

VIDOR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
2017 - 2018



ELEMENTARY HANDBOOK
<http://www.vidorisd.org>

**2017-2018 ELEMENTARY
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

REQUIRED FORM

**Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of
Student Handbook**

My child and I have been made aware that access to the 2017-2018 Elementary Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct is available at www.vidorisd.org. The option to receive or view a paper copy is available at the campus office.

I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year and that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. If I have any questions regarding this handbook or the Code, I should direct those questions to the campus principal.

Printed name of student: _____

Signature of student: _____

Signature of parent: _____

Date: _____

Please sign and date this page and return it to the student's school.

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to Vidor Independent School District. It is our privilege to serve this community. Our goal is to ensure the best possible education for each child.

This handbook has been designed to provide information regarding policies and procedures. In order to ensure a safe and positive environment, school rules must be followed. Please read the contents of this handbook carefully.

It is our goal to inform parents of their child's academic and social progress. By working together, we will provide our students with a positive learning opportunity.

Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Wedgeworth, Principal

Oak Forest Elementary

(409) 951-8860

Jeff Leger, Principal

Vidor Elementary

(409) 951-8830

Preston Clark, Principal

Pine Forest Elementary

(409) 951- 8800

VIDOR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

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District Instructional Technologist/Webmaster	Jana Cash
Director of Technology	Janet Bradley

CAMPUS ADMINISTRATION

Oak Forest Elementary	Carolyn Wedgeworth
Pine Forest Elementary	Preston Clark Vidor
Elementary	Jeff Leger

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Note: To view Legal and Local policy go to www.vidorisd.org and access *Online Board Policy* under the **Parents** heading.

PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to 2017–2018 school year! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students.

The Vidor ISD Elementary Student Handbook is designed to provide basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. The handbook is divided into two sections:

Section I—PARENTAL RIGHTS

Parent rights are available to assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to review closely this section of the handbook.

Section II—OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

This information is organized alphabetically by topic, and where possible, further divided by applicability to ages and forward/ or grade levels, for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

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

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Vidor ISD Student Code of Conduct, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found as an attachment to this handbook or posted at the Vidor ISD web site: <http://www.vidorisd.org> .

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. Acknowledgement form or acknowledgement of electronic distribution of Student Handbook form.
2. Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information
3. Consent/Opt- Out Form

[See Objecting to the Release of Directory Information on page 3 and Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey Analysis, or Evaluation on page 4 for more information]

References to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to board policy.

A copy of the district's policy manual is available for review online at <http://www.vidorisd.org> .

SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS

This section of the Vidor ISD Elementary Student Handbook includes information related to certain rights of parents as specified in state or federal law.

CONSENT, OPT-OUT, AND REFUSAL RIGHTS

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

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

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

Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student

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

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

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

Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment

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

If you do not want corporal punishment to be administered to your child as a method of student discipline, please return the form included in the forms packet or submit a written statement to the campus principal stating this decision. A signed statement must be provided each year.

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

If the district is made aware that a student is in temporary or permanent conservatorship (custody) of the state, through foster care, kinship care, or other arrangements, corporal punishment shall not be administered, even when a signed statement prohibiting its use has not been submitted by the student’s care giver or case worker.

Limiting Electronic Communications with Students by District Employees

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

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

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

Objecting to the Release of Directory Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, permits the district to disclose appropriately designated “directory information” from a child’s educational records without written consent. “Directory information” is information that is generally not considered harmful or invasion of privacy if released. Examples include a student’s photograph for publication in the school yearbook; a student’s name and grade level for purposes of communicating class and teacher assignment; the name, weight, and height of an athlete for publication in a school athletic program; a list of student birthdays for generating school wide or classroom recognition; a student’s name and photograph posted on a district-hyphen approved and managed social media platform; and the names and grade levels of students submitted by the district

to a local newspaper or other community publications to recognize the A-B honor role for a specific grading period. This Directory information will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

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

The district has identified the following as directory information: school yearbook, news releases, and recognition activities.

Participation in Third- Party Surveys

Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey, Analysis, or Evaluation

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

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family
- Sexual behavior or attitudes
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student's eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program

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

“Opting Out” of Participation in Other Types of Surveys or Screenings and Disclosure of Personal Information

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

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

screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law. [See policies EF and FFAA.]

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

Removing a Student from Instruction or Excusing a Student from a Required Component of Instruction

Religious or Moral Beliefs

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

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

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

Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence in Grades 3-12

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

RIGHT OF ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS, CURRICULUM MATERIALS, AND DISTRICT RECORDS

Instructional Materials

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

Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent

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

Student Records

Accessing Student Records

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

- Attendance records
- Test scores
- Grades
- Disciplinary records
- Counseling records
- Psychological records
- Applications for admission
- Health and immunization information
- Other medical records
- Teacher and counselor evaluations
- Reports of behavioral patterns
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child
- Teaching materials and tests used in your child's classroom

Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records

A federal law, known as the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, affords parents and eligible students certain rights with the respect to the student's education records. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education. These rights, as discussed in this section as well as at **Objection to the Release of Directory Information** on page 3 are:

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

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

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

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

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

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

- When district school officials have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student's records. School officials would include board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or district medical staff); a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third -party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, resource officer, or volunteer); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties. “Legitimate educational interest” in a student's records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility; or investigating to the school and the student or evaluating programs.
- To authorize representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, TEA, The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) case workers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses information it has designated as directory information [see **Objecting to the Release of Directory** Information on page 3 for opportunities to prohibit this disclosure].

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

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

A parent or eligible student who provides a written request and pays copying costs of ten cents per page may obtain copies. If circumstances prevent inspection during regular school hours and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records. The address of the superintendent's office is 120 E. Bolivar, Vidor, Texas 77662.

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

Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course or on an examination is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy FNG (LEGAL). See **Report Cards/Progress Reports** page 36, and **Complaints and Concerns** on page 20 for an overview of the process.]

The district's policy regarding student records found at policy FL is available from the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's website at <http://www.vidorisd.org>.

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

Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications

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

STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Children of Military Families

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

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

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent, including a step parent or legal guardian, who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment of at least 4 months will be excused by the district. The district will excuse no more than five excused absences per year. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment.

Additional information may be found at [Military Family Resources at the Texas Education Agency](#).

Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments

Multiple Birth Siblings

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

Safety Transfers/Assignments

As a parent, you may:

- Request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the district to have been a victim of bullying. The term is defined by Education Code 37.0832. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the superintendent or principal for information.
- Consult with district administrators if your child has been determined by the district to have engaged in bullying and the board decides to transfer your child to another classroom or campus. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus.
- [See **Bullying** page 18, policy FDB, and policy FFI.]
- Request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See policy FDE]
- Request the transfer of your child to another district campus if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. If the victim does not wish to transfer, the district will transfer the assailant in accordance with policy FDE.

Service/ Assistance Animal Used by Student

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

Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services

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

A parent may request an evaluation for special education services at any time. If a parent makes a written request to a school district's director of special education services or to a district administrative employee for an initial evaluation for special education services, the school must, not later than the 15th school day after the date the school receives the request, either give the parent prior written notice of its proposal to evaluate the student, a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards, and the opportunity for the parent to give written consent for the evaluation or must give the parent prior written notice of its refusal to evaluate the student and a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards.

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

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

Upon completion, the school must give you a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

Additional information regarding special education is available from the school district in a companion document titled Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process.

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

- Texas Project First
- Partners Resource Network

Contact the campus diagnostician regarding options for your child if he/she is experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is needed.

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

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

Students who Speak a Primary Language Other Than English

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

Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504

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

- The designated person to contact regarding a referral for evaluation applicable to Section 504 is the school counselor [See policy FB]

SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

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

ABSENCES / ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day's learning on the previous day's, and to grow as

an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Two state laws-one dealing with required presence of school aged children in school, e.g., compulsory attendance, the other with how a child's attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or course credit-are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below:

Students who are absent part of the day for health-related services could be counted present for that day. A note from the Health Care Provider is necessary.

For a long period of absence, the school should be contacted so that arrangements may be made for continuance of academic work. By calling the front office, homework assignments may be collected for the students.

Compulsory Attendance

Between Ages 6 and 19

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

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

Prekindergarten and Kindergarten

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

Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance

All Grade Levels

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

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

As listed in Section I at **Children of Military Families**, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments. [See page 8 for that section.]

Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance

All Grade Levels

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

Student With Disabilities

If a student with a disability is experiencing attendance issues, the student’s ARD committee or Section 504 committee will be notified, and the 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.

Between Ages 6 and 19

When a student between ages 6 and 19 incurs unexcused absences for 3 or more days or parts of days within a four week period, the school will send a notice to the students parent, as required by law, to remind the parent that it is the parents duty to monitor his or her child’s attendance and to require the student to come to school. The notice will also inform the parent that the district will initiate truancy prevention measures and request a conference between school administrators and parent.

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

- Is absent without excuse from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, or
- Is absent without excuse on three or more days or parts of days within a four week period. For a student younger than 12 years of age, the student’s parent could be charged with an offense based on the student’s failure to attend school. If a student age 12 through age 17 violates the compulsory attendance law, both the parent and student could be charged with an offense. [See policy FEA(LEGAL).]

Attendance for Credit or Final Grade (Kindergarten Through Grade 12)

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered will be referred to the attendance review committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences. [See policy FEC.]

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

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

- If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed above at **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance** will be considered extenuating circumstances for purposes of attendance for credit or the award of a final grade.
- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district.
- In reaching a decision about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student's parent could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit or a final grade.

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

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

Official Attendance-Taking Time (All Grade Levels)

The district must submit attendance of its students to TEA reflecting attendance at specific time each day. Official attendance is taken every day.

Official attendance is taken every day at 10:00 A.M. which is during the second instructional hour as required by state rule.

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

Documentation after an Absence (all grade levels)

When a student is absent from school, the student-upon arrival or return to school-must bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence.

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

Definition of Excuse/Unexcused Absence:

Excused: A student who has been absent from school and provides written documentation that meets the Vidor ISD attendance policy

Unexcused: A student who has been absent from school and does not provide written documentation or if the documented reason does not meet the Vidor ISD attendance policy

Absences that will be considered excused:

- Personal illness with documentation provided by one of the following:
- Signature of a parent or guardian (up to and including the sixth absence)
- Signature of the school nurse
- Signature of a doctor or other health care official when the student has been absent for the entire day (the parent of a student cannot serve as parent and health care official)
- Death in the immediate family:
- Immediate family includes: parents, grandparents, and siblings (both natural and step)
- Three days allowed
- Court proceedings (other than for truancy filings) with supporting documentation signed by the court
- Inclement weather conditions that can be validated by district officials
- All student suspensions
- Religious holy days
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship
- Documented health-care appointments; including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student's return to campus.
- All absences covered under Texas Education Code Section 25.087 (b)

Grades EE-4 procedure to collect absence notes and mark excused or unexcused:

- After a student has accrued six absences (both excused and unexcused), all future absences will have to be accompanied by written documentation from a doctor or other health care official. (The parent/guardian of a student cannot serve as both parent and health care official.)
- Documentation to excuse an absence must be provided within three school days from the last consecutive absence.
- All absences are coded unexcused until acceptable documentation is provided that meets district guidelines for the absence to be excused
- Student submits note to homeroom teacher
- Homeroom teacher submits all notes received to the attendance office on a daily basis
- Attendance office personnel use the district policy for a guideline to determine if an absence is excused or unexcused
- All excused absences will be keyed in by attendance office personnel on the day they are submitted
- Parent/guardian may appeal any unexcused absence to the campus or grade level administrator in charge of attendance within five school days from the date of the absence. The parent/guardian is responsible for providing documentation to support the appeal. The appeal will consider:

- The evaluation of the absence reason, determination of if it should be excused, and submission to the principal for final approval of all absence notes.
- An evaluation by the counselor or principal will be made on unexcused absences in question. If approved, the unexcused absence will be changed to an excused absence.
- Situations or reasons outside the district guidelines should be classified as “unique,” and caution is to be exercised when approving any reason as excused if it falls outside district boundaries.

Parent / Student Notification

1. Three unexcused absences: Letter mailed to parents
2. Six total absences: Letter mailed to parents notifying them that all future absences will require a note from a doctor or other health care official
3. Fifteen total absences: Letter mailed to parents
4. Ten percent -When student misses 10% or more, letter mailed to parents in May to set up Attendance Committee Hearing

Documentation of Attendance Information

The campus attendance office will be the central location for student attendance records.

Individual campus departments will be responsible for filing attendance information in each student’s attendance folder.

Student attendance information will be filed within five (5) school days of the occurrence

Examples of information that is to be filed in the student attendance folder are:

- Absence notes and permits
- Copies of all court referrals
- Student attendance warning / notification letters
- Suspension and expulsion documentation as it pertains to the date’s the student is absent

- Address, phone number, parent / guardian appeal
- Conference documentation
- Unexcused absence application appeal
- Any other documentation that pertains to a student's attendance

Denial of Credit – Texas Education Code Section 25.092

General district guidelines:

- Absences will be a total of all excused and unexcused.
- Each campus will form a campus attendance hearing committee.
- A list of committee members and the designated date(s) and time(s) for attendance hearings will be established at the beginning of each year.
- Training for Attendance Hearing Committee members will be conducted, as needed, by the District Attendance Office.

ACCOUNTABILITY UNDER STATE AND FEDERAL LAW (All Grade Levels)

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

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

Information about all of these can be found on the district's website at www.vidorisd.org. Hard copies of any reports are available upon request to the district's administration office.

TEA also maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at TEA Performance Reporting Division and the TEA homepage.

BULLYING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Upon the recommendation of the administration, the board may, in response to an identified case of bullying, decide to transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's parent, the student may also be transferred to another campus in the district. The parent of a student who has been determined by the district to be a victim of bullying may request that his or her child be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district.

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 9]

A copy of each campus policy is available in the principal's office or superintendent's office, and on the district's website.

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

CELEBRATIONS (All Grade Levels)

Although a parent or grandparent is not prohibited from providing food for a school-designated function or for children in the child's or grandchild's classroom for his or her birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss this with the child's teacher prior to bringing any food in this circumstance. Occasionally, the school or a class may host certain functions or celebrations tied to the curriculum that will involve food. The school or teacher will notify students and parents of any known food allergies when soliciting potential volunteers for bringing food products. [See **Food Allergies** on page 29]

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN

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

Behavioral indicators may include verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior. Emotional warning signs to be aware of include withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school. A child who has experienced sexual abuse or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that disclosures of sexual abuse may be more indirect than disclosures of physical abuse and neglect, and it is important to be calm and comforting if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you. As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. [To find out what services may be available in your county, see Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County.]

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

- Child Welfare Information Gateway Factsheet
- Kids Health, For Parents, Child Abuse
- Texas Association Against Sexual Assault, Resources
- Texas Attorney General, What We Can Do About Child Abuse Part 1

- Texas Attorney General, What Can We Do About Child Abuse Part 2

Reports of abuse or neglect may be made to:

The CPS division of the DFPS (1-800-252-5400) or Texas Abuse Hotline Website.

COMMUNICATION-AUTOMATED

Emergency

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. An emergency purpose may include early dismissal or delayed opening because of severe weather or another emergency, or if the campus must restrict access due to a security threat. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number previously provided to the district has changed.

[See Safety on page 36 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.]

Nonemergency

Your child's school will request that you provide contact information, such as your phone number and e-mail address, in order for the school to communicate items specific to your child, your child's school, or the district. If you consent to receive such information through a landline or wireless phone, please ensure that you notify the school's administration office immediately upon a change in your phone number. The district or school may generate automated or pre-recorded messages, text messages, or real-time phone or e-mail communications that are closely related to the school's mission, so prompt notification of any change in contact information will be crucial to maintain timely communication with you. Standard messaging rates of your phone carrier may apply. If you have specific requests or needs related to how the district contacts you, please contact your child's principal. [See Safety on page 36 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.]

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

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

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

CONDUCT

Applicability of School Rules

As required by law, the board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior—both on and off campus as well as on district vehicles—and consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards

set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules. During any periods of instruction during the summer months, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

Campus Behavior Coordinator

By law, each campus has a campus behavior coordinator to apply discipline management techniques and administer consequences for certain student misconduct, as well as provide a point of contact for student misconduct. The campus behavior coordinator at each district campus is listed below:

- Oak Forest Elementary
Kyra Day
- Pine Forest Elementary
Jessica Whittington
- Vidor Elementary
Carolyn Wedgeworth

Disruptions of School Operations

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

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.

- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.

- Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district.

Social Events

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

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

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

COUNSELING

Academic Counseling Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels

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

Personal Counseling

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

DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT/RETALIATION

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

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

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

Two types of prohibited harassment are described below.

Sexual Harassment and Gender Based Harassment

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reporting Procedures

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced dating violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent. [See policy FFH (LOCAL) for other appropriate district officials to whom to make a report.] Upon receiving a report of prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by that policy. If not, the district will refer to policy FFI to determine if the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying, as defined by law and that policy. If the alleged

prohibited conduct, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct and would also be considered bullying as defined by law and policy FFI, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

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

Investigation of Report

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

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

During the course of an investigation, the district may take interim action to address the alleged prohibited conduct.

When an investigation is initiated for alleged prohibited conduct, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying, as defined by law. If so, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

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

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

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

School Materials

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

Non School Materials From Others

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

rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies at DGBA or GF.]

Prior review will not be required for:

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

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

DRESS AND GROOMING

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

- Tube tops, spaghetti strap shirts, mesh shirts, halter tops, backless shirts, open sided shirts, and shirts that expose the mid-drift will not be permitted.
- Hair shall be neat, clean, and well groomed. Students will not be allowed to wear unnatural hair colors (purple, green, orange, etc.)
- Clothing which desecrates the flag of the United States or contains objectionable symbols or language may not be worn in the building.
- Shorts may be worn by students EE-Fourth grade. Shorts must be an appropriate mid-thigh length.
- Shoes must be worn to school. Shoes with cleats or wheels will not be permitted. Any shoes that cause damage to floors are not allowed.
- Earrings may not be worn by boys. No other visible body piercing by male or female students will be allowed.
- Hats may not be worn in the building.
- Other clothing, haircuts, or hair styles that the principals deem distractible will not be permitted.

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

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Telecommunication Devices, Including Cell Phones

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess personal mobile telephones: however, these

devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. A student must have approval to possess other telecommunication devices such as netbooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable computers.

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

If a student uses a telecommunication device without authorization during the school day, the device will be confiscated. The parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunication device from the principal's office for a fee of \$15.00 after five calendar days. Proof of ownership must be provided each time.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunication device may be searched by authorized personnel.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the student code of conduct. The district will not be responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen telecommunication devices and or other electronic devices.

Possession and Use of Other Electronic Devices

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

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

Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources

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

Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources

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

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as "sexting", will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct, may in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child "Before You Text" Sexting Prevention Course, a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology.

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

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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

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

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR Spanish, as mentioned at Standardized Testing as mentioned on page 46, may be administered to an English language learner, for a student up to grade five. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to English language learners who qualify for services.

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

FUNDRAISING

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes in accordance with administrative regulations. [For further information, see policies FJ and GE.]

Gang Free Zones

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

GRADING GUIDELINES

Grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated and distributed to students and their parents by the classroom teacher. These guidelines have been reviewed by each applicable curriculum department and have been approved by the campus principal. These guidelines establish the minimum number of assignments, projects, and examinations required for each grading period. In

addition, these guidelines establish how the student's mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.) Grading guidelines also outline in what circumstances a student will be allowed to redo an assignment or retake an examination for which the student originally made a failing grade.

Grading Policy

Written notice of a students' performance in each class or subject shall be sent every four weeks. Report cards are sent each nine (9) weeks. The grading system for VISD is as follows:

90-100 = A 80-90= B 75-79= C 70-74= D 69-below= F

In grades 1-4, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based upon course-level, grade-level standards (TEKS) for all subject areas. Students must make a grade of 70 or above in three of the following: Reading, English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies (two of the three must be Reading and Mathematics).

Makeup work must be done in a reasonable amount of time, specified by the teacher, and taken to support the grade average assigned. The guidelines for grades 1-4 are:

Progress report – approximately every 4 ½ weeks. Report cards will be sent every 9 weeks.

Grades for 1-4 (English, Reading, Math)

English: Minimum of 6 grades total (not including spelling grades with spelling to only count for 10% of grades) 3 of the 6 grades will be test grades.

Reading: Minimum of 6 grades total with 3 of these as test grades.

Math: Minimum of 12 grades total with 6 of these as test grades.

Grades for 1-2 (Science, Social Studies)

Science: Minimum of 4 daily grades.

Social Studies: Minimum of 4 daily grades.

Grades for 3-4 (Science, Social Studies)

Science: Minimum of 8 daily grades (4 will come from the **Science lab** / 4 will come from the Science classroom)

Social Studies: Minimum of 4 daily grades.

Make-up work: Students shall make up assignments and tests after absences. **Unexcused absences:** The grade for make-up work after an unexcused absence shall be no higher than 70. **Suspensions:** The grade for make-up work after a suspension shall be no higher than 50.

Go to www.vidorisd.org and sign up to view your child's grades online.

HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS

Student Illness

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she won't be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools must exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods

of time as identified in state rules. For example, if your child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication. In addition, students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea free without diarrhea-suppressing medication for at least 24 hours. A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.

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

Students suspected of having contagious illnesses including, but not limited to, Chicken Pox, Fifth Disease, unknown rashes, Pink Eye or Strep Throat will be sent home to be evaluated by a physician prior to returning to school. Vidor ISD nurses will follow the guidelines set down by the CDC regarding all communicable diseases.

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

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

Bacterial Meningitis

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

- What is meningitis?

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

- What are the symptoms?

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

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

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

- How serious is bacterial meningitis?

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

- How is bacterial meningitis spread?

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

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

- How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

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

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

- What should you do if you think you or a friend might have bacterial meningitis? Seek prompt medical attention.

- Where can you get more information?

The school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Department of State Health Services office to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the Web sites, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Department of State Health Services.

Food Allergies

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

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

[See policy FFAF and Celebrations on page 19.]

Head Lice

Head lice, although not an illness or a disease is very common among children and is spread very easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, or nap time and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones. Because lice spread so easily, the district will need to exclude any student found to have live lice until after one treatment of FDA-approved shampoo or cream rinse, which can be purchased from a drug store or grocery store.

If careful observation indicated that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent and inform the parent that the child will need to be picked up from school and will need to stay home until after an initial treatment is applied. After the student has undergone one treatment, the parent should check in with the school nurse before the student may return to class. The nurse can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments and how best to get rid of lice and prevent their return.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website
Managing Head Lice.

Physical Activity Requirements

In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, [and FFA], the district will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten through grade 4 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week.

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

School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council held meetings. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available from the campus. [See also policies at BDF and EHAA.]

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

OTHER HEALTH RELATED MATTERS

Physical Fitness Assessment

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to your child's physical education teacher to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment.

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

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, including, electronic cigarettes, while on school property at any time or while attending an off campus school-related

activity.

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

Asbestos Management Plan

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, is available from Robert Godeaux at 505 Orange Street, Vidor, Texas or by calling (409) 951-8770.

Pest Management Plan

Vidor Independent School District periodically applies pesticides. Information concerning these applications may be obtained from Ronnie Davis and Ed Proshaska at 180 University, Vidor, Texas or by calling (409) 951-8740.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

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

- Proof of residency requirements
- Immunization requirements
- Educational program placement, if the student is unable to provide previous academic records, or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness

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

A student or parent who is dissatisfied by the districts eligibility, school selection, or enrollment decision may appeal through policy FNG (LOCAL). The district will expedite local time lines, when possible, for prompt dispute resolution.

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, LaNiece Sollock, at 200 Archie Street, Vidor, Texas 77662 or (409) 951-8737.

IMMUNIZATIONS

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Department of State Health Services, Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-934; or online at Affidavit Request for Exemption from Immunization. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required for pre-k– fourth grade are Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DPT), Hepatitis A and B, Hib, PCV, Polio (IPV), Rubeola (Measles), Mumps, Rubella, Varicella (Chicken Pox) and

meningococcal. The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the Texas Department of Health. Proof of immunization may be personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

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

[For further information, see policy FFAB(LEGAL) and the DSHS website: Texas School & Child Care Facility Immunization Requirements.]

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES (All Grade

Levels) Questioning of Students

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

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

LEAVING CAMPUS

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

for any part of the school day. The district has put the following procedures in place in order to document parental consent:

- For students in elementary and middle school a parent or otherwise authorized adult must come to the office and sign the student out. Please be prepared to show identification. Once an identity is verified, campus personnel will call the student to the office.
- If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse or other district personnel determines that the student should go home, the nurse will contact the student's parent and document the parent's wishes regarding release from school. Unless directed by the parent to release the student unaccompanied, the parent or other authorized adult must follow the sign out procedures as listed above. If a student is allowed to leave campus by himself or herself, as permitted by the student's parent, or if the student is age 18 or is an emancipated minor, the

nurse will document the time of day the student was released. Under no circumstances will a child in elementary or middle school be released unaccompanied by a parent or adult authorized by the parent.

LOST AND FOUND

A “lost and found” collection site is located on campus. If your child has lost an item, please encourage him or her to check the lost and found site. The district discourages students from bringing to school personal items of high monetary value, as the district cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of the school year.

MAKEUP WORK

For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student make-up work. This will be based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student. This insures mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) or in meeting subject or course requirements.

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

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

A student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time, so that the teacher and student may plan any work that can be completed before or shortly after the absence. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school and that, even though absences may be excused or unexcused, all absences account for the ninety percent threshold in regards to the state laws surrounding “attendance for credit.”

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

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

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

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

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

- Prescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse, or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled

container.

- Nonprescription medications in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

Students whose schedules provide for regular time spent outdoors, including for recess and physical education classes, should apply sunscreen before coming to school. A student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to a student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school

and requests assistance with applying sunscreen. If sunscreen needs to be administered to treat any type of medical condition, this should be handled through communication with the school nurse so that the district is made aware of any safety or medical issues.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

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

- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: See the school counselor.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent, Dr. Jay Killgo

PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed.
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. (To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period.)
- Becoming a school volunteer.
- Participating in campus parent organizations.

- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction.
- Being aware of the school’s ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district

operations. See also attached policy in Appendix.

PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. State law requires that one minute of silence follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others.

PRAYER

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

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

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

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

In grades 1–4, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in reading and mathematics, and either science or social studies. EIE (LOCAL).

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

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

promoted to the next grade level.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

{See leaving campus on page 33}

REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

Report cards with each student's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued at least once every nine weeks.

At the end of the fourth week of a grading period, parents will receive a progress report of their child's performance in grades 1-4. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent may request to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject.

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal pursuant to the board-adopted policy and are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG (LOCAL).

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

SAFETY

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

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

Accident Insurance

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

Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies

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

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

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

Emergency School-Closing Information

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

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

If the campus must close or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will alert the community in the following ways: Skylert, district website, and local media.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Use by Students Before and After School

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place. The cafeteria or grade level halls are open to students before school, beginning at **7:00 a.m.**

Conduct Before and After School

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

Student Code of Conduct or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

Cafeteria Services

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

Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need or household situation. Information about a student's participation is confidential; however, disclosure of a student's eligibility may be made without prior notice or consent to programs, activities, and individuals that are specifically authorized access under the National School Lunch Act (NSLA), which is the law that sets forth the disclosure limits for the district's child nutrition programs. A student's name, eligibility status, and other information may be disclosed to certain agencies as authorized under the NSLA to facilitate the

enrollment of eligible children in Medicaid or the state children's health insurance program (CHIP) unless the student's parent notifies the district that a student's information should not be disclosed. A parent's decision will not affect the child's eligibility for free and reduced price meals or free milk. Parents must re-apply at the first of every school year for Free or Reduced Price meals. Paper applications are available from any school office, administration building, or online. To access online, go to www.vidorisd.org. Under-For Parents- Click on Free/Reduced Meal Benefits. This will bring you to the Heartland Apps website. These applications will be downloaded to the cafeteria program the next morning.

If a student qualifies for free or reduced-priced meals, he/she will receive one breakfast meal and one lunch meal per day. A student that does not qualify for the program will be charged full price. Parents may deposit money in their students account by check, cash, or online at myschoolbucks.com. If a student does not have sufficient funds in their account to cover the cost of a meal, they will be allowed to charge two lunches. Managers may email or send a letter to alert the parent that the child is low or needing money in their account.

Library

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

Students must not write or color in library books. The books are to be returned in the same condition in which they were checked out.

The student who checks out the book is responsible for payment of the lost book. The purchase price of the book will be charged. If the book is found by the next school year, the price of the book will be refunded. There will be a charge for damaged books depending on the replacement price of the book.

Report cards may not be issued until charges are paid and students have been cleared by the librarian. Students moving out of the school district must be cleared through the library before their records and withdrawal cards are released.

SEARCHES

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

Students' Desks

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

Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of their assigned desks. Searches of desks may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by policy, whether or not a student is present.

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

Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices (All Grade Levels)

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

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

[See policy FNF(LEGAL) and **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources** on page 25 for more information.]

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

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

Title 1 Information

The Site-Based Decision Making Committee (SBDMC) is composed of administrators, teachers, parents, community members, parents of the Title 1-Part A Parental Involvement Plan, as well as the Vidor ISD's Title 1-Part A Campus Plan. Parent comments from parent-teacher conferences as well as parent surveys and meetings are used to solicit parent input in order to refine the policy. The Draft Plan will be presented to parents of Title I-Part A students for their approval and once adopted will be distributed to all Title 1- Part A parents and placed on file in the Principal's office for audit purposes.

STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness)

Grade 3-8

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

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–4
- Reading, annually in grades 3–4
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grade 4
- Any other subject and grade required by federal law

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

STAAR Spanish is available for eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district will assist any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (temporary or permanent custody of the state) with the enrollment and registration process, as well as other educational services throughout the student's enrollment in the district. A student who is placed in foster care and who is moved outside of the district's attendance boundaries is entitled to continue in enrollment at the school he or she was attending prior to the placement until the student reaches the highest grade level at the particular school.

Please contact Janet Bradley, who has been designated as the district's liaison for children in the conservatorship of the state, at 409-951-8700 with any questions.

SUICIDE AWARENESS

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

TARDIES

Students are expected to be in their classes at the beginning of school each morning (7:30 a.m.). When students enter the classroom late it is very disruptive to the teaching/learning that is taking place. Students who are late must go to the office and get permits before reporting to class.

TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT, and OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

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

TRANSFERS

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

TRANSPORTATION

School-Sponsored Trips

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

Buses and Other School Vehicles

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. A parent may also designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, contact the VISD Transportation office at 951-8760.

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

- Be on time at the designated bus stop. Bus drivers will not blow horns or wait for students
- Follow the driver's directions at all times
- Enter and leave the bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop
- Keep feet, books, and other objects out of the aisle
- Refrain from loud talking or unnecessary noise which might distract the driver
- Not deface the bus, van, or its equipment. The offender will pay the cost of damages resulting from any acts of vandalism
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus or van
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco or e-cigarettes in any district vehicle
- Observe all usual classroom rules
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving
- Fasten seat belts if available
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus or van and before crossing in front of the vehicle

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

The following procedures shall be followed when a discipline concern arises on a bus serving a regular route or on an extracurricular activity:

The student shall report to the assistant principal with the report of misconduct. The student will not be allowed to ride the bus until the misconduct report is addressed.

A student may be suspended from riding the bus if rules are not followed. A conference involving the principal, the student passenger, the driver, and parent(s) may be required.

In case of serious misconduct that endangers the safety of other passengers or the driver, the driver shall have the authority to call for law enforcement assistance; the principal and parents shall be notified of the situation as soon as possible. The student shall not be provided bus service again until a conference is held.

A note of permission from parent/guardian for a student to ride a different numbered bus must be presented to principal/assistant principal for approval. Then it must be given to the bus driver when boarding the bus. **The note should be specific to the student's destination including the address and phone number.**

VANDALISM

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

VIDEO CAMERAS

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

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

Upon request of a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member, or a board member, state law requires district to place video and audio recording equipment in a classroom in which the student spends at least fifty percent of his or her instructional day, referred to in the law as self-contained classroom. The majority of students in this type of classroom must also be students who receive special education services. Before the district places a video camera in a classroom or other setting in which your child receives special education services, the district will provide notice to you. Please speak directly with the principal for further information to request the installation and operation of this equipment.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

General Visitors

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

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

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

Raptor Identification System

As part of Vidor ISD's initiative to increase safety and security, we have installed a "RAPTOR" system on our campus. The online Raptor System screens all visitors to determine if they are included in a data base listing sex offenders from 48 states. All campus visitors will be required to swipe driver's license to receive a visitor's pass. If cleared by the system, their name and picture will be printed on an adhesive badge, and they will be allowed to participate in activities on the campus.

How will this affect you? You will be asked to swipe your driver's license. Once cleared by the system, you will be provided a visitor's pass.

Frequently Asked Questions by Parents

What is the Raptor System? Raptor is a computer software system that enhances school security by reading visitor drivers' license, comparing information to a sex offender data base, alerting campus administrators if a match is found, then (assuming no match was made) printing visitor badges that include a photo.

How does it work? Driver's license information is compared to a data base that consists of registered sex offenders from 48 states, including Texas. If a match is found, a campus administrator is notified so school access can be denied to that visitor.

Why is Vidor ISD using this system? **Student safety is our highest priority.** The system is an efficient method for checking the status of a visitor as a potential sexual predator. The system also quickly prints visitor badges that include a photo, the name of the visitor, time and date.

I just moved to Texas; can I use my photo ID from another state or country? Raptor will read any state issued photo ID from anywhere in the US, Mexico, and many other countries, including US military ID's.

How much time should I allow at the front office for check in? The first time you sign in with Raptor System, you should expect to wait for about one to two minutes while the scanner inputs your ID into the system. After this initial scan, signing in with Raptor on future visits is just as fast as using handwritten name tags and sign in sheets.

WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL

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

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

GLOSSARY

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

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

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

ESSA is the Every Student Succeeds Act passed by the Federal Government in 2015.

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

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

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

SHAC stands for School Health Advisory Council, a group of at least five members, a majority of whom must be parents, appointed by the school board to assist the district in ensuring that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district's health education instruction.

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

STAAR, State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, the state’s standardized academic achievement assessments.

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

STAAR Spanish is an alternative state-mandated assessment administered to eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

State-mandated assessments are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Successful performance sometimes is a condition of promotion.

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

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