



The Texas Girls School Student/Parent Handbook

2025–2026 School Year

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Welcome to The Texas Girls School

Dear Students and Parents,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Principal, teachers, and other school staff, welcome! We wish this year to be an especially productive experience for each student. For this to happen, we all have to work together: students, parents, and staff. This Parent/Student Handbook is designed to help us accomplish that goal.

This Handbook contains information that both students and parents need for reference during the school year.

We have attempted to make the language as straightforward as possible; however, a couple of words should be defined. Please be aware that the term "parent" is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume a school-related responsibility for a student. Also, the term "campus" is used to refer to school property as well as the geographic area within 300 feet of school property as measured from any point on the real property boundary line. Thus, to prohibit an activity on "campus" is to prohibit the activity on school property and within 300 feet of school property.

This Handbook contains information regarding school policy and procedures, health and safety, academics, and grading. State Law for Student Code of Conduct, parental rights, as well as computer resources, electronic communication devices, and the school grievance policy.

Please be aware that this Handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Policy changes that affect Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, the school website, text messaging, and other communications. **In case of conflict between Board Policy and any provision of this Handbook, the provision that was most recently adopted by the Board of Directors will be followed.**

Please review this entire Handbook and keep it as a reference during this school year. Please take the time to look over the information provided. If you have any questions about the material in this Handbook, please contact the school office. Understanding this information will assist you on the path to success.

Sincerely,

Dana Stuart Browning
Founder and Principal/Superintendent

Important Contacts

The Texas Girls School Campus

Phone: (512) 360-0098

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School Leadership

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1. The Texas Girls School General Information

1.1. Mission

The Texas Girls School's mission is to challenge and nurture young women to thrive in future global markets through personalized STEM advanced academics.

Through a supportive small school and single-gender environment, project-based learning, and STEM advanced academics, we prepare all girls to excel in the local and international economy by cultivating a world-class education of career and college readiness skills.

1.2. About The Texas Girls School

Our Texas-First and Girls-First program is built around the TRAIL values—Texas Identity, Relationships, Advancing Women in STEM, Intentional Growth, and Liveliness. These pillars shape our students into high-impact women.

T – *Texas Identity through Our Shared Science, History & Culture*

By exploring Texas' science, history, and culture, students connect local knowledge to global ideas. Courses like Texas Ecology and Texas Night Sky offer unique, place-based learning in engineering and environmental science.

R – *Relationships*

In our supportive, all-girls setting, students build strong bonds and a sense of belonging. Small class sizes foster meaningful discussion, risk-taking, and confident leadership.

A – *Advancing Women in STEM*

Hands-on STEM pathways prepare students for real-world problem solving. Project-based learning, advanced coursework, and capstone experiences develop critical thinking and innovation.

I – *Intentional Growth*

We guide students to set goals and reflect on their progress. Growth is holistic—academic, personal, and creative—fostering self-awareness, purpose, and confidence.

L – *Liveliness*

Joy, wellness, and balance are central to our school culture. Flexible teaching, vibrant arts and extracurriculars, and a wellness-first mindset ensure students and staff thrive together.

1.3. What is a Charter School?

Charter schools were authorized by the Texas Legislature in 1995 to provide an alternative to traditional public schools. Open-enrollment charter schools are, by choice, public schools that have the flexibility to adapt to the educational needs of individual students, and often provide a personalized learning environment that promotes greater student achievement. In exchange for some autonomy, charter schools have increased accountability and must meet the testing standards dictated by the state.

Among other things, Texas Charter schools are tasked with: a) improving student learning, b) increasing the choice of learning opportunities within the public school system; c) establishing a new form of accountability for public schools, and d) encouraging different and innovative learning methods.

Funding

Charter schools receive state funds based on the average daily attendance of students (same as traditional public schools); however, they do not receive funds from local tax revenue and the majority, including Texas charters, do not receive state facilities funding. Texas Education Agency (TEA) data indicates that charter schools receive approximately \$1000 - \$1200 less in total revenue per pupil than traditional public schools. In the State of Texas, the funding for students follows the student. Therefore, a school is funded based upon the children that attend that school.

1.4. Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Texas Girls School does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex or gender, disability, or age in providing educational services, activities, and programs, including vocational and career technology programs. The Texas Girls School complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"); Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and any other legally protected classification or status protected by applicable law.

As required by Title IX, The Texas Girls School does not (and is required not to) discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. This non-discrimination requirement applies to admission to and employment with The Texas Girls School. Inquiries into issues related to Title IX may be referred to The Texas Girls School Title IX Coordinator (identified below), to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

Any questions or concerns about The Texas Girls School's compliance with these federal programs should be brought to the attention of the following persons designated as being responsible for coordinating compliance with these requirements:

- The Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding sex-based discrimination, is the Dean of Students, students@texasgirlsschool.org.
- The ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability, is the Dean of Students, students@texasgirlsschool.org.
- The Age Discrimination Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of age, is the Dean of Students, students@texasgirlsschool.org.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination may be directed to the Dean of Students, students@texasgirlsschool.org.

2. General Policies and Procedures

2.1. **General Admissions and Enrollment Information**

Admission and enrollment of students shall be open to any person who is eligible for admission based on lawful criteria identified in the school's charter. The total number of students enrolled in the school shall not exceed the number of students approved in the school's charter or subsequent amendments. Applications for admission shall be due by a reasonable deadline to be set each year by the school—i.e., the close of the "open-enrollment period."

In accordance with state law, The Texas Girls School does not discriminate in its admissions policy on the basis of sex, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic, artistic, or athletic ability, or the district the child would otherwise attend.

Exclusion from Admission

As authorized by the The Texas Girls School charter and Texas Education Code § 12.111(a)(5)(A), students with a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or other discipline problems under Texas Education Code Chapter 37, Subchapter A may be excluded from admission and enrollment in The Texas Girls School.

Submission of Applications and Admissions Lottery

Students wanting to attend The Texas Girls School must submit an application during the school's open enrollment period, which is designated by the school administration. Applications for admission are available online through The Texas Girls School website.

If fewer applications than spots available are received, students will be offered admission on a first-come, first-served basis. If The Texas Girls School receives more applications than it has spots available in any grade level, it will conduct a random lottery. Each applicant selected during the lottery (up until all open seats are filled) will be offered admission. Once all enrollment spots have been filled by the lottery, the lottery will continue and applicants will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which they are drawn. If a vacancy arises before the commencement of the next school year, the individual on the waiting list with the lowest number assignment will be offered admission and then removed from the waiting list.

If an application is received after the application period has passed, the applicant's name will be added to the waiting list behind the names of the applicants who timely applied.

Families offered an enrollment seat will be sent a registration packet with instructions for registering. Families must complete and return the registration packet by the published deadline in order to secure enrollment. If an enrollment offer is declined or if you do not

complete the registration packet by the established deadline, your child's seat will be offered to the next potential student on the waiting list.

Exceptions to Lottery Process: Federal guidelines permit The Texas Girls School to exempt from the lottery students who are already attending The Texas Girls School; siblings of students already admitted to or attending The Texas Girls School; and children of The Texas Girls School's founders, teachers, and staff, so long as the total number of students allowed under this exemption constitutes only a small percentage of The Texas Girls School's total enrollment.

Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of the school to prohibit discrimination in student admission on the basis of sex, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic, artistic, or athletic ability, or the district the student would otherwise attend in accordance with the Texas Education Code, or any other basis protected by law.

2.2. Student Information

Any student admitted to The Texas Girls School must have records, such as a report card and/or transcript from the previous school attended, to verify her academic standing. Verification of residency and current immunization records are also required. Every student enrolling in The Texas Girls School for the first time must present documentation of immunizations as required by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

No later than 30 days after enrolling in The Texas Girls School, the parent and the school in which the student was previously enrolled shall furnish records that verify the identity of the student. These records may include the student's birth certificate or a copy of the student's school records from the most recently attended school. Students will not be denied enrollment if they fail to meet this requirement.

The Texas Girls School will forward a student's records on request to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll without the necessity of the parents' consent.

Food Allergy Information

Parents should notify The Texas Girls School when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially an allergy that could result in dangerous or life-threatening reactions either by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact with the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the Registrar if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

Students with special dietary needs due to food allergies or students who need other food modifications must have a physician complete a special dietary needs form available from The Texas Girls School.

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

Establishing Identification

Any of the following documents are acceptable proof of identification and age: birth certificate; driver's license; passport; school ID card; records, or report card; military ID; hospital birth records; adoption records; church baptismal record; or any other legal document that establishes identity.

Undocumented Students

Enrollment may not be denied to children who are not legally admitted into the United States.

Residency Verification

The Texas Education Code authorizes schools to obtain evidence that a person is eligible to attend public schools. To be eligible for continued enrollment in The Texas Girls School, each student's parent must show proof of residency at the time of enrollment. Residency may be verified through observation, documentation, and other means, including, but not limited to:

- A recently paid rent receipt,
- A current lease agreement,
- The most recent tax receipt indicating home ownership,
- A current utility bill indicating the address and name of the residence occupiers,
- Mailing addresses of the residence occupiers,
- Visual inspection of the residence,
- Interviews with persons with relevant information, or
- Building permits issued to a parent on or before September 1st of the school year in which admission is sought (permits will serve as evidence of residency for the school year in which admission is sought only).

Residency for Servicemembers: A person whose parent is an active-duty member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, may establish residency by providing The Texas Girls School a copy of a military order requiring the parent's transfer to a military installation in the school's geographic boundaries. "Residence" includes residence in a military temporary lodging facility.

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

2.3. Change of Address or Telephone Number

When the address or telephone number of a student has been changed, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the Registrar immediately. Proof of residency at the new address may be required.

2.4. Attendance Policy

Attendance is taken daily at 9:45 a.m. for all students.

Absences from class can significantly disrupt a student's learning and mastery of instructional materials. For this reason, students and families should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences and strive for consistent, on-time attendance.

As a public charter school, The Texas Girls School only receives funding for the days students are physically present. Unlike traditional public schools, charter schools receive less overall funding, which means that each absence—regardless of the reason—has a direct impact on the resources available to our students. Missed days translate into fewer materials, reduced programming, and limited opportunities. Your commitment to daily attendance directly supports a stronger educational experience for all students.

Texas Compulsory Attendance Law

The state compulsory attendance law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 18 attend school and school-required tutorial sessions unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused. School staff must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent from school without permission from any class, from required special programs, or from required tutorials will be considered "truant" and subject to disciplinary action.

Truancy may also result in an assessment of penalties by a court of law against both the student and her parents. State law permits the school to file a complaint against the parent in the appropriate court if the student is absent, without excuse, on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period. State law requires the school to file a complaint against the parent in the appropriate court if the student is absent, without excuse, on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year.

Attendance for Credit

Per state law, students must attend at least 90% of class days to be eligible for course credit. The Texas Girls School requires a higher standard of 95% attendance, including both excused and unexcused absences, to receive credit or a final grade.

Students falling below 95% attendance may be referred to the Attendance Review Committee to determine if absences were due to extenuating circumstances and to explore how credit may be regained.

The committee will consider:

- All absences (excused and unexcused), with attention to circumstances defined in the Texas Education Code
- Only post-enrollment absences for transfer or migrant students
- Whether absences were within the student's or parent's control
- The quality of documentation for absences
- Student's academic progress and completion of coursework
- Information shared by the student or parent regarding absences and recovery options

If the committee determines there are no extenuating circumstances, the student or parent may appeal in writing to the Board of Directors within 30 days of the semester's end. Appeals should be addressed to:

**The Texas Girls School
10321 Boulder Lane
Austin, TX 78726**

The appeal will be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled board meeting, and the Superintendent will notify the family of the date, time, and location.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

The following absences are considered excused absences:

- personal illnesses (doctor's note required);
- family emergency (excused only by a doctor's note, or other acceptable documentation);
- observing religious holy days;
- juvenile court proceeding documented by a probation officer;
- appearing at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the student's application for United States citizenship;
- taking part in a student's United States naturalization oath ceremony;
- documented health care appointment, if the student begins classes or returns to school on the same day as the appointment;
- serving as an election clerk;
- required screening, diagnosis, and treatment for Medicaid-eligible students;
- required appointment with a health care practitioner, as described by Section 1355.015(b), Insurance Code, to receive a generally recognized service for persons with autism spectrum disorder, including applied behavioral analysis, speech therapy, and occupational therapy.
- temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the Principal.

Any absence not listed above will be considered an unexcused absence. Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, class cuts, car trouble, oversleeping, personal business, vacation, trips out of town, etc.

Required Documentation of Absences

Parents/guardians are asked to notify the school promptly whenever they know their student will be absent or **by 9:00 a.m.** on the day of the absence to ensure accurate attendance records and support student success. Please send an email to attendance@texasgirlsschool.org including the student's full name, grade level, date(s) of absence, and reason for absence.

Please make sure you verify absence details in the Parent Portal. (See further instructions below)

Documentation

If an absence is unplanned or unexpected, and you're unable to notify The Texas Girls School in advance, the student's guardian should email, including date(s) of absence, reason for absence, parent/guardian name and signature (if written), within 3 school days of the student returning to school.

How to View Detailed Student Absence Information in the ASCENDER Parent Portal

Parents can view detailed information regarding student absences in their portal account at any time.

1. Go to: <https://portals13.ascendertx.com/ParentPortal/login?distid=246803>
2. Log in with your Parent Portal account.
3. Select Your Student's Name from the home screen.
4. On the left-hand menu, click "Attendance" to view

Excessive Absences

According to the Texas Education Code, students must be present at least 90% of the school days, unless otherwise exempted by the administrators. Because of the rigor of the curriculum and the limited public funding sources for charter schools, The Texas Girls School has a standard of 95% attendance. **Nine (9) absences is considered a serious discipline offense, and if this occurs, the School has the right to send the student back to their home campus.**

When a student reaches five (5) total absences within a six-month period, a letter will be sent home to parents indicating that continued absences may materially affect the student's progress and enrollment at The Texas Girls School. Nine (9) absences for students may necessitate a meeting with the school's attendance committee and possibly result in dismissal of a student to their home campus.

Make-Up Work

If a student misses class for any reason, a teacher may assign make-up work that incorporates the instructional objectives for the class and that will assist the student to master the essential knowledge and skills necessary to meet subject or course requirements. Students are responsible for obtaining and completing the make-up work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher. Teachers will provide students and parents with additional information regarding penalties for failure to complete make-up work within the time allotted, as well as the process for making up tests missed due to absence.

Students with Disabilities

If a student with a disability is experiencing attendance issues, the student's ARD or Section 504 committee will determine whether the attendance issues warrant an evaluation, a reevaluation, and/or modifications to the student's individualized education program or Section 504 plan, as appropriate.

2.5. Tardiness

Doors open at 8:15 a.m.. Instruction begins at 9:00 a.m.. Students arriving after 9:00 a.m. must be checked in at the front office, where an excuse or tardy will be recorded as appropriate. The student will receive an admittance slip and proceed to class.

Unexcused tardiness for any class during the school day is cumulative for the semester. Failure to arrive on time for the first class of the day will have the following consequences:

2 Tardies: Warning from a principal

4 Tardies: Second warning from principal and parent contact

6 Tardies: Detention

2.6. School Calendar

The Texas Girls School operates according to the school calendar adopted annually by the Board of Directors. Holidays may be used as school make-up days for days lost due to bad weather. The latest changes to the calendar will be available on the school's website.

2.7. School Day

Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. and are dismissed at 4:15 p.m. Students may be dropped off as early as 8:15 a.m. They will be supervised, but there are no organized activities before the instructional day begins.

Students enrolled in after-school programming or who are signed up for scheduled clubs may be on campus, provided that all applicable fees for activities have been paid. These fees vary and will be published on our website and communicated to parents.

Schedule

Our flex schedule provides a balance between core academic instruction and hands-on, experiential learning opportunities.

Monday – Thursday: Core Learning

Students engage in a structured schedule that includes Humanities, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Tech Apps/Computer Science, and electives. Flexible learning blocks allow time for enrichment, collaboration, and additional academic support.

Friday: STEM Exploration Flex Days

Fridays are set aside for hands-on, TEKS-aligned STEM exploration. These flex days provide students with opportunities to apply their learning in real-world contexts while meeting state standards. Activities may include:

- Makerspace projects that build creativity, engineering skills, and design thinking.
- Field trips to science centers, universities, and research facilities that deepen content knowledge.
- Outdoor explorations that connect classroom learning to ecosystems, observation, and environmental science.

Guest speakers and workshops led by professionals in STEM fields, bringing TEKS objectives to life through practical application.

These days are designed to spark curiosity, encourage critical thinking, and promote innovation—bridging traditional instruction with experiential, standards-based learning.

2.8. Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

All students attending The Texas Girls School must arrive by car. To ensure safety and efficiency for all, families must adhere to the carline rules shared on the website – [LINK](#). The car tag, issued annually and indicating the student's identification number, is to be visible at all times when picking up your student(s) in the afternoon.

Students may arrive as early as 8:15 a.m., at which time the doors to the building are opened. Parents are asked not to deliver students before 8:15 a.m., as there is no supervision on school grounds prior to that time.

Parents may begin lining up no sooner than 3:55 p.m. to assure access for visitors, vendors, and consultants who need to depart before the start of the car line.

2.9. Release of Students from School

A student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day, except in accordance with campus sign-out procedures. Additionally, state rules require that

parental consent be obtained before a student under the age of 18 may leave campus at any point in the school day.

Because class time is important, doctor's appointments or meetings with other professionals should be scheduled at times when the student will not miss instructional time, if possible.

Students who fail to check in/out before leaving and/or returning to campus will be considered truant from any instructional hours missed.

Students will not be allowed to leave in the custody of any person not named on the student's registration paperwork. Photo identification is required.

Early pick-up of students during the 30 minutes prior to dismissal (3:45-4:15 p.m.) will not be done except in the case of an emergency through an administrator. During this time, students are preparing for dismissal and transitioning to other areas of the building, making it difficult to locate them for the remaining minutes. Please schedule your appointments accordingly.

2.10. Closed Campus

The Texas Girls School is a closed campus. Specifically, this means that students are not allowed to leave campus for any reason during the school day, including during meal periods, without first obtaining permission from the school office (see "Release of Students from School").

2.11. School Facilities Use

Certain areas of the campus will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place. Unless the school staff member overseeing the activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the campus. Unless involved in an activity under the supervision of school staff, students must leave campus once school is dismissed.

2.12. Student Fees

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

- a fee for materials for a class project that the student will keep, if the fee does not exceed the cost of materials;
- membership dues in voluntary student clubs or organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities;

- a security deposit for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment;
- a fee for voluntarily purchased items, such as student publications, class rings, pictures, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.;
- a reasonable fee, not to exceed the actual annual maintenance cost, for the use of musical instruments and uniforms owned or rented by the school;
- a fee for items of personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that become the property of the student;
- a fee for a student identification card;
- a fee for supervision of a student who is picked up late from all school-related functions;
- a fee for lost, damaged, or overdue textbooks, library books, technological equipment, and academic curriculum materials; or
- a fee specifically permitted by any other statute.

The Texas Girls School may waive any fee or deposit if the student and parent are unable to pay. A request for such a waiver must be made in writing to the School Registrar and include evidence of inability to pay. Details for the fee waiver are available in the campus office.

Families are responsible for paying all fees associated with extra-curricular programs before participation.

2.13. Lost and Stolen Items

All articles, including books, found on campus should be taken to the school office. All articles not claimed at the end of the school year will be disposed of through proper channels. Students are not to bring electronic entertainment devices and other personal items to school. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

2.14. Check Acceptance Policy

All personal checks written to the school must include the current address and phone number of the account holder. The account holder's name should also be legible and printed on the check.

In the event that a check written to the school is returned unpaid by the bank, the account holder agrees that the school may collect a return check fee of \$30. The school may contract with a collection company in an effort to redeem returned checks. The use of a check for payment is the account holder's acknowledgement and acceptance of this policy and its terms.

2.15. Textbooks and Curriculum Materials

State-approved textbooks and additional curriculum materials are provided free of charge for each subject or class. Materials must be used by the students as directed by the teacher

and treated with care. A student who is issued damaged materials should report the damage to the teacher.

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

A parent is entitled to request that The Texas Girls School allow a student to take home any instructional materials used by the student. The Texas Girls School will honor the request, subject to the availability of the instructional materials. A student who takes home instructional materials must return the materials to school at the beginning of the next school day if requested to do so by the student's teacher. The Texas Girls School must provide the instructional materials to the student in printed format if the student does not have reliable access to technology at the student's home. The Texas Girls School is also not required to purchase printed copies of instructional materials that the school would otherwise not purchase; the school may provide the student with relevant electronic instructional materials.

2.16. School Functions

Students are held responsible for their conduct while in attendance at any school function. A student who is on campus or in attendance at any school function at any place, night or day, is subject to all regulations of the school and will be governed accordingly.

2.17. Dress and Grooming

The school's dress and grooming standards are designed to promote hygiene, minimize distractions, and support a sense of unity among students.

Students are expected to come to school clean, neatly groomed, and wearing clothing that fits properly—not excessively tight or loose—and is clean and in good condition. Items such as shoes, socks, jewelry, and hair accessories should not distract from learning. Final decisions about what is considered distracting will be made by the school administration.

As authorized by state law and The Texas Girls School charter, students are required to wear uniforms to school. Families are responsible for providing the appropriate uniform, with support available for economically disadvantaged students as outlined in the Texas Education Code. Requests for assistance must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent and include documentation of financial need.

If a student arrives at school out of uniform or in violation of the dress code, the school will work with the student and family to promptly resolve the issue.

Specific information on the Uniform/Dress Code Policy, as well as how violations are addressed, can be found in the Uniform Guide on our website under School Resources – [LINK].

2.18. Food Service

The Texas Girls School is committed to providing fresh, nutritious meals through a farm-to-table catering program. Our meals are crafted with high-quality ingredients, offering both healthy and vegetarian options to meet the various needs of our students.

Parents will be required to order meals in advance to ensure proper meal planning and preparation. Additional details, including ordering instructions and menu options, will be provided before the first day of school.

Free/Reduced Meals

Free and reduced-price breakfasts and lunches are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. See the School Registrar to apply. Students must apply for meal assistance each school year.

2.19. School-Sponsored Trips / Field Trips

The Texas Girls School regularly takes students on field trips for educational purposes.

A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip.

The Texas Girls School may ask a parent to provide information about a student's medical provider and insurance coverage, and may also ask a parent to sign a waiver allowing for emergency medical treatment in the case of a student accident or illness during the field trip.

The Texas Girls School may (as allowed by law) require a fee for student participation in a field trip to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and meals; however, students will not be denied participation because of financial need.

2.20. Transportation

The Texas Girls School does not provide regular transportation to and from school, unless required by a student's Individualized Education Plan ("IEP") for a student with disabilities. However, The Texas Girls School may provide transportation in school-sponsored vehicles for educational field trips.

Riding a school vehicle is a privilege. Drivers have the authority to maintain discipline and require seating charts. When riding a school vehicle, students are held to behavioral standards established in this Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times;
- Enter and leave the vehicle in an orderly manner;
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle;
- Not deface the vehicle or its equipment;
- Not put head, hands, arms, legs, or an object out of any window; and
- Wait for the driver's signal in order to leave or cross in front of the vehicle.

Only designated students are allowed to ride in the vehicle. Students may neither ride the vehicle to a different location nor have friends ride the vehicle to participate in after-school activities.

If a student with a disability is receiving school transportation as a result of an IEP, the student's admission, review, and dismissal committee will have the discretion in determining appropriate disciplinary consequences related to inappropriate behavior in a school vehicle.

2.21. Distribution of Materials or Documents

Only publications relating to school-sponsored activities or school-recognized clubs and organizations may be posted or distributed. The publication, as well as the time and location of its posting or distribution, must be submitted to the Principal for review and approval.

2.22. Electronic Devices and Technology Resources

Cell Phones

To support a focused and distraction-free learning environment, **The Texas Girls School is a cell phone-free campus during the instructional day**. All students are required to secure their phones in a school-issued Yondr pouch upon arrival. Phones must remain sealed from the beginning of the school day until dismissal, in alignment with our bell-to-bell policy.

Students will carry their pouches with them but will not have access to their phones during the day.

Phones may not be accessed during lunch, restroom breaks, passing periods, or any other time while on campus.

Other Personal Electronic Devices

Laptops, tablets, or other learning tools may be brought to school only with prior approval from school administration. Devices such as MP3 players, cameras, handheld gaming

systems, and smartwatches with communication or entertainment functions are not permitted.

All approved devices must be used in alignment with instructional expectations and may only be accessed at designated times.

Non-Compliance

If a student does not follow the school's policy for securing a phone in a Yondr pouch or brings an unapproved electronic device to campus, the item will be collected by school staff and turned in to the Principal's office.

- On the first occurrence, the item will be returned to the student at the end of the day.
- Repeated occurrences may require a parent to retrieve the device and may include a small administrative fee.
- Continued non-compliance will be addressed in alignment with the school's Student Code of Conduct.

The Texas Girls School is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal devices, including those that are confiscated.

For more information, including details on device expectations and retrieval procedures, please visit the Cell Phone Policy Guide under School Resources on our website – [LINK](#).

Acceptable Use of Technology Resources

School-owned technology resources for instructional purposes may be issued to individual students. Use of these technological resources, which include The Texas Girls School's network systems and use of school equipment, is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and Parents will be asked to sign an Acceptable Use Agreement Acknowledgment Form regarding the use of these school resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in the withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

2.23. Pledges of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

As allowed by state law, 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 at the school office to excuse their student from reciting a pledge.

One minute of silence will follow recitation of the pledges. During the one-minute period, each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that is not likely to interfere with or distract others. State law does not allow students to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence.

2.24. Prayer

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

2.25. Use of Student's Image/Information

Photographs of students (including video images) along with student names, activities, honors, and achievements will be allowed for use in official school projects and events unless a parent specifically requests in writing that such usage be denied. Individual student photos for official campus identification cards may be taken as required.

2.26. Withdrawals

Voluntary Withdrawal

A student under 18 years of age may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The Texas Girls School requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. Parents may obtain a withdrawal form from the main office. The parent shall also provide the name of the new school in which the student will be enrolled, and must sign the withdrawal request to document that the student will continue to be enrolled in a school as required by compulsory attendance laws.

Withdrawing students and parents are expected to:

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

In all cases, withdrawal forms must be appropriately completed and signed before withdrawal is complete.

3. Student Health and Safety

3.1. Health-Related Policies and Procedures

The Texas Girls School has adopted Board policies that promote student physical and mental health, including:

- Food and nutrition management,
- Wellness and health services,
- Physical examinations,
- Immunizations,
- Medical treatment,
- Communicable diseases,
- Crisis intervention,
- Trauma-informed care,
- Student safety,
- Child abuse and neglect,
- Freedom from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, and
- Freedom from bullying.

The Texas Girls School has also developed administrative procedures as necessary to implement these policies.

3.2. Respect for All

The school has a varied student population and strives to maintain an environment of respect and acceptance. Students must not engage in harassing behaviors motivated by ethnicity, gender, color, religion, national origin, or disability directed toward another student. Students are expected to treat other students and school staff with courtesy and respect, to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive, and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop.

3.3. School Safety

Student safety on campus and at school-related events is a high priority for the school. Although the school has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure 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, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the Principal, teachers, or school staff;

- remain alert to and promptly report to school staff safety hazards, such as intruders on campus, propped doors, and threats made by any person toward a student or school staff;
- know emergency evacuation routes and signals; and
- immediately follow the instructions of school staff who are overseeing the welfare of students.

3.4. Asbestos Management Plan

The school has every facility inspected for asbestos before use by a licensed Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) inspector. An Asbestos Management Plan is created for the school in accordance with federal regulations by AHERA. Parents may view the Asbestos Management Plan by contacting the school office.

3.5. Bacterial Meningitis

What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is the 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 it requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

What are the symptoms?

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

Students and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pains, and drowsiness or confusion. In both students 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 and sharing drinking containers or utensils).

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?

Students should not share food, drinks, utensils, or toothbrushes. Students should limit the number of people they kiss. While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include a disease outbreak in a community or for people traveling to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. The vaccine is safe and effective (85–90 percent). 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 students do if they think they or a friend might have bacterial meningitis?

Students should seek prompt medical attention.

Where can students get more information?

A family doctor and the staff at the local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. Parents and students may also call the local health department or the Regional Texas Department of Health office to ask about the meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at websites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov>) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us>).

3.6. Communicable Diseases

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. Parents of students with a communicable or contagious disease should notify the school office so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. School authorities will report those students who are suspected of having a reportable condition. A list of reportable conditions can be found on the Texas Department of State Health Services website at: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/investigation/conditions/>.

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

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

Please contact the school office if you have questions or if you are concerned about whether a child should stay home.

3.7. Immunization Requirements

The State of Texas requires that every child in the state be immunized against vaccine-preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with an established immunization schedule.

To determine the specific number of doses that are required for your student, please read "Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Students." This document and more information about school vaccine requirements are available at the Texas Department of State Health Services ("DSHS") Immunization Branch website: www.ImmunizeTexas.com (click on the "School Requirements" link, then "Main Page" link).

Proof of immunization must be in one of the following forms:

- a copy made from the original health record;
- a printed copy from the Health Dept/Physician with their signature and stamp on it;
- a record that is printed from Immtrac.

Records from a previous school are not acceptable.

Provisional Enrollment

A student can be enrolled provisionally for 30 days from the first day of attendance only if:

- she is transferring from a Texas school to a Texas school;
- a dependent of a parent who is Active Duty Military with a valid ID card;
- the student is homeless or displaced.

Should on day 30 of the provisional enrollment, if an up-to-date compliant immunization record is not received, then the student will be excluded from school and marked absent until the record is provided.

A student may be enrolled provisionally if the student has an immunization record that indicates she has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate required vaccine. To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible and provide

acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school. The school shall review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student every 30 days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccination. If, at the end of the 30-day period, a student has not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, then the student is not in compliance and the school shall exclude the student from school attendance until the required dose is administered.

Exemptions from Immunization Requirements

Exemptions from immunization requirements are allowable on an individual basis for:

- medical reasons;
- reasons of conscience, including a religious belief; and
- active duty with the armed forces of the United States.

To claim an exclusion for medical reasons, the student must present a statement signed by the student's physician (M.D. or D.O.), duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States who has examined the student, in which it is stated that, in the physician's opinion, the vaccine required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student's household. Unless it is written in the statement that a lifelong condition exists, the exemption statement is valid for only one year from the date signed by the physician.

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

Immunization Records Reporting

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

3.8. Emergency Medical Treatment

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity and the parent cannot be reached, The Texas Girls School staff will seek emergency medical treatment

unless the parent has previously provided a written statement denying this authorization. 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 Registrar to update any information.

3.9. Illness During School Hours

A student who becomes ill during school hours is to report to the teacher, who will then send them to the school office. The student's parents will be contacted. No student is allowed to go home without the parent being notified. Students are not to call parents from cell phones asking to go home; such calls are to be made from the school office by school staff.

Students should stay home from school due to illness if any of the following are present:

- fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher in the past 24 hours;
- vomiting and/or diarrhea in the past 24 hours;
- itchy, red eyes with discharge;
- unknown rash;
- ringworm (until treatment has been started);
- live head lice or
- jaundice.

To protect students at school, students assessed with any of the signs and symptoms listed above will be sent home.

3.10. Administration of Medication

All medication must be prescribed. To be administered during school hours, the medication must be prescribed by a physician or advanced nurse practitioner ("ANP") and filled by a pharmacist licensed in the State of Texas.

Prescription medication labels must include the student's name and instructions and be clearly legible.

Written instructions from a physician or ANP are required and must include the following information:

- name of the student,
- name of the medication,
- reason the medication is being given,
- specific amount to be given,
- time the medication is to be given, and
- the method used to administer the medication.

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

Asthma and Anaphylaxis Medication

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

Student possession and self-administration of asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school requires the student to demonstrate her ability to self-administer the medication to the student's physician or other licensed health care provider and the school nurse, if available. Requirements also include written authorization from the student's parent and physician or other licensed health care provider on file in the school office indicating the student is capable of independently administering her own asthma or emergency anaphylaxis medication. Medication in a student's possession must be in an original container with a prescription label. Please note that most pharmacies will place a label on the inhaler device upon request.

Diabetes Management

Students with diabetes may be allowed to have equipment and medication used in the treatment of diabetes located in the office to be administered by a health specialist. Requirements also include written authorization from the student's parent and physician or other licensed health care provider on file in the school office.

Students with diabetes may possess the equipment and medication used in the treatment of diabetes during the school day and at school-related events, given certain conditions and a written note from the prescribing doctor or health care professional expressing this authorization. According to Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 168, a diabetes management and treatment plan must be developed and implemented by the student's parents and the physician responsible for the student's diabetes treatment. This plan must evaluate the student's ability to manage diabetes and her level of understanding of diabetes, and must be signed by the parent and physician responsible for the student's diabetes treatment. An individual health plan must be implemented by the school and must incorporate components of the student's diabetes management and treatment plan. In accordance with the student's individualized health plan, which incorporates the diabetes management and treatment plan signed by the parent and physician that indicates the student's ability to manage diabetes and her level of understanding of diabetes, a school shall permit a student to attend to the management and care of her diabetes, which may include:

- performing blood glucose level checks;

- administering insulin;
- treating hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia;
- possessing necessary monitoring and treatment equipment designed for diabetes care; and
- attending to the management of her diabetes in the classroom, in any area of the school grounds, or at any school-related activity.

3.11. Seizure Management Plan

The parent of a student with a seizure disorder may seek care for the student's seizures while the student is at school or participating in a school activity by submitting to The Texas Girls School a copy of a seizure management and treatment plan developed by the parent and the physician responsible for the student's seizure treatment. The plan must be submitted to and reviewed by The Texas Girls School:

- Before or at the beginning of the school year;
- On enrollment of the student, if the student enrolls after the start of the school year; or
- As soon as practicable following a diagnosis of a seizure disorder for the student.

Beginning January 1, 2024, a seizure management and treatment plan must be submitted on the form adopted by the Texas Education Agency and provide the following:

- The student's name and date of birth;
- The names and contact information of the student's parent and the physician responsible for the student's seizure treatment, and at least one other emergency contact;
- Any medical history significant to the student's seizure disorder;
- The type, length, and frequency of the student's seizures;
- A description of each type of seizure the student has experienced;
- The student's seizure triggers or warning signs;
- The student's ability to manage seizures and the student's level of understanding of the seizures;
- The student's response after a seizure;
- The basic first aid to be provided to the student during a seizure, including whether the student needs to leave the classroom after a seizure and the process for the student's return to the classroom, if applicable;
- A description of what constitutes a seizure emergency for the student;
- A description of seizure emergency protocol for school personnel to follow in the event of a seizure emergency for the student;
- A treatment protocol for any medications or other procedures to be administered by school personnel to the student during school hours, including:
 - Each daily or emergency medication, including (i) the name and dosage of the medication and the time at which the medication is to be given; (ii) common

- side effects for the medication; and (iii) any special instructions regarding the medication; and
- o Whether the student has a vagus nerve stimulator and, if so, appropriate magnet use for the stimulator;
- Any special considerations or precautions applicable to the students; and
- The signature of the student's parent and the physician responsible for the student's seizure treatment.

3.12. Interrogations and Searches

Students shall not place, keep, or maintain any article or material prohibited by school policy or that would lead school officials to reasonably believe that it would cause a substantial disruption at school or a school-sponsored or school-related function. Principals and teachers have the right to question students regarding their conduct or the conduct of others without consent or the presence of a parent/guardian.

School staff may search a student's outer clothing, pockets, or property by establishing reasonable suspicion or securing the student's voluntary consent. However, consent obtained through the threat of contacting parents or the police authorities is not considered to be voluntarily given.

Student cubbies, desks/offices, backpacks, vehicles parked on campus, and any other area that is owned or jointly controlled by the school are under the jurisdiction of the school. As such, they may be searched any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by school policy, with or without the presence of the student. The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's possession.

Random Drug Searches

In order to ensure a drug-free learning environment, the school may conduct random drug searches of the school facilities. The school may 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 campus. 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.

3.13. Law Enforcement Agencies

Procedures for Law Enforcement Interviews

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

- The school shall verify and record the identity of the official and request an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.
- The school shall make reasonable efforts to notify the student's parents.
- Unless prohibited by law or when the student has been arrested or taken into police custody, a school staff member shall be present during the questioning or interview.

When the investigation involves allegations of child abuse, special rules apply (see "Child Abuse Reporting and Investigations").

Procedures for Assuming Custody of Student

The school shall permit a student to be taken into custody:

- pursuant to an order of the juvenile court;
- pursuant to the laws of arrest;
- by a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in conduct that violates a penal law, delinquent conduct, or conduct in need of supervision, or conduct that violates a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court;
- by a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court;
- pursuant to a properly issued directive to apprehend; or
- by an authorized representative of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services ("DFPS"), a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in Section 262.104 of the Texas Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.

3.14. Child Abuse Reporting and Investigations

Reporting Procedures

Students who believe they are the subjects of abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, or other maltreatment should report the incident immediately to a teacher or the Principal.

If a parent has cause to believe that a student has been or may be abused or neglected at school, the parent should immediately notify the Principal at the school and make an oral report to Child Protective Services at 1.800.252.5400 or the local Police Department at 911.

Staff Reporting

All school officials are required to report any suspicions or knowledge of abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, or other maltreatment immediately and directly to Child Protective Services. School staff cannot be required to report it to a supervisor before reporting to CPS.

Additional Information

Additional information regarding abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and other maltreatment of children, including prevention techniques and knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a child may be a victim of abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, or other maltreatment, may be found at the following Texas Education Agency website: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index.aspx?id=2820>.

Staff Training

All members of the school staff are trained annually in child abuse awareness and reporting procedures.

Student Interviews at School

The school cooperates with official child abuse investigators as required by law. The school may not interfere with an investigation of a report of child abuse or neglect conducted by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services ("DFPS"). The school shall permit the investigator to conduct the required interview with the student at any reasonable time at the school. The school may not require the investigator to permit school staff to be present at a student interview conducted at school.

Notification of Parents

Investigations at school may be conducted by authorized law enforcement or state agencies without prior notification or consent of the student's parents if necessary.

3.15. Visitors

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit the campus by appointment. No visitors will be allowed in any part of the building without first obtaining approval from the school office. Student lunch period is closed to visitors. The school will take the following actions when there is a visitor at the school:

- The visitor must first report to the school office and will be required to furnish a U.S. federal or state-issued photo ID.
- The visitor's information will be stored in an electronic database to document visitors to the school. Information stored in the electronic database may be used only for the purpose of school security and may not be sold or otherwise disseminated to a third party for any purpose.
- The school will verify whether the visitor is a sex offender registered with the computerized central database maintained by the Department of Public Safety or any other database accessible by the school. Visitors identified as sex offenders shall be escorted by school staff at all times during a school visit.
- A visitor badge will be issued to the visitor and displayed conspicuously during the visit.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the Principal and teacher, and such visits are not permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment.

3.16. Emergency Closings

In the event of threatening conditions, we will take all necessary emergency precautions. If you have concerns about school closure or delayed openings because of weather conditions, please check The Texas Girls School website, official Facebook page, your email for a message from the administration, and possibly the local media. The Texas Girls School will determine closures based in part on other area school districts, but also the needs of our student body.

3.17. Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies

Students, teachers, and other staff will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm or notification is initiated, students should follow the direction of school staff quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner. During the drill, order rather than speed shall be stressed. Defined instructions for vacating or sheltering in a space will be posted in each room, and students should familiarize themselves with these instructions.

3.18. Surveillance Cameras/Video Recordings

For safety purposes, including the maintenance of order and discipline, surveillance cameras may be used to monitor student behavior in classrooms, on school vehicles, and in school common areas. Video recordings may be reviewed routinely to document student misconduct and used by staff when investigating an incident.

3.19. Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

Statement of Nondiscrimination

The Texas Girls School prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or gender, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint and/or grievance process is a violation of school policy.

Discrimination and Harassment (Prohibited Conduct)

For purposes of The Texas Girls School policy, the term "Prohibited Conduct" means discrimination or harassment against a student involving conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender or sex, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law and that adversely affects the student, and/or that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

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

Examples of Prohibited Conduct may include offensive or derogatory language directed at another person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening or intimidating conduct; offensive jokes; name calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; display of graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

The Texas Girls School also considers gender-based harassment to be Prohibited Conduct. Gender-based harassment includes harassment based on a student's gender, expression by the student of stereotypical characteristics associated with the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender. Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include, but not be limited to, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of Prohibited Conduct (meaning discrimination or harassment) is prohibited. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of reported Prohibited Conduct is also prohibited. A person who makes a false claim or offers false statements or refuses to cooperate with a The Texas Girls School investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

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

Reporting Prohibited Conduct

Any student who believes that she has experienced Prohibited Conduct or retaliation or believes that another student has experienced Prohibited Conduct or retaliation should immediately report the alleged conduct to a teacher, counselor, the Principal or designee, or other school employee. The report may be made by the student's parents. Alternatively, a report may be made directly to the appropriate Compliance Coordinator identified in this Handbook.

Upon receiving a report of potential Prohibited Conduct, The Texas Girls School will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. If not, The Texas Girls School will determine if the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying. If the alleged Prohibited Conduct, if proven, would constitute discrimination or harassment and would also be considered bullying, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

****NOTE**** The Texas Girls School's process concerning formal complaints of sexual harassment is outlined in "Freedom from Sexual Harassment" below.

Investigation

To the extent possible, The Texas Girls School will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with the law. Allegations of Prohibited Conduct will be promptly investigated. The investigation may be conducted by the Compliance Coordinator or designee, or by a third party designated by The Texas Girls School, such as an attorney. When appropriate, the Principal or the student's teacher(s) will be involved in or informed of the investigation.

If a law enforcement or other regulatory agency notifies The Texas Girls School that it is investigating the matter and requests that the school delay its investigation, The Texas Girls School will resume the investigation after the agency's investigation.

During an investigation and when appropriate, The Texas Girls School will take interim action to address the alleged Prohibited Conduct.

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

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

Appeal

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the school's student and parent complaint process, beginning at Level Two.

3.20. Freedom from Sexual Harassment

The Texas Girls School prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, by an employee, volunteer, or another student.

Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- A school employee conditioning the provision of aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to The Texas Girls School's educational programs or activities;
- Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking (as those offenses are defined in the Clery Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f), and the Violence Against Women Act, 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)).

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

Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and school employees are prohibited. Any sexual relationship between a student and a school employee is always prohibited, even if consensual.

General Definitions

A "complainant" means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

A "respondent" means an individual who is reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

A "formal complaint" means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that The Texas Girls School investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

"Supportive measures" means non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered appropriately and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to The Texas Girls School's educational program or activity without unreasonably burdening either party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or The Texas Girls School's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. Examples of supportive measures include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of class schedules, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, and other similar measures.

Reporting Sexual Harassment

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by email, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator in the "Statement of Nondiscrimination" section of this handbook, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. Such a report may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, by using the telephone number or email address, or by mail to the office address listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

The Texas Girls School's response to a report of sexual harassment must treat complainants and respondents equitably by offering supportive measures and by following a grievance process before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures against a respondent.

After a report of sexual harassment has been made, the Title IX Coordinator must promptly contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the complainant's wishes concerning supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.

Notice of Allegations

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, The Texas Girls School must provide the following written notice to the parties who are known:

- Notice of The Texas Girls School's grievance process, including any informal resolution process.
- Notice of the allegations of sexual harassment, including, to the extent known, the identity of the parties, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident.
- Notice that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made known after the grievance process.
- Notice that the parties may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney.
- Notice that the parties may inspect and review evidence related to the complaint.
- Notice that The Texas Girls School prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

If, during an investigation, The Texas Girls School decides to investigate allegations about the complaint or respondent that are not included in the initial notice of the complaint, The Texas Girls School must provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

Grievance Process

At the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of The Texas Girls School.

The following guidelines apply when The Texas Girls School receives a formal complaint of sexual harassment. This process is designed to incorporate due process principles, treat all parties fairly, and to assist The Texas Girls School reach reliable responsibility determinations.

- The Texas Girls School will require an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence – including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence – and credibility determinations may not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.
- Any individual designated by The Texas Girls School as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, or to facilitate an informal resolution process must not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent responsible. The Texas Girls School will ensure that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and anyone who facilitates an informal resolution process receive appropriate training related to the requirements of Title IX and The Texas Girls School's sexual harassment policy.
- The Texas Girls School recognizes a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made after the complaint process.
- The Texas Girls School shall attempt to complete an investigation of reported sexual harassment within 60 calendar days of receiving a complaint. However, the investigation process may be delayed or extended for a limited time for good cause with written notice to the complainant and the respondent of the delay or extension. Good causes may include considerations such as absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities.
- Students found to have engaged in sexual harassment are subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
- The Texas Girls School shall employ the clear and convincing evidence standard to determine responsibility when reviewing formal complaints.
- The Texas Girls School may not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions of evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

Consolidation of Formal Complaints

The Texas Girls School may consolidate formal complaints as to allegations of sexual harassment against more than one respondent, or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against the other party, where the allegations of sexual harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

Dismissal of Formal Complaints

The Texas Girls School must investigate the allegations in a formal complaint.

The Texas Girls School must dismiss a formal complaint if the conduct alleged in the formal complaint:

- Would not constitute sexual harassment, even if proved;
- Did not occur in The Texas Girls School's education program or activity; or
- Did not occur against a person in the United States.

The Texas Girls School may dismiss a formal complaint or any allegations therein if, at any time during the investigation:

- A complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein;
- The respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by The Texas Girls School; or
- Specific circumstances prevent The Texas Girls School from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

Upon a dismissal, The Texas Girls School must promptly send a simultaneous written notice to the parties of the dismissal and the reason(s) for the dismissal. Dismissal of a formal complaint does not preclude The Texas Girls School from taking appropriate action under the Student Code of Conduct or any other school policy that may apply to the alleged conduct.

Investigating Formal Complaints

The following guidelines apply during the investigation of a formal complaint and throughout the grievance process.

- The Texas Girls School will ensure that the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rests on The Texas Girls School and not on the parties.
- The Texas Girls School cannot access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, unless The Texas Girls School receives that party's voluntary, written consent to do so.
- The Texas Girls School will provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
- The Texas Girls School will not restrict the ability of either party to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence.

- The Texas Girls School will provide the parties with the same opportunities to have others present during any grievance proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisory of their choice, and not limit the choice or presence of an advisor for either the complainant or respondent in any meeting or grievance proceeding. The Texas Girls School may establish restrictions regarding the extent to which the advisor may participate in the proceedings, as long as the restrictions apply equally to both parties.
- The Texas Girls School will provide to a party whose participation is invited or expected written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all investigative interviews or other meetings with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate.
- The Texas Girls School will provide both parties an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in a formal complaint, including the evidence upon which the recipient does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a party or other source, so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence before conclusion of the investigation.
- Prior to completing an investigative report, The Texas Girls School must send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy, and the parties must have at least 10 days to submit a written response, which the investigator will consider before completing the investigative report.
- The Texas Girls School must create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence and, at least 10 days before a determination regarding responsibility, send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the investigative report in an electronic format or a hard copy, for review and written response.
- After sending the investigative report to the parties and before reaching a determination of responsibility, the decision-maker(s) must allow each party to submit written relevant questions that a party wants asked of any witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party. Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior concerning the respondent and are offered to prove consent. The decision-maker(s) must explain to the party proposing the questions any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

Determination Regarding Responsibility

The decision-maker(s) making a determination regarding responsibility cannot be the same person(s) as the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator(s). The decision-maker(s) must review the investigation report and make a written determination, based on the clear and

convincing evidence standard, regarding responsibility. The written determination must include:

- Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
- A description of the procedural steps taken from receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, or methods used to gather other evidence;
- Findings of fact supporting the determination;
- Conclusions regarding the application of The Texas Girls School's Code of Conduct to the facts;
- A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to The Texas Girls School's education program or activities will be provided to the complainant; and
- The Texas Girls School's procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal.

The Texas Girls School must provide the written determination to the parties simultaneously. The determination becomes final either on the date that The Texas Girls School provides the parties with the written determination of the result of the appeal, if an appeal is filed, or if an appeal is not filed, the date on which an appeal would no longer be considered timely.

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for the effective implementation of any remedies.

Appeals

The Texas Girls School will offer both parties an appeal from a determination regarding responsibility, and The Texas Girls School's dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein, on the following bases:

- Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
- New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; and
- The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

As to appeals, The Texas Girls School will ensure that the decision-maker(s) for the appeal is not the same person as the decision-maker(s) that reached the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal, or the investigator(s), or the Title IX Coordinator. The Texas Girls School will provide both parties a reasonable equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome.

The decision-maker(s) for the appeal will issue a written decision, based on the clear and convincing evidence standard, describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result, and provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties.

A party who is dissatisfied with the appeal decision may file an appeal to the Board of Directors through the process outlined in The Texas Girls School's grievance procedures.

Emergency Removals

The Texas Girls School can remove a respondent from The Texas Girls School's education program on an emergency basis, provided that The Texas Girls School undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis, determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal, and provides the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal. The Texas Girls School's ability to do so may not be construed to modify any rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504, or the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Informal Resolution

At any time before reaching a determination regarding responsibility, The Texas Girls School may facilitate an informal resolution process, such as mediation, that does not involve a full investigation and adjudication. However, The Texas Girls School may not require as a condition of enrollment or continuing enrollment, employment or continued employment, or enjoyment of any other right, a waiver of the right to an investigation and adjudication of formal complaints. Additionally, The Texas Girls School may not require the parties to participate in an informal process and may not offer an informal resolution process unless a formal complaint is filed.

Prior to facilitating an informal resolution process, The Texas Girls School must:

- Provide to the parties a written notice disclosing the allegations and the requirements of the informal resolution process, including the circumstances under which it precludes the parties from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations. The notice must also inform that, at any time before agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint, as well as of any consequence resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared.
- Obtain the parties' voluntary, written consent to the informal resolution process.

The Texas Girls School may not offer or facilitate an informal resolution process to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student.

Retaliation Prohibited

Neither The Texas Girls School nor any other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual to interfere with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation or proceeding under this policy.

Examples of retaliation may include, but are not limited to, intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination.

Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the grievance procedure described above.

Confidentiality

The Texas Girls School must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by FERPA or as required by law, or for purposes related to the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising under the Title IX regulations.

Non-Sexual Harassment Sex Discrimination

The formal complaint investigation and resolution process outlined above in "Freedom from Sexual Harassment" applies only to formal complaints alleging sexual harassment as defined by Title IX, but not to complaints alleging sex discrimination that do not constitute sexual harassment. Complaints of non-sexual harassment sex discrimination may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator and will be handled under the process described in the "Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation" section of this Handbook.

4. Academics and Grading

4.1. Academic Programs

Administration will provide students and parents with information regarding academic programs to prepare for higher education and career choices.

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting will have an opportunity to complete their daily work just as if they were in the regular learning center.

Students and parents are encouraged to discuss options for ensuring that students complete all work required with a teacher or Principal.

4.2. Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is an essential element of The Texas Girls School's philosophy and practice of promoting academic excellence. All students are expected to be honest and to display a high standard of integrity in the preparation and presentation of work for credit in classes. Cheating, dishonesty, and plagiarism will not be tolerated by The Texas Girls School.

Additionally, the use of generative artificial intelligence for academic cheating, dishonesty, or plagiarism is strictly prohibited as a violation of The Texas Girls School policy. Generative AI refers to the use of computer algorithms to generate original content that mimics human writing styles. While this technology can be useful for various academic and creative purposes, it is important to note that using generative AI to plagiarize someone else's work, including that of a computer program, is unethical.

Students who engage in academic cheating, dishonesty, or plagiarism are subject to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

When using artificial intelligence ("AI") tools to create or support the creation of text or other work, students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines as well as additional guidance provided by their classroom teacher.

- **Use AI responsibly:** Students should use AI tools and techniques responsibly and ethically. This includes not using AI to cheat, plagiarize, or gain an unfair advantage. AI tools should only be used for school-related work when given approval or guidance from a teacher.
- **Understand the limitations of AI:** Students must understand the limitations of AI and recognize that it is not a replacement for critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

- **Maintain data privacy:** AI should be used in a way that protects personally identifiable information. Students should not share with AI technologies personal information, such as name, birth date, address, or other financial or confidential information.
- **Check sources generated by AI:** AI has been known to generate inaccurate information, and can also be used to create misinformation and disinformation. Students should take steps to verify information generated by AI.
- **Provide attribution:** Students should provide proper attribution and credit to the source of the AI tool or technique when using AI technologies.
- **Seek guidance:** When unsure whether the use of AI is appropriate for a particular assignment or project, students should seek guidance from their teacher or instructor.

Student use of AI technology must be consistent with The Texas Girls School's expectations regarding academic integrity. Misuse of AI tools may be considered academic cheating, dishonesty, or plagiarism.

4.3. Technology & STEM Integration

As a STEM-focused, tech-forward school, The Texas Girls School equips students with advanced digital tools to enhance learning. Our computer technology is used under teacher supervision for approved educational purposes. Students and parents must review and agree to the Student Acceptable Use Policy upon registration.

4.4. Grading Guidelines

Approved grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated to students and their parents by the classroom teacher. These guidelines establish:

- The categories and weights of assignments, projects, and examinations required for each grading period;
- How the student's mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.);
- Circumstances under which a student will be allowed to redo an assignment or retake an examination that the student originally failed; and
- Procedures for a student to follow after an absence.

4.5. Guidelines to Retake or Redo a Failed Assignment

A student who meets the criteria outlined in the grading guidelines is permitted a reasonable opportunity to redo an assignment or retake a test for which they received a failing grade.

The individual teacher or collaborative team will determine which assignment(s) or test(s) are eligible for a redo or retake. These guidelines must be consistent across grade levels or courses and clearly communicated to students and parents. Students who receive a failing grade due to academic dishonesty are not eligible for a redo or retake opportunity.

- Students must complete the retake or redo opportunity within five school days of the notification to the student of a failing grade.
- Students must participate in any re-teaching or review activities assigned by the teacher in preparation for redoing an assignment or test.
- Students who receive a failing grade due to a violation of academic dishonesty are not eligible for the retake or redo opportunity.
- Students may redo or retake assignments with the opportunity to earn a replacement grade of at least a 70.

4.6. Grade Reporting

Progress Reports and Report Cards are available electronically through Ascender. If a parent is unable to access Ascender, a printed copy may be requested from the School Registrar.

- **Progress Reports** are issued after the fourth week of each nine-week grading period.
- **Report Cards** are posted at the end of each nine-week grading period.

Grades are updated weekly, and parents are encouraged to regularly monitor their student's progress through Ascender. These reports serve as a primary form of communication between teachers and families, reflecting both academic performance and effort. Parents are encouraged to schedule conferences with teachers as needed.

Access the Ascender Parent Portal through the link below:
<https://portals13.ascendertx.com/ParentPortal/login?distid=246803>

If a student earns a grade below 70% in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be asked to meet with the teacher to discuss academic progress. Parents will also be notified if tutorials are required.

Questions regarding grade calculations should first be addressed with the teacher. If concerns remain unresolved, a conference with a Principal may be requested. Per state law, a test or course grade issued by a teacher may not be changed unless the Board of Directors determines that the grade was:

- Arbitrary,
- Contained an error, or
- Issued in violation of the school's grading policy.

4.7. Promotion Requirements

A student may be promoted based on academic achievement and/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 (without notations that the student is performing

lower on original work) and successfully complete all assigned coursework. Students must demonstrate mastery of grade-level content on benchmark tests – with limited exceptions. In addition, at certain grade levels a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the state-mandated assessment test and meet the 95% attendance rule (see “Attendance Policy” section). All grades are final; students will receive the grade that was earned.

A parent may request in writing that a student repeat any grade in grades 6 and 7. Before granting the request, the leadership team may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request, and will invite the parent to participate.

4.8. Special Programs

Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English

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

Special Education Services

To be eligible to receive Special Education services, the student must have a disability, and as a result of the disability, the student has a need for specialized services. The school has the responsibility of identifying, locating, and evaluating individuals with disabilities who are 3 to 21 years of age and who fall within the school’s jurisdiction. If you know or suspect that your student has a disability, please contact the Assistant Principal of Instruction for information about available programs, assessments, and services.

Special education services are specifically designed to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. Each student who receives special education services has an Individual Education Plan (“IEP”) which is developed by the student’s Admission, Review, and Dismissal (“ARD”) Committee. The ARD Committee considers the student’s disability and determines appropriate accommodations, supplementary aids, and/or services that are necessary for the student to participate in the general curriculum. At any point, the student does not fulfill their responsibilities (e.g., completing classwork or homework, participating in class, and/or following the student code of conduct), the administration reserves the right to administratively withdraw the student.

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is the Assistant Principal of Instruction.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within fifteen school days, the Committee must decide if the evaluation is needed. If evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The school must complete the evaluation and the report within 45 school days of the date the school receives the written consent.

The school must give a copy of the report to the parent.

Following the completion of an evaluation, the school must hold an Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee meeting within 30 calendar days.

If the school determines that the evaluation is not needed, the school will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the student will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights if they disagree with the school. Additionally, a copy of the "Notice of Procedural Safeguards: Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities" will be provided.

The "Notice of Procedural Safeguards: Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities" can be obtained from the school office or at the Texas Education Agency Special Education Website: www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed. For further information, please contact the Assistant Principal of Instruction.

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

Section 504 Services

To become eligible for services and protections under Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, a student must be determined, as a result of an evaluation, to have a "physical or mental impairment" that substantially limits one or more major life activities. If a student has, or is suspected of having, a disability under this act and requires special services, parents or teachers should contact the Assistant Principal of Instruction for information concerning available programs, assessments, and services.

Dyslexia and Related Disorders

From time to time, students may be tested and, where appropriate, treated for dyslexia and related disorders in accordance with programs, rules, and standards approved by the State. Parents will be notified should the school determine a need to identify or assess their student for dyslexia and related disorders.

4.9. Testing

At The Texas Girls School, we believe standardized testing provides a useful snapshot of student progress but does not define our hands-on, STEM-focused approach to learning.

- Students will take the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) as required by the Texas Education Agency. These assessments measure knowledge against state standards.
- As part of our commitment to academic excellence, we follow the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum and participate in statewide assessments, including TELPAS for English language learners.
- Beyond STAAR, we may administer nationally norm-referenced exams to assess student performance on a broader scale.

4.10. Tutorials

Students are encouraged and may be required to see teachers for tutoring schedules, including mandatory tutoring before school, after school, or on Saturday. Any contact with teachers concerning the tutoring or the student's progress must be made by the parent.

Private tutoring is the responsibility of the parent. Teachers are not permitted to privately tutor their students for pay.

5. Student Code of Conduct

5.1. **Purpose of the Student Code of Conduct**

To function properly, education must provide an equal learning opportunity for all students by recognizing, valuing, and addressing their individual needs. Beyond the standard curriculum, principles and practices of good citizenship should be taught and exemplified by school staff. Guided by our mission to empower young women through personalized STEM-focused academics, The Texas Girls School is committed to fostering an environment that nurtures both intellectual and personal growth. To support this, we have established this Student Code of Conduct in accordance with state law and our open-enrollment charter as required by as required by [Chapter 37](#) of the Texas Education Code. Adopted by the Board of Directors, the Code provides information to parents and students regarding behavioral expectations, consequences of misconduct, and procedures for administering discipline.

The Student Code of Conduct does not define all types and aspects of student behavior, as The Texas Girls School may impose campus or classroom rules in addition to those found in the Student Code of Conduct. These rules may be posted in classrooms or given to the student and may or may not constitute violations of the Student Code of Conduct. When students participate in student activities, they will also be expected to follow the guidelines and constitutions that further specify The Texas Girls School organization's expectations, student behavior, and consequences.

5.2. **Authority and Jurisdiction**

The school may discipline a student for any violation of the Student Code of Conduct committed while a student is:

- on school property;
- within 300 feet of school property as measured from any point on the real property boundary line;
- attending any school-related or school-sponsored activity, no matter when or where it takes place;
- on the property of another school;
- attending another school's school-sponsored or school-related activity; or
- off school property, including online activity and social media activity if
 - the violation causes a material and/or substantial disruption at school, or
 - it is reasonably foreseeable to school officials that the violation will cause a material and/or substantial disruption at school.
- When retaliation against a school employee, board member, or volunteer occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location;
- When a student engages in bullying/cyberbullying as provided by Texas Education Code 37.0832;

- When the student commits a felony, as provided by Texas Education Code 37.006 or 37.0081

The school may also discipline a student for any offense listed in Sections 37.006(a) or 37.007(a), (b), and (d) of the Texas Education Code, no matter when or where the offense takes place.

5.3. Responsibilities of Staff, Parents, and Students

Each member of the school community must fulfill certain responsibilities if a positive learning environment is to be achieved. A cooperative relationship among staff, parents, and students requires that:

School Staff

- maintain an atmosphere conducive to good behavior;
- are in regular attendance and on time, and are prepared to perform their duties with appropriate working materials;
- exhibit an attitude of respect toward individuals and property and conduct themselves in a responsible manner;
- plan a flexible curriculum to meet the needs of all students;
- promote effective training and discipline based upon fair and impartial treatment of all students;
- encourage parents to keep in regular communication with the school and encourage parental participation in school affairs;
- develop a cooperative working relationship among staff and students; and
- obey school policies and regulations.

Parents

- ensure their student's compliance with school attendance requirements and promptly report and explain absences and tardiness to the school;
- assist their student in being properly attired;
- take an active interest in the overall school program;
- communicate regularly with the school concerning their student's conduct and progress;
- discuss report cards and work assignments with their student;
- bring to the attention of school authorities any problem or condition that affects their student;
- maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers at the school;
- cooperate with the Principal and teachers in their efforts to achieve and maintain a quality school system; and
- provide transportation for their students to and from mandatory tutorials.

Students

- attend all classes daily and on time;

- prepare for each class, taking appropriate materials and assignments to class;
- meet school standards of grooming and dress;
- exhibit an attitude of respect and courtesy toward individuals and property, and conduct themselves in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline;
- refrain from making profane, insulting, threatening, or inflammatory remarks;
- refrain from engaging in disruptive conduct or cheating;
- obey all school and classroom rules;
- seek changes in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner through approved channels;
- respect the rights and privileges of students, teachers, and other staff and volunteers;
- cooperate with and assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline; and
- adhere to the requirements of the Student Code of Conduct.

5.4. Discipline Management Techniques

Disciplinary management techniques are designed to improve conduct and to encourage students to adhere to their responsibilities as members of the school community. Disciplinary action will draw on the professional judgment of teachers and administrators and a range of discipline management techniques. Discipline will be correlated to the seriousness of the offense, the student's age and grade level, the frequency of misbehavior, the student's attitude, the effect of the misconduct on the school environment, and statutory requirements. Because of these factors, discipline for a particular offense may bring into consideration varying techniques and responses.

The safety of students is a priority and goal for The Texas Girls School. All stakeholders (staff, students, parents, and community members) must assist The Texas Girls School in creating and maintaining a safe and orderly environment free of bullying, teasing, harassment, violence, weapons, etc. We appreciate all help and support in assisting The Texas Girls School to reach this goal.

Techniques

The following discipline management techniques may be used—alone or in combination—for behavior prohibited by the Student Code of Conduct or by campus or classroom rules:

- Assignment of school duties, such as cleaning or picking up litter.
- Behavioral contracts.
- Cooling-off time or a brief “time-out” period.
- Behavior coaching
- Counseling by school staff.
- Rewards for positive behavior.
- Demerits.
- Detention.
- Expulsion.

- Grade reductions for cheating, plagiarism, and otherwise permitted by policy.
- In-school suspension.
- Out-of-school suspension.
- Parent-teacher conferences.
- Restorative discipline practices.
- School-assessed and school-administered probation (final warning contracts).
- Seating changes within the classroom.
- Sending the student to the office or another assigned area.
- Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process.
- Verbal correction, oral or written.
- Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in extracurricular activities or field trips.
- Referral to outside agency or legal authority for criminal prosecution in addition to measures imposed by The Texas Girls School.
- Other strategies and consequences as determined by school officials.

5.5. Restorative Discipline Practices

The Texas Girls School may utilize a wide variety of restorative discipline practices, which are designed to build a sense of school community based on cooperation, mutual understanding, trust, and respect, and emphasize the importance of positive relationships and pro-social relationships between students. Specifically, The Texas Girls School believes that when students engage in inappropriate conduct, restorative discipline practices may hold the potential to:

- Build trust, respect, and relationships
- Develop self-discipline and positive behaviors
- Encourage accountability and responsibility in the school community
- Establish mutual understanding
- Help students understand the harm caused by the misconduct
- Identify and respond to the needs of the person harmed and the person who caused the harm
- Increase parent partnerships
- Reintegrate students who have caused harm in the school community
- Strengthen school culture

Essentially, the restorative approach sees misbehavior or conflict as an opportunity for students to learn about consequences for their actions, develop empathy for others, and learn methods to make amends in a way that strengthens interpersonal bonds.

Examples of restorative discipline practices may include, but are not limited to:

- Affective statements;
- Apologies;
- Reflective writing

- Service to the School/Community
- Collaborative problem-solving circles
- Community building circles;
- Mediation;
- Relationship building;
- Repairing harm circles;
- Restitution
- Restorative circles or conferences, and
- Restorative dialogues/making agreements.

Restorative discipline practices may take the form of alternatives in lieu of other disciplinary consequences allowed under the Code of Conduct and/or supplemental action taken along with other disciplinary consequences.

Restorative discipline practices are a collaborative process and may not be required or appropriate in all student discipline situations.

5.6. Physical Restraint

School staff may, within the scope of their duties, use and apply physical restraint to a student that they reasonably believe is necessary to:

- protect a person, including the person using physical restraint, from imminent physical injury;
- obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object;
- protect property from imminent serious damage;
- preventing students from fleeing when fleeing would put the student, other students, or others in imminent danger.

5.7. Code of Conduct Violations

Abuse

Actions or threats of actions that constitute verbal or physical abuse of any employee or volunteer of the school by a student or any other individual will not be tolerated. Appropriate measures necessary to correct these situations shall be taken by the school, including expulsion.

Academic Dishonesty

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests and disciplinary penalties following the Student Code of Conduct.

Academic dishonesty includes cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism, and unauthorized communication between students during an examination. The

determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher or other supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students.

Academic Offenses

Students found to have academic offenses shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests and disciplinary penalties following the Student Code of Conduct.

Academic offenses may include, but are not limited to: incomplete homework assignments, missing assignments, late assignments, missing after-school and before-school tutorials, and failure to return signed papers.

Alcoholic Beverages

Any student found to have sold, given, delivered, been in possession of, or been under the influence of any alcoholic beverage while in school or while a participant in or spectator of a school-sponsored event shall be subject to disciplinary penalties under the Student Code of Conduct. An "alcoholic beverage" means any beverage containing alcohol, including wine or beer. A student is considered "in possession" if she has contact with the alcohol, regardless of the amount of time it is in the student's possession. If a student comes into possession of alcohol, she needs to immediately inform an adult on campus. The smell of alcohol detectable on one's breath is sufficient evidence to indicate being "under the influence."

Bomb Threats

Any threat of this type will not be tolerated. A student making a bomb threat will be subject to expulsion and dealt with to the full extent of the law.

Conduct While Riding in School Vehicles

The Principal shall take steps to maintain acceptable student conduct while riding a school vehicle. Students who fail to follow the behavioral standards described in this Handbook (see "Transportation") may be denied the privilege of school transportation. Parental involvement will be sought before a student is excluded from riding a school vehicle, except in situations involving a flagrant violation. Flagrant violations include fighting, gross insubordination, and other acts that may cause a safety hazard. It should be understood by all that the driver has the responsibility for maintaining order in her school vehicle. It is the duty of the Principal, not the driver, to exclude a student from riding a school vehicle. However, the driver is not prohibited from exercising reasonable judgment to protect other passengers from bodily harm.

Disruptive Activity

To protect student safety and sustain an educational program free from disruption, state law permits the school to take action against any person—student or non-student—who:

- interferes with the movement of people in an exit, an entrance, or a hallway of a school building without authorization from the Principal;
- interferes with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building;
- uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly;
- uses force, violence, or threats to disrupt an assembly;
- interferes with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to school property;
- uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving school property without authorization from the Principal;
- disrupts the conduct of classes or other school activities while on school property or on public property that is within 500 feet of school property (disruption includes making loud noises; enticing, attempting to entice, preventing, or attempting to prevent a student from attending a required class or school activity; entering a classroom without the consent of either the Principal or the teacher and, through either acts of misconduct or the use of loud or profane language, disrupting class activities); or
- interferes with the transportation of students in school vehicles.

Electronic Devices

Students are not allowed to access personal electronic devices during the school day. All cell phones must be secured in a Yondr pouch upon arrival, and other devices require prior approval. Items used without permission will be collected and returned per school policy.

Electronic Equipment in the Classroom

Students may only use audiovisual or electronic equipment in the classroom with permission from the teacher. These items include, but are not limited to, audio or video taping equipment. The school is not responsible for the damage, loss, or theft of these items.

Exposure

Inappropriate exposure of body parts, even without any sexual intent, is a serious offense and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Gambling

Students are forbidden to gamble in a school building or on school property.

Gang-Free Zones/Gang Activity

Any student found to have engaged in organized criminal activity, gang-related, and other criminal acts will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Student behavior considered to be "gang-related" will not be tolerated at school or any school activity, regardless of the location of the activity. This includes, but is not limited to: articles of clothing, hand signs, graffiti, and any other behaviors considered by the administration to interfere with the educational program of the school.

Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, Religion, National Origin, Sex, Gender, or Disability

Students must not engage in harassing behavior directed toward another student. Harassment is chronically annoying, aggressive, or intimidating behavior towards another individual.

Students are expected to treat other students and school staff with courtesy and respect, to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive, and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop.

The school encourages parental and student support in its efforts to address and prevent harassment in any form in schools. Students and/or parents are encouraged to discuss their questions or concerns about the expectations in this area with a teacher or with their Principal.

A student who believes she has been harassed by another student or by school staff is encouraged to report the incident in writing to the Principal. The allegations will be investigated and addressed. A substantiated complaint against a student will result in appropriate disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense and the Student Code of Conduct.

The student or a parent may appeal the decision of the Principal following the school grievance procedure (see "Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns").

Harmful Drugs

The Texas Girls School enforces a zero-tolerance policy on harmful drugs to protect the health and safety of all students.

Definition

Harmful Drugs include marijuana (all forms), controlled substances, dangerous drugs, narcotics, stimulants, depressants, simulated controlled substances, and abusable inhalants (e.g., glue, aerosol paint, thinners), as defined by state and federal law.

Possession

A student is in possession if the substance is on their person, belongings, or in any area under their control (e.g., locker, backpack, vehicle), even briefly. Students must report any accidental possession immediately to a staff member.

Use or Influence

A student is in violation of this policy if they are found to be using or under the influence of a harmful drug while on school grounds or at any school-sponsored event. Observable signs of impairment, confirmed by school staff, may be considered evidence of being under the influence.

Distribution or Intent to Distribute

Intent to distribute includes possessing quantities inconsistent with personal use, packaging materials, distribution-related communication, or transferring substances to others.

Consequences

Violations will result in disciplinary action per the Student Code of Conduct, including but limited to:

- Suspension
- Referral to law enforcement
- Required participation in a drug rehabilitation program
- Expulsion, particularly for distribution or repeat offenses

Medication Exception

A student may not keep in their possession any medication, even medication for which they have a prescription (see "Medication Policies"). The only exception to this policy is doctor-prescribed asthma medication (see "Asthma and Anaphylaxis Medication").

Hazing/Bullying

Texas Laws prohibit students from engaging in, encouraging, aiding, or assisting in hazing or bullying. Hazing is defined as harassment, humiliation, and/or embarrassment of other students, which may or may not include some physical abuse. Bullying is defined as written, verbal, or physical conduct that, in the judgment of the Principal, is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the student and is harmful to a student or a student's property. A student found to have engaged in, encouraged, aided, assisted in, or had knowledge of and failed to report a hazing or bullying incident will be subject to discipline.

Inappropriate Sexual Conduct

Inappropriate sexual conduct encompasses any inappropriate, indecent, or offensive act that implies or involves contact of a sexual nature.

Insensitivity to Others

Inappropriate verbal or physical behavior that is motivated due to race, ethnicity, culture, gender, or disability will not be tolerated.

Interference with School Activities or Discipline

Any student whose conduct, whether in class or out, materially and substantially interferes with school activities, school-sponsored functions (whether on public or private property), or school discipline, or invades the rights of school staff or other students, shall be subject to disciplinary penalties following the Student Code of Conduct.

"Conduct" includes, but is not limited to, the following activities:

- preparing, circulating, or presenting petitions which interrupt the school day;
- displaying on or about their person, books, materials, locker, or vehicle, symbols, arm bands, flags, pennants, signs, or other decorations that are related to violence and/or gangs; and
- preparation, printing, publishing, or distributing any unauthorized publication, periodical, paper, pamphlet, magazine, or book.

School Property

A good citizen, among other things, takes pride in the care of school property, realizing that the appearance of the building and campus is a credit or discredit to themself, as well as to the student body in general.

Any student found to have intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly damaged or destroyed school property shall be required to compensate the school for the full extent of the damage and shall be subject to disciplinary measures. Students found to have intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly damaged or destroyed school property may be refused admittance to school or school-sponsored functions until full restitution has been made for such damages.

Self Defense

The privilege of self-defense is limited. A claim of self-defense in the use of physical force will not exempt a student from discipline when:

- the student provokes, invites, or encourages the use of physical force by another person;
- the student has an opportunity to avoid physical force or to inform school staff of the threatened use of force;
- the student uses physical force after the other party abandons or attempts to abandon a fight or confrontation;
- the student does not attempt to walk away from a confrontation; or
- the student does not attempt to get help from school staff.

Threats

Oral or written threats to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, an employee, or school property, including threats made using the Internet or other computer resources at school, will not be tolerated. A threat assessment is required to be completed when a threat is made. A committee will determine the outcome based on the severity of the threat.

Tobacco

Tobacco products, matches, lighters, etc., are not permitted at school or school-related functions. A student is considered "in possession" if they have contact with tobacco or tobacco products, regardless of the amount of time it is in the student's possession. If a

student comes into possession of tobacco or a tobacco product or e-cigarettes, or vaping products, she needs to immediately inform an adult on campus.

Smoking and using smokeless tobacco, e-cigs, vapor devices, or tobacco products are not permitted in school buildings, vehicles, or on school property, 300 feet from school property, or at school-related or school-sanctioned events off school property.

Weapons

A student shall not possess, exhibit, use, or threaten to exhibit or use any firearm, explosive weapons, knife, or materials that could be used as a weapon to inflict physical harm or damage to persons or property on school property or at any school-related function, whether on or off school property. A student is considered "in possession" if they have contact with a weapon, regardless of the amount of time it is in the student's possession. If a student comes into possession of a weapon, they need to immediately inform an adult on campus. Weapons include, but are not limited to:

- Firearm: any device designed, made, or adapted to expel a projectile through a barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance, or any device readily convertible to that use;
- Knife: a blade or a hand instrument designed to cut or stab another by being thrown, a dagger, a bowie knife, a sword, or a spear;
- Club: an instrument that is specifically designed, made, or adapted to inflict serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with the instrument;
- Explosive weapon;
- Firearm silencer;
- Knuckles (i.e., brass knuckles);
- Chemical dispensing device (such as mace or pepper spray);
- Zip gun;
- Any object used in a way that threatens to inflict bodily injury on another person;
- Firearm ammunition;
- Fireworks of any kind, smoke or stink bombs, or any other pyrotechnic device;
- Chains;
- Razors (including box cutters);
- Pellet gun;
- BB gun;
- Stun gun;
- Airgun; and
- Toys that imitate weapons ("lookalikes").

5.8. Conferences, Hearings, and Appeals

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

5.9. Suspension

In addition to the above list of Student Code of Conduct violations, an Administrator has the authority to suspend a student for any of the following additional reasons:

- the need to further investigate an incident,
- a recommendation to expel the student, or
- an emergency constituting endangerment to health or safety.

Prerequisites to Suspension

Before suspending a student, an Administrator or appointee must attempt to hold an informal conference with the student to:

- notify the student of the accusations against them
- allow the student to relate their version of the incident, and
- determine whether the student's conduct warrants suspension.

Notification to Parents

If an Administrator determines the student's conduct warrants suspension during the school day, the Administrator will notify a suspended student's parents of the period of suspension and the grounds for the suspension. Should the parent require further discussion, a meeting should be scheduled with administration through the school office.

Credit during Suspension

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

5.10. Expulsion Process

Hearing

Students alleged to have committed an expellable offense will receive a hearing before the Principal within a reasonable time following the alleged misconduct. Before the hearing, the school will send a written notice to the student and the student's parents, including:

- the basis for the proposed expulsion;
- the date, time, and location of the hearing; and
- the right of the student, at the hearing, to:
 - be present;
 - be accompanied by her parents;
 - be represented by any adult representative, including legal counsel;
 - present evidence, call witnesses, and testify; and

- be informed of the school's evidence.

After making a good faith effort to inform the student and the student's parents of the time and place of the hearing, the school shall hold the hearing regardless of whether the student, the student's parents, or another adult representing the student attends. The Principal shall audio record the hearing.

Expulsion Order

Within seven days following the hearing on expulsion, the Principal will notify the student and the student's parents in writing of their decision. If the outcome of the expulsion hearing is that the student will be expelled, the Principal will enter an expulsion order and provide a copy to the student and the student's parents specifying:

- the length of the expulsion;
- the procedures for re-admittance at the end of the expulsion period, if applicable; and
- the right to appeal the Principal's decision.

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

Appeals

The student or a parent may appeal the decision of the Principal per the school grievance procedure (see "Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns").

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

Effect of Student Withdrawal

If a student withdraws from the school before the expulsion hearing is conducted or an expulsion order is entered, the school may continue with the proceedings and enter an order. If the school fails to enter an expulsion order after the student withdraws, the next district in which the student enrolls may complete the proceedings and enter an order.

No Credit Earned

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

5.11. Appeal to the Board of Directors

The student or their parents may appeal the extended suspension or expulsion decision to the Board of Directors by notifying the Principal in writing within five calendar days of the date of receipt of the Principal's or designee's decision. The student and/or their parent(s) will be informed of the date, time, and location of the meeting in which the disciplinary consequence will be reviewed. The Board of Directors will review the disciplinary administrative record and any audio recording or transcription/minutes of any hearings or conferences before the

Principal or designee at a regular or specially called meeting in closed session as permitted by the Texas Open Meetings Act. The appeal shall be limited to the issues and documents considered during the disciplinary consequence, except that if the administration intends to rely on evidence not included in the expulsion record, the administration shall provide the student or parent(s) notice of the nature of the evidence at least three days before the Board of Directors' meeting.

The Board of Directors may, but is not required to, allow an opportunity for the student or parent(s) and the administration to each make a presentation and provide rebuttal, and an opportunity for questioning by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will consider the appeal and may request that the administration explain the disciplinary decision.

The Board of Directors will communicate its decision, if any, orally or in writing before or during the next regularly scheduled Board of Directors' meeting. If no decision is made by the end of the next regularly scheduled Board of Directors' meeting, the Principal or designee's decision concerning the disciplinary action appeal shall be upheld. The Board of Directors may not delegate its authority to issue a decision, and any decision by the Board of Directors is final and may not be appealed.

As stated above, disciplinary consequences will not be deferred pending the outcome of an appeal of an extended suspension or expulsion to the Board of Directors.

5.12. Suspension/Expulsion Requirements for Special Education

A student with a disability shall not be excluded from her current placement pending appeal to the Board of Directors for more than ten days without ARD Committee action to determine appropriate services in the interim. Pending appeal to a special education hearing officer, unless the school and parents agree otherwise, a student with a disability shall remain in the present education setting.

Placement of Students with Disabilities

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

5.13. Emergency Removal

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

the reason for the action, and appropriate hearings will be scheduled within a reasonable time after the emergency removal.

5.14. Administrative Withdraw

At any point, the student does not fulfill their responsibilities (e.g., completing classwork or homework, participating in class, and/or following the student code of conduct), The Texas Girls School administration reserves the right to administratively withdraw the student. Parents will be notified via conference or phone call should the student reach this level.

6. Especially for Parents

6.1. **Consent to Provide a Mental-Health Care Service**

The Texas Girls School will not provide mental health care services or conduct medical screenings as part of intervention procedures, except as permitted by law. When necessary, a risk assessment will be completed to determine the appropriate level of support or intervention in compliance with legal guidelines.

The school has established procedures for recommending interventions to a parent when a student shows early warning signs of mental health concerns, substance abuse, or suicide risk. The Dean of Students will notify the parent within a reasonable time after learning of such signs and provide information about available counseling options.

Procedures are also in place for staff to notify the Dean of Students when a student may need support.

The mental health liaison can offer more information about these procedures, including curriculum materials on identifying risk factors, accessing treatment and support resources on and off campus, and utilizing available student accommodations.

6.2. **Notice of Teacher Qualifications**

Parents may submit a request for information regarding the professional qualifications of their student'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.

Parents also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to their student.

6.3. **Surveys and Activities**

Students will not be required to participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education without parental consent if it concerns:

- political affiliations or beliefs of the student or parent
- mental or psychological problems of the student or family
- sexual behavior or attitudes

- illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
- critical appraisals of close family members
- privileged relationships (e.g., with lawyers, doctors, ministers)
- religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent
- income (unless required by law for program eligibility or financial aid)

Parents may inspect the survey or instrument and any related instructional materials.

“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities

Parents have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for their student’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 their student to market or sell that information;
- any non-emergency, invasive physical examination, or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student (exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law).

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

Parents may request that their student be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires that students in social studies classes in grades 3- 12 recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless:

- the parent provides a written statement requesting that their student be excused,
- the school determines that the student has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or
- the parent is a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity.

7. Appendix

7.1. Annual Notice of Parent and Student Rights (Annual FERPA Confidentiality Notice)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) affords Parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights concerning the student’s educational records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student’s education record within 45 days after the day The Texas Girls School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child’s or their education records should submit to the Principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Principal or designee will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

- The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask The Texas Girls School to amend their child’s or their education records should write to the Principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If The Texas Girls School decides not to amend the records as requested by the parent or eligible student, The Texas Girls School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- The right to provide written consent before The Texas Girls School discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A “school official” is:

- A person employed by The Texas Girls School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel);
- A person serving on the Board of Directors;

- A volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by The Texas Girls School, performs an institutional service or function for which The Texas Girls School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of The Texas Girls School with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or providers of video conferencing or other virtual learning software apps to hold classes or conduct classroom activities virtually;
- A parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or
- A parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, The Texas Girls School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled, if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by The Texas Girls School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Notice of Directory Information

FERPA, a federal law, requires that The Texas Girls School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent before the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, The Texas Girls School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised The Texas Girls School to the contrary following The Texas Girls School's procedures.

Directory Information for School-Related Purposes:

The Texas Girls School has designated the following categories of information as directory information for the purpose of disclosure for school-related purposes:

- Student name;
- Address and telephone listing;
- Date and place of birth;

- Dates of attendance;
- Degrees, honors, and awards received;
- Grade level;
- Major field of study;
- Most recent educational institution attended;
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- Photographs (including video images); and
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams.

School-related purposes are those events/activities that The Texas Girls School conducts and/or sponsors to support the school's educational mission. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Extracurricular programs or events (e.g., playbills or programs for events such as school plays, concerts, athletic events, graduation ceremony, etc.).
- Honor roll and other student recognition lists.
- Marketing materials of The Texas Girls School (e.g., using directory information for print media, website, or social media accounts operated by The Texas Girls School, videos, newspaper articles, etc.).
- Publications (e.g., printing student names and pictures in newsletters and yearbooks, etc.), including sharing directory information with companies that have a contractual relationship with The Texas Girls School and that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks.

Directory Information Supplied to Military and College Recruiters:

Two federal laws require The Texas Girls School to provide military recruiters or an institution of higher education, upon request, with access to the name, address, and telephone listing of each secondary student served by The Texas Girls School, unless Parents have advised The Texas Girls School that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

Directory Information Supplied to Law Enforcement Officials and Authorities:

The Texas Girls School has designated the following categories of information as directory information for purposes of responding to requests for general student information made by law enforcement officials and authorities: student's name, address, and telephone number.

The Texas Girls School shall not release directory information except for the purposes indicated above, namely, disclosure relating to school-related purposes; for disclosure to military recruiters and institutions of higher education for secondary students; and the purpose of disclosure upon request by law enforcement officials and authorities.

IF YOU DO NOT WANT THE TEXAS GIRLS SCHOOL TO DISCLOSE ANY OR ALL OF THE TYPES OF INFORMATION DESIGNATED ABOVE AS DIRECTORY INFORMATION FROM YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION

RECORDS WITHOUT YOUR PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT, YOU MUST NOTIFY THE TEXAS GIRLS SCHOOL IN WRITING WITHIN 10 DAYS AFTER RECEIVING THIS "NOTICE OF PARENT AND STUDENT RIGHTS (ANNUAL FERPA CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE)."

Disclosure of PII without Consent

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires The Texas Girls School to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have the right to inspect and review the record of disclosures.

The Texas Girls School may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the Parents or the eligible student:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution, whom The Texas Girls School has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom The Texas Girls School has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled, if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the Texas Education Agency. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system

and the system's ability to effectively serve, before adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))

- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
- To Parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
- Information The Texas Girls School has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

7.2. McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001

Homeless children and youth are ensured specific educational rights and protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001. "Children and youth who are homeless," as defined by this federal law, means and includes children who:

- Are abandoned in hospitals, or are awaiting foster care placement.
- Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations.
- Are living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations.
- Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
- Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Children who are homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain policies and procedures, including proof of residency requirements; immunization requirements; educational program placement; award of credit; eligibility requirements for participating in extracurricular activities; continuing enrollment in the "school of origin" or enrollment in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing; graduation requirements; and other related matters.

Questions concerning assistance offered to homeless students can be obtained from the Dean of Students, students@texasgirlsschool.org.

7.3. Student Acceptable Use Policy

Computer Resources

To prepare students for an increasingly computerized society, the school has made a substantial investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of those resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students with access to school computers and their parents agree to follow the following user agreement regarding the use of these resources. Violations of this agreement may result in the withdrawal of computer privileges and other disciplinary action. Electronic communications, such as e-mail using school computers, are not private and may be monitored by school staff.

Technology Mission Statement

The school is committed to utilizing the maximum potential of technology to enhance student learning and increase teacher effectiveness by providing students with technology-related experiences. Recognizing the ever-changing influences of technology on all aspects of our lives, the school is dedicated to providing an integrated technological curriculum for all students and staff. Students will have access to the technology necessary to produce, manage, communicate, and efficiently retrieve information for educational use. In the attainment of both present and future goals, the school will provide a continually evolving staff development program oriented toward the integration of technology in the areas of curriculum.

Instructional Resource

The school is proud to bring network and Internet access to the school staff and students. The school believes the Internet offers many diverse and unique resources to both students and staff. The school's goal in providing this service to staff and students is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovative teaching, and communication skills.

The Internet is a global electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers. Services available to our school Internet users include:

1. educational opportunities and electronic field trips,
2. public domain software and shareware,
3. access to university libraries and various museums,
4. online encyclopedias,
5. access to research databases,
6. access to hundreds of reference sources,
7. online subscriptions to educational journals,
8. virtual classrooms and laboratory simulations, and
9. information and news from NASA and other research institutions.

Through the school, students and staff have access to numerous research-oriented and instructional resources via the Internet. Online encyclopedias, professional journals, and databases filled with timely information on thousands of topics are just a few of the resources provided. Computers at the school have the technology necessary to support student research and to promote academic achievement.

Student Safety

The school is aware that resources that are inappropriate or not designed for use in the educational setting may be accessed on the Internet. To protect students and staff from such inappropriate material, the school's Internet access is filtered with one of the highest-rated Internet filtering systems available. However, users must recognize that the school can't restrict access to all controversial material, and individuals must be responsible for their actions in navigating the network.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure school-level compliance with all procedures and regulations regarding the local area network and Internet usage. All students, parents, teachers, administrators, and school staff who obtain their Internet access through the school are expected to use these services appropriately.

User Responsibilities

- The school is providing Internet resources for educational purposes only. Student/staff use of Internet resources must be related to an expressed educational and/or administrative goal or objective.
- The use of the school Internet and computer network must be in support of educational goals, research, and class assignments, and be consistent with the educational objectives of the school.
- Users must have a valid, authorized account to access the network and use only those computer resources that are authorized. Accounts may be used only in accordance with authorized purposes.

- Individual accounts may be used only by the owner of the account, except where specifically authorized by school administrators. In the case of class accounts, all use must be under the supervision of the sponsoring teacher/supervisor.
- The user is responsible for safeguarding the computer account. Users are expected to protect access to accounts by periodically changing the password and keeping it confidential. They must respect the privacy of others by not tampering with their files, passwords, or accounts.

Policy Terms and Conditions

Acceptable Use

Users are to properly use school network resources for educational and/or administrative purposes. Respectful and responsible network etiquette and behavior should be in keeping with the school's mission statement. Students and staff are expressly prohibited from accessing obscene, profane, vulgar, or pornographic sites or materials.

Privileges

The use of the Internet is a privilege. Abusive conduct will lead to the privilege being revoked.

Warranty

The school makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The school will not be responsible for loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed deliveries, viruses, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or user errors or omissions. Opinions, advice, services, and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers, or other third-party individuals in the system are those of the providers and not the school. The school specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the school network services.

Disclaimer of Liability

The school shall not be liable for the user's inappropriate use of electronic communication resources or violations of copyright restrictions, the user's mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The school shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy, age appropriateness, or usability of any information available on the Internet.

Monitored Use

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications system by students and staff shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated school staff to ensure appropriate use for educational or administrative purposes. Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic mail messages is prohibited. Only authorized school personnel designated by the Director of Technology Services may read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other system users. Deliberate interference with the ability of other system users to send/receive electronic mail, or the use of another

person's user ID and/or password, is prohibited. Forgery or attempted forgery will result in the cancellation of system privileges, as well as other appropriate consequences.

Vandalism

Vandalism is prohibited and will result in the cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, disrupt, or destroy data of another user of the school's network, or any of the agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses. Any of these actions may be viewed as violations of school policy, administrative regulations, and possibly as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Users must respect the privacy of other users. Users will not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or represent themselves as another user unless explicitly authorized to do so by that user. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance and/or degrade, disrupt, or bypass system security are violations of school policy and administrative regulations and may constitute criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws.

The school will, following school policy, cooperate with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the school's network.

Network Etiquette

The user is expected to exhibit the following behavior:

- Be polite;
- Use appropriate language;
- Maintain confidentiality of the user, colleagues, and students;
- Respect copyright laws; and
- Be respectful in all aspects of network use.

Consequences

Students found to have violated school policies and procedures concerning the use of school computers or networks shall be subject to disciplinary penalties following the Student Code of Conduct.

Vandalism Prohibited

Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy school equipment or data or data of another user of the school's system, or any of the agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet, is prohibited. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance are violations of school policy and administrative regulations and may constitute criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Such prohibited activity includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses. Vandalism, as defined above, will result in the suspension of system use privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with

system restoration, as well as other appropriate consequences as allowed by school policy and state and federal law.

Violations of the law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the school.