments.
17. Jeans with holes or rips must not reveal skin above the knee.
18. Dresses and Skirts must be of an appropriate length. The campus administrator will determine appropriateness if necessary.
19. When the student is representing Taft ISD at a school-sanctioned activity, this student appearance guide will apply.
20. The discretion of the principal or his/her designee will prevail.

The principal, in cooperation with the sponsor, coach, or other person in charge of an extracurricular activity, may regulate the dress and grooming of students who participate in the activity. Students who violate those standards may be removed or excluded from the activity for a period determined by the principal, sponsor, or coach and may be subject to other disciplinary action. (See FO, FOA, FOD)

Any mode of dress, appearance, or behavior that disrupts the peaceful operation of the school is considered minor disruptive behavior. Campus administrators will have the discretion to determine inappropriate dress or appearance. (i.e. Haircuts, hair color, eyebrows, clothing, etc.)

If the principal determines that a student's grooming/dress violates the dress code, the student shall be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school. This may include requiring a change of dress. However, if an immediate change of dress is not available, the student will report to ISS for the remainder of the day. At Taft High School classroom teachers may supply the student with "spirit shirts" that must be worn over the restricted items of clothing. A fine of \$5 will be charged if the "spirit shirt" is not returned at the end of the school day. If not corrected, the student shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. If it becomes necessary, the principal or delegated school official will counsel with individual students and their parents/guardian concerning the appearance of the student. If counseling does not produce the desired results, the principal will take whatever action he/she deems necessary to insure appropriateness, health, safety, and good taste.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

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

Eligibility for participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association overseeing inter-district competition. The following requirements apply to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than an advanced placement or international baccalaureate course; or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or a foreign language—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to 10 absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum of 5 absences for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of 2 absences for state competition. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.
- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.
- On the day of an extra-curricular activity, a participating student must not have any unexcused absence(s).

Please note: Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior—including consequences for misbehavior—that are stricter than those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the *Student Code of Conduct* or by local policy will apply **in addition** to any consequences specified by the organization’s standards of behavior.

[For further information, see policies at FM and FO.]

FEES

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.

- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Musical instrument and uniform maintenance, when uniforms and instruments are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credits that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school. [See **Buses and Other School Vehicles**]
- A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit because of absences and whose parent chooses the program in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the principal. [For further information, see policies at FP.]

FUND-RAISING

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the principal at least 10 school days before the event. [For further information, see policies at FJ and GE.]

GRADE CLASSIFICATION

After the ninth grade, students are classified according to the number of credits earned toward graduation.

<u>Credits Earned</u>	<u>Classification</u>
6.0 to 11.5	Grade 10 (Sophomore)
12.0 to 17.5	Grade 11 (Junior)
18.0 & higher	Grade 12 (Senior)

Students are only promoted once per year; at the end of each school year. Only three year graduates will be promoted after the first semester of their junior year if they have acquired 18 credits.

GRADING GUIDELINES

Prekindergarten and Kindergarten: Mastery of TEKS objectives should be reported each six weeks through the use of a mastery check list.

In grades 1–12, achievement is reported to parents as a numeric grade based on the following:

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
0 – 69	F

In grades 1-5, E, S, I, and U grades will be assigned for music/fine arts and physical education.

GRADUATION

Requirements for a Diploma

To receive a high school diploma from the district, a student must successfully complete the required number of credits and pass a statewide exit-level exam.

The five End of Course (EOC) test, required for students to graduate, covers English language arts 1 & 2, Algebra, Biology, and US History. A student who does not pass these assessments will have additional opportunities to take the test.

Graduation Programs

The district offers the graduation programs listed below. All students entering grade 9 are required to enroll in the Foundation Program + Endorsements or Distinguished Level of Achievement. Permission to enroll in the Foundation Program will be granted only if an agreement is reached among the student, the student’s parent or person standing in parental relation, and the counselor or appropriate administrator. [See policy EIF(LEGAL).]

Anyone entering High School on or before the 2011-2012 school year, must meet the following credit requirements for graduation:

- Minimum Program 22 credits
- Recommended Program 26 credits
- Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program 26 credits

Anyone entering High School during or after the 2014-2015 school year, must meet the following credit requirements for graduation:

- Foundation Program 22 credits
- Foundation Program + Endorsements 26 credits
- Distinguished Level of Achievement 26 credits

Every student has the option of choosing to graduate on the Foundation Program at the student’s written request and with the principal’s approval. Please be aware that not all courses are offered at every secondary campus in the district. A student who wants to take a course not offered at his or her regular campus should contact the counselor about other alternatives. If the parents of at least 22 students request a course not currently offered in the required curriculum, other than fine arts or career and technology, the district may offer the course for the following year.

Certificates of Coursework Completion

A certificate of coursework completion will not be issued to a senior student who successfully completes state and local credit requirements for graduation but fails to perform satisfactorily on the exit-level tests.

Students with Disabilities

Upon the recommendation of the admission, review, and dismissal committee, a student with disabilities may be 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.

[See FMH (LEGAL)]

Graduation Activities

Graduation activities will include:

- Baccalaureate Ceremony
- Graduation Ceremony
- Chemical Free Party

Graduation Expenses

Because students and parents will incur expenses in order to participate in the traditions of graduation—such as the purchase of invitations, senior ring, cap and gown, and senior picture—both student and parent should monitor progress toward completion of all requirements for graduation. The expenses often are incurred in the junior year or first semester of the senior year. [See **Student Fees**]

Harassment

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**]

Gang-Free Zones

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next high category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a location in, on, or within 1000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS

Physical Activity for Students in Elementary and Middle School

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

Students in middle or junior high school shall engage in a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters OR at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within a two-week period for at least four semesters.

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

School Health Advisory Council

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council held 3 meetings and will have at least four meetings this school year. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available from the Taft ISD Food Director, Margie Longoria. [See also policies at BDF and EHAA.]

Physical Fitness Assessment

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to principal to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

Vending Machines

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

Other Health-Related Matters

Tobacco Prohibited

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of tobacco products by students and others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the *Student Code of Conduct* and policies at FNCD and GKA.]

Asbestos Management Plan

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, is available in the Taft ISD Maintenance Office. If you have any questions, please contact Ismael Olivarez, 361-528-2636 Ext 2469.

Pest Management Plan

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to

be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Ismael Olivarez, 361-528-2636 Ext 2469.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, Parent Involvement at 361-528-2636.

HOMEWORK

Students will be assigned homework by their assigned teacher(s). For more information please contact your student's teacher(s)

IMMUNIZATION

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco/affidavit.shtm>.

The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are: diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella (German measles), mumps, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis (polio), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, varicella (chicken pox), and MCV4 (Meningococcal vaccine).. The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the Department of State Health Services. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition. [For further information, see policy FFAB (LEGAL) and the Department of State Health Services Web site: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm>.]

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Questioning of Students

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

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

Students Taken Into Custody

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

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.

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

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

Notification of Law Violations

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been arrested or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.

[For further information, see policy GRA (LEGAL) and GRAA (LEGAL).]

MAKEUP WORK

Routine and In-depth Makeup Work Assignments

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

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher. [For further information, see policy EIAB (LOCAL).]

A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

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

DAEP or In-school Suspension Makeup Work

A student removed to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) during the school year will have an opportunity to complete, before the beginning of the next school year, coursework needed to fulfill the student's high school graduation requirements. The district may provide the opportunity to complete the coursework through an alternative method, including a correspondence course, distance learning, digital curriculum, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FOCA (LEGAL).]

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, distance learning, or summer school. [See policy FEA (LEGAL).]

Students and their parents are encouraged to discuss options with the teacher or counselor to ensure the student completes all work required for the course or grade level.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

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

- Only authorized employees, in accordance with policies at FFAC, may administer:
- Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.
- Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.

- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

For the safety and protection of all students, medication will not be sent home with the student. When the period for administering the medication expires, the medication must be picked up by the parent, legal guardian or other responsible adult.

- In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only:
 - In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district's medical advisor; and
 - When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district's form.

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

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

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

Psychotropic Drugs

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

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate. [For further information, see policies at FFAC.]

NONTRADITIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

[See **Requirements for a Diploma**]

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS

For information contact Amber Surz at 361-528-2636.

PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE

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 principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge.

One minute of silence will 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. [See policy EC(LEGAL) for more information.]

PRAYER

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

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

In grades 1-12, promotion and course credit shall be based on mastery of the curriculum. Expectations and standards for promotion shall be established for each grade level, content area, and course and shall be coordinated with compensatory/accelerated services.

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

Grade-level advancement for students in grades 9-12 shall be earned by course credits. [See EI]

Promotion standards and appropriate assessment and acceleration options, as established by individualized education programs (IEP) or grade-level classification of students eligible for special education, shall be determined by the ARD committee.

In addition, at certain grade levels a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) in order to meet graduation requirements.

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

- In order to be promoted to grade 9, students enrolled in grade 8 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 8 assessments in English.

Parents of a student in grades 5 or 8 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve

performance. Such students will have two additional opportunities to take the test. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policies at EIE.]

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

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student in a middle school or beyond who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment or is determined by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9. The PGP will be designed and implemented by a guidance counselor, teacher, or other staff member designated by the principal. The plan will, among other items, identify the student's educational goals, address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and outline an intensive instruction program for the student. For additional information, see the counselor or principal. [See policy EIF (LEGAL).]

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

Because class time is important, doctor's appointments should be scheduled, if possible, at times when the student will not miss instructional time. For student safety, in order for a student to leave campus, they must be checked out by a parent or guardian at the front office. Students will no longer be allowed to leave the building without this happening. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day. Visitors must show identification and sign in and out.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student should receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent.

REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

Report cards with each student's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are printed and sent home to parents at least once every grading period.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period parents will be given a written progress report. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent may request to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. [See **Working Together** on how to schedule a conference.]

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

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

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report may state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in a class or subject.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and should be returned to the school within 5 days.

RETALIATION

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**]

SAFETY

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

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

Accident Insurance

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

Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies

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

Fire Drill Bells

3 bells	leave the building
1 bell	halt; stand at attention
2 bells	return to the classroom

Tornado Drill Bells

1 continuous bell	move quietly but quickly to the designated locations
2 bells	return to the classroom

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school would need to have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the school nurse to update any information that the nurse or the teacher needs to know.

Emergency School-Closing Information

If schools close due to emergency information will be available at:

Television	Radio
KIII Channel 3	KOUL
KRIS Channel 6	KEYS
KZTV Channel 10	C101
	KRAD

SAT, ACT, AND OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS

Many colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. Students are encouraged to talk with the counselor early during their junior year to determine the appropriate exam to take; these exams are usually taken at the end of the junior year. (Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test, such as the Compass, Accuplacer or other TSI tests).

Students failing to attend pre-scheduled tests which the district has paid for, will be required to reimburse the district for all costs.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

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.

Students are not permitted in athletic facilities (gym, locker rooms, etc.), shop, lab areas, and band facilities without written permission or direct supervision. Students will not have access to facilities earlier than 7 am unless prior arrangements have been made.

Areas and times will be designated by the campus principal.

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.

Conduct Before and After School

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

Use of Hallways During Class Time

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

Cafeteria Services

The district participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced breakfast and lunches daily. Information about a student's participation is confidential. See principal or cafeteria personnel to apply. Outside food and drinks are only allowed to be consumed during a student's breakfast or lunch period in designated areas. Parents dropping off food must leave it with the front office. Students may pick it up during his/her designated lunch. School drinks may only be in approved clear containers with lids and will be allowed at teacher's discretion. Taft High School is a closed campus. Parents must sign students out for lunch. Students, eighteen years or older, may be allowed to sign out with administrator permission.

The district follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day. [For more information, see policy CO (LEGAL).]

Library Media Center

The mission of TAFT ISD's School Library Media Centers is for its students to become effective global learners and users of today's information resources in its varied formats. District library media centers will promote information literacy in all its formats creating a "student-centered" library media program that is based on three central ideas: collaboration, leadership and technology." The Library Media Center will serve its community by enabling "students to achieve their potential and fully participate" in society as active information users and lifelong learners. The library program will foster creativity by allowing users to "produce new information and create products and presentations that communicate ideas efficiently and effectively."

By supporting TAFT school curriculum, the district's library media centers will provide for a thriving learning environment that stimulates the intellect. The district library media program resources and activities that supply all user groups with information access in an expedient manner. The School Library Program: Standards and Guidelines for Texas, <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/schoollibs/sls/index.html> serve to guide in the development of library media centers and for the planning of effective student centered library instruction.

The school library media center is open for independent student use during the following times with a teacher permit:

Petty Elementary: Monday thru Friday 7:30 - 3:30

Junior High: Monday thru Friday 7:45 - 4:00

High School: 7:45 – 4:15 Monday thru Thursday
4:30-5:30 Monday thru Thursday - September thru May
7:30 – 3:56 Friday

Please contact your school library media specialist to learn more about the services and programs at your campus.

Meetings of Non-curriculum Related Groups

Student-organized, student-led non-curriculum related groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the principal before and after school. These groups must comply with the requirements of policy FNAB (LOCAL).

A list of these groups is available in the principal's office.

SEARCHES

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

Students' Desks and Lockers

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

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

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

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

Vehicles on Campus

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable cause to do so, with or without the permission of the student. A student has full responsibility for the security and content of his or her vehicle and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. All students parking on campus will be required to request a parking permit through the office and will be displayed on the front upper passenger side of the vehicle. Students parked out of compliance will be subject to removal of the vehicle from school grounds at the parent's/student's expense. [See also the *Student Code of Conduct*.]

The student parking lot is off limits immediately following arrival to school and during the school day. A student must have administrative approval to visit the parking areas during the school day. Teachers are not allowed to issue passes to parking areas. This rule applies equally to bicycles, motor scooters, motorcycles, and any other type of privately owned vehicle. Students are not to loiter in the parking lots.

Trained Dogs

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

Metal Detectors

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

Drug-Testing:

The random drug testing program shall apply to all district students in grades 7-12 who may choose to participate in a competitive extracurricular activity. Competitive extracurricular activity means a student extracurricular activity:

1. Which is sanctioned by the Texas University Interscholastic League; or
2. Which otherwise has its own rules and requirement for participating students which do not apply to the student body as a whole, has a faculty sponsor or coach monitoring the students for compliance with various rules dictated by the clubs and activities, and, in relation to competition with other school or districts involves occasional off-campus travel, and communal undress.

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

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the school counselor.

STEROIDS

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for medical use only, and only a physician can prescribe use.

Body building, muscle enhancement, or the increase of muscle bulk or strength through the use of an anabolic steroid or human growth hormone by a healthy student is not a valid medical use and is a criminal offense.

Students participating in UIL athletic competition may be subject to random steroid testing. More information on the UIL testing program may be found on the UIL Web site at http://www.uil.utexas.edu/athletics/health/steroid_information.html.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Summer school will be offered by Taft ISD. Notification of time and location will be made by the campus principal.

STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness)

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state-mandated tests (such as STAAR or EOC (End of Course Exams) in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8th
- Algebra 1 (EOC)
- Reading, annually in grades 3–8th
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7
- English I and English II (EOC)
- Social studies in grades 8
- US History (EOC)
- Science in grades 5, 8Biology (EOC)
- TAKS ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies exit level
- Any other subject and grade required by federal law

[See policy EKB (LEGAL).]

TARDINESS

Petty

Students will be considered tardy if they arrive at school after 8:00am. Students accumulating 5 or more tardies will not be eligible for perfect attendance.

Junior High School/High School

Students will be considered tardy if they arrive to each class after the bell rings.

Taft ISD encourages students and parents to monitor attendance using the Skyward website and phone app.

Students with multiple tardies will receive additional consequences at administrative discretion based on addressing the cause of the tardiness. Tardies may be used in determination eligibility for incentives and awards.

TEXTBOOKS

State-approved textbooks are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. A student who is issued a damaged book should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return a book issued by the school, including electronic textbooks and all technological equipment in an acceptable condition, loses the right to free textbooks until the book is returned or paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided textbooks for use at school during the school day. If a textbook is not returned in an acceptable condition or paid for, the District may withhold the student's academic records for out-of-District requests only.

TRANSFERS

[See **Other Parental Rights**, on page 3, and **Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education** for other transfer options.]

TRANSPORTATION

School-Sponsored Trips

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. The principal, however, may make an exception if the parent makes a written request that the student be released to the parent or to another adult designated by the parent.

Buses and Other School Vehicles

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted at the school.

A parent may also designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, you may contact 361-528-2636 Ext 2222.

See the *Student Code of Conduct* for provisions regarding transportation to the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP).

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding in district vehicles, 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 bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop nearest home.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the bus, van, or its equipment.

- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus or van.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco on school buses.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts.
- Wait for the driver’s signal upon leaving the bus or van and before crossing in front of the vehicle.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*; bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

VANDALISM

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

VIDEO CAMERAS

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

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

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

General Visitors

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the principal’s office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and only so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

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

Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students

On High School Career Day the district invites representatives from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present

information to interested students. The time date and place for the career day will be announced in the local media.

WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL

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

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

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

GLOSSARY

Accelerated instruction is an intensive supplemental program designed to address the needs of an individual student in acquiring the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level.

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

Alternative assessment instrument, developed by the state, may be given to students in special education and students identified as limited English proficient.

ARD is the admission, review, and dismissal committee convened for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student's parents are part of the committee.

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

DAEP stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the *Student Code of Conduct*. Students in the DAEP will be separated from students not assigned to the program. The DAEP will focus instruction on English language arts, mathematics, science, history, and self-discipline, and provide for students' educational and behavior needs, as well as supervision and counseling.

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

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

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

NCLB Act is the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) is recommended for all students entering grade 9 and is required by state law for any student in middle school or higher who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

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

Section 504 is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined by an ARD committee to be eligible for special education services, appropriate regular educational services will be provided.

State-mandated tests are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Successful performance sometimes is a condition of promotion, and passing the grade 11 exit-level test is a condition of graduation. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests if necessary for promotion or graduation.

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

TAKS is short for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, the state's standardized achievement test currently given to students in certain subjects in grades 3–11.

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

MEMORANDUM

TO: All District's Parents and Students
FROM: Mr. Jose Lopez, Superintendent
Mr. Ricardo Trevino, Executive Director for Human Resources
DATE: August 28, 2017
RE: Student Code of Conduct and Student Handbook (2017-2018)

Welcome to another great year at Taft Independent School District! As you know, every school year, the District distributes a Student Code of Conduct and a Student Handbook. These documents are critically important as they contain most of the District's rules and regulations in regards to academic and disciplinary matters. In the interest of efficiency, please be advised that the Student Code of Conduct and Handbook will be made available this year in the office of all campus Principals. You are more than welcomed to view the Student Code of Conduct and Handbook at any time during the school year. Furthermore, if you would like a printed copy, please visit our website at www.taftisd.net and you can down load it from the website in the convenience of your home. You may also request a printed copy from the campus Principal.

Parent/Guardian, please sign and return to your student's campus. Thank you for your attention and support of all District endeavors.

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX II

Use of Student Work in District Publications

Occasionally, the Taft ISD wishes to display or publish student artwork or projects on the district's Web site and in district publications. The district agrees to only use these student projects in this manner.

Parent: Please circle one of the choices below:

I, parent of _____ (student's name), **(do give)** **(do not give)** the district permission to use my child's artwork or special project on the district's Web site and in district publications.

Parent signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX III

NOTICE REGARDING FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows the procedures for requesting the information unless the parent or guardian objects to the release of the directory information about the student. If you do not want Taft ISD to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing by September 26, 2016. TAFT ISD has designated the following information as directory information: student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, degrees, honors and awards received, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, grade level, most recent educational institution attended, and participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and the weight and height of members of athletic teams.

- I consent to the release of my child's COMPLETE directory information.**
- I do not consent to the release of my child's COMPLETE directory information.**
- I consent only to the release of my child's directory information for the limited school-sponsored purpose of publication in the campus yearbook, campus directory, or district publication.**

The parent may request to withhold specific directory information by submitting a request in writing to the campus principal

Student' Name _____ Date _____

Parent's signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX IV

Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education

Federal law requires districts receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et. seq.) to provide a military recruiter or an institution of higher education, on request, the name, address, and telephone number of secondary school students enrolled in the district, unless the parent has advised the district not to release information to these types of requestors without the parent's prior written consent. [See **Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education** on page 12 for more information.]

Parent: Please complete the following only if you do not want your child's information released to a military recruiter or an institution of higher education without your prior consent.

I, parent of _____ (*student's name*), request that the district **not** release my child's name, address, and telephone number to a military recruiter or institutions of higher education upon their request without my prior written consent.

Parent signature _____

Date _____

Appendix V

Requirements to obtain a Parking Permit:

- The Taft ISD Police Department will issue parking permits to students and applicable faculty.
- *Students driving to school are subject to the district's drug testing policy; Refer to the district handbook for information:* FNF (Local): STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES: INTERROGATIONS AND SEARCHES.
- To obtain a parking permit, the driver must complete a parking permit form, present a valid driver's license and proof of auto insurance with student's name on it as an insured driver, and submit to drug testing if applicable.
- There is no fee for the parking permit.
- A fee of \$5.00 will be required for the replacement of a lost/misplaced permit.

Parking Permit Rules:

- Permit parking will be enforced during school hours.
- The permit is only valid to the person it is assigned.
- Permits used by unauthorized persons will be voided and the person assigned the permit will have their parking privileges revoked. The vehicle in violation may be removed at the vehicle owner's expense.

Authorized student parking lot:

- *Student parking is located off of McIntyre Avenue @ Rincon on the front side of the High School Campus.*
- The rear parking lot located off of McIntyre Avenue by New Gym, is reserved for faculty ONLY.
- The rear parking off of Victoria Avenue is reserved for band practice and faculty parking and deliveries ONLY.
- Students parking in unauthorized areas will be subject to disciplinary action by the school and the vehicle may be removed from the unauthorized area at the vehicle owner's expense.

Display of Permit:

- The permit must be displayed on front window.
- The permit number must face the front of the vehicle and not be obstructed.
- If the permit is obstructed and unreadable, the vehicle may be removed from the property at the owner's expense.
- The permit must be displayed while parking in the designated parking area.
- Only students with permits will be allowed to park their vehicles in the designated student parking lot.
- Vehicles parked without a valid permit may be removed at the vehicle owner's expense.

Lost/Misplaced/Stolen parking Permits:

- Permits reported Lost, Misplaced or Stolen will be voided and become INVALID.
- Any vehicle displaying a voided parking permit will be removed from the school's property at the owner's expense.

Revocation of Permits:

- Parking privileges may be revoked by the Campus Principal and/or the Taft ISD Police Department for, but not limited to violations of the student code of conduct and other parking violations and Safety Concerns.

SPECIAL NOTICE: To ensure the safety and security of the students and faculty of the Taft Independent School District, these rules will be enforced and are subject to change. Notification of changes will be given to the permit holder.

Taft Independent School District
Student Parking Permit Form 2017-2018

Leave Blank Department Use Only	
Permit#: _____	
DL <input type="checkbox"/>	Ins. <input type="checkbox"/>
Submitted to D.T.	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Date: _____	
Verified By: _____	

Name: _____ **Driver License:** _____
State/ License #

Address: _____ **Phone No.:** _____
Physical Address Only

Info: _____

Vehicle Information – Primary

Make: _____ **Model:** _____ **Year:** _____
Color: _____ **LP#:** _____

Vehicle Information - Secondary

Make: _____ **Model:** _____ **Year:** _____
Color: _____ **LP#:** _____

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
 INTERROGATION AND SEARCHES

FNF
 (LOCAL)

TAFT INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
 DRUG TESTING AUTHORIZATION FORM

Date: _____
 Student's Name: _____ Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Taft Independent School District Drug Testing Policy. I understand that I will be asked to provide a urine sample for drug analysis. I consent to any such testing conducted as part of the drug testing policy, and I agree that I will not refuse to provide a urine sample for drug analysis, if requested by the Taft Independent School District.

Student's Signature: _____ Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____

NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT IS VALID FOR THE 2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR.