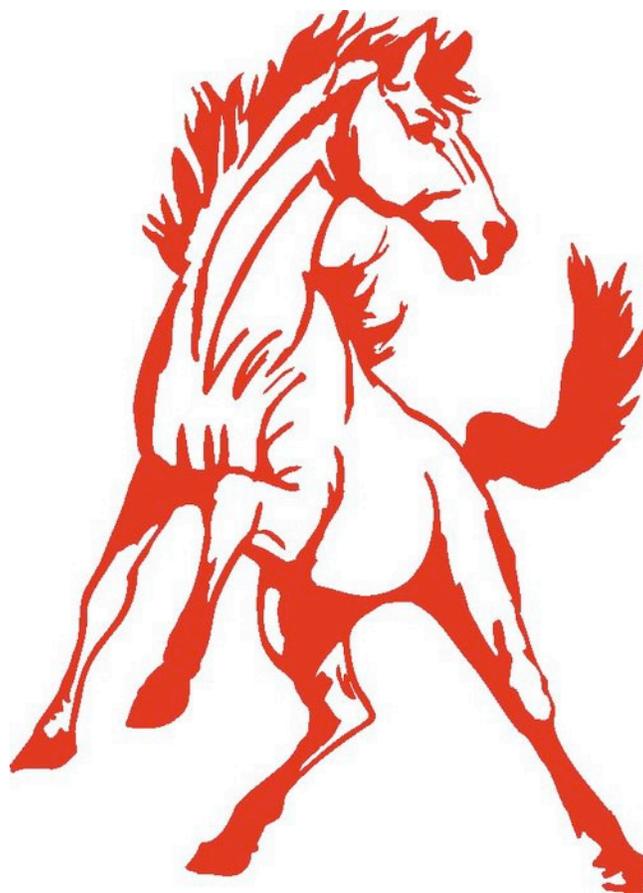


Sweetwater Middle School

2017 - 2018

Student Handbook



PURPOSE. PEOPLE. PRIDE

PREFACE

Welcome to school year 2017-2018. The faculty and administration wish to extend a warm welcome to you and express a sincere desire that your stay here will be rewarding. Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students.

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

SECTION I--REQUIRED NOTICES. This section contains notices that the district must provide parents.

Section II—INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS. This section is organized by broad topic (such as academics, discipline, extracurricular activities). For direction to specific topics, please consult the index in the back of the handbook.

Section III—PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES. This section contains information to assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT 2017-2018

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Sweetwater Independent School District Student Code of Conduct, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning.

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

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

In case of conflict between board policy or the Student Code of Conduct and any provisions of the student handbook, the provisions of board policy or the Student Code of Conduct that were most recently adopted by the board are to be followed. A copy of the district’s policy manual is available for review online at www.sweetwaterisd.net.

After reading through the entire handbook with your child, keep it as a reference during this school year. If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please call Sweetwater High School at (325) 235-4371.

Accessibility

If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of disability, please contact your campus principal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	1
PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES	4
SWEETWATER HIGH SCHOOL ALMA MATER	4
SECTION I: REQUIRED LEGAL NOTICES	4
SECTION II: INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS.....	17
SCHOOL DAY	17
FACILITIES AND SCHOOL PROPERTY.....	21
PROHIBITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS.....	29
DISCIPLINE	32
ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES	39
ACADEMICS.....	42
GRADUATION REQUIREMENT	46
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.....	50
CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS	52
MEDICAL AND SAFETY ISSUES	53
SECTION III: PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	58
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.....	58
PARENTAL RIGHTS.....	58

SWEETWATER INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Welcome to Sweetwater High School. The faculty and administration wish to extend a warm welcome to you and express a sincere desire that your stay here will be both successful and rewarding. All students and parents are urged to acquaint themselves with the provisions of this handbook. The school staff and Administration are ready to assist in any possible way.

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. George McFarland, Superintendent
Melinda McCarty, Assistant Superintendent
Nathan Ehlert, Business Manager

Campus Administration

Jeff Withrow, Principal
Danette Price, Assistant Principal
Mickey Scott, Counselor
Anita Withrow Counselor

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Leah Andrews - President
Becky Jimenez - Vice-President
Jana Hall - Secretary
Mark Meneses - Trustee
Jeff Allen - Trustee
Domingo Castillo - Trustee
Neal Hoover - Trustee

OUR BELIEFS AT SWEETWATER MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Every individual can learn given the necessary learning tools and environment.
- Every individual deserves to be heard.
- Every human being is worthwhile.
- Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every individual wants to be accepted and appreciated.
- All persons have a contribution to make.
- All persons are gifted.
- Every individual is responsible for their actions.
- Believing is the first step to achieving.

OUR MISSION AT SWEETWATER MIDDLE SCHOOL

The mission of Sweetwater Middle School is to ensure that all students are successful in their learning for life.

SWEETWATER MIDDLE SCHOOL ALMA MATER

Loyal and True,
Sweetwater Colts, we're for you
This is our motto
We are one for all and all for Alma Mater.
Here's to our school
Long on high may she rule
Forever more you will find us,
Always Loyal and True

SECTION I: REQUIRED LEGAL NOTICES

Nondiscrimination:

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Sweetwater Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation of Act of 1973 as amended. SISD will take steps to assure that lack of English language will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs. For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the Title IX Coordinator at the SISD administration building, (325) 235-8601, or the Section 504 Coordinator at SHS, (325) 235-4371.

Homeless Liaison and Title I Participants:

Melinda McCarty is our liaison for services to students who are determined to be homeless, as defined by federal law, and our Parent Involvement Coordinator who works with families and children participating in Title I programs. If you have questions about the program or need assistance related to the program, the Superintendent's Office at 325-235-8601.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act:

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the School principal [or appropriate official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

[NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. 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 20202-4605

Notice of Directory Information Release Procedures:

Sweetwater ISD may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Sweetwater ISD to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories - names, addresses and telephone listings - unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want Sweetwater ISD to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the District in writing by **September 8, 2017**. Sweetwater ISD has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended

A federal law, known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to student education records. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is age 18 or older or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education. These rights, as discussed in this section 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 a 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 education records.

Federal law requires that, as soon as a student reaches the age of 18, is emancipated by a court, or enrolls in a postsecondary institution, control of the records goes to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes and under limited circumstances when there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

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

- 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, school 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, school 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 to the school and the student; or investigating or evaluating programs.
- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, TEA, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, school district/system, or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or which the student has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses information it has designated as directory information .

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

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

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 207 Musgrove Street, Sweetwater, TX 79556.

The address(es) of the principals' offices are: can be located on the district website at www.sweetwaterisd.net. 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. The district's policy regarding student records found at policy FL is available on the district's website at www.sweetwaterisd.net.

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

Student Records:

A student's school records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters SISD until the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from campus to campus.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under the age of 18 or who is a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The superintendent is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours upon completion of the written request form. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

Parents of a student who is under 18 years of age or who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if the age of 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interest" include any employees, agents, or Trustees of SISD, of cooperatives of which SISD is a member, or facilities with which SISD contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities under IDEA, or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504; compiling statistical data; or investigating or evaluating programs including juvenile service providers.

The parent's or student's right of access to and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Student records that are accessible 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, and
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.

Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers’ personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher, records pertaining to former students who are no longer students in SISD, and records maintained by school law enforcement officials for purposes other than school discipline do not have to be made available to the parents or students.

Certain officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. SISD forwards a student’s records on request and without prior parental consent to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment:

We do not require students to participate in any surveys that are funded with any U.S. Department of Education funds that concern the following topics unless you (or your child if he or she is an adult) give us your prior consent. You will also have the opportunity to inspect the survey in advance. If we administer surveys that concern any of these topics that are funded from other sources, we will give you advance notice of the survey, allow you an opportunity to inspect the survey, and give you an opportunity to opt-out of the survey. The topics that are covered by this notice are:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his or her parent;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or his or her family;
3. sex behavior or attitudes;
4. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of others with whom the responding students have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his or her parent; or
8. income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Parental Rights

This section of the Sweetwater 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 Conduct a Psychological Evaluation

A district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without obtaining prior written parental consent unless the examination, test, or treatment is required under state or federal law regarding requirements for special education or by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for child abuse investigations and reports.

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 Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction if Student is Under Age 14

A child under the age of 14 must have parental permission to receive instruction in the district's parenting and paternity awareness program; otherwise, the child will not be allowed to participate in the instruction. This program, developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE), is incorporated into the district's health education classes.

Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student When Not Otherwise Permitted by Law

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 or extracurricular activity;
- When it relates to media coverage of the school; or
- 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 other video or voice recording of your child not otherwise allowed by law.

[See Video Cameras on page 91 for more information, including a parent's right to request video and audio equipment be placed in certain special education settings.]

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 submit a written statement to the campus principal stating this decision. A signed statement must be provided each year if you do not want corporal punishment to be administered to your child.

You may choose to revoke this prohibition 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 requests that this method be used on the student.

Note: 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 will not be administered, even when a signed statement prohibiting its use has not been submitted by the student's caregiver or caseworker.

Limiting Electronic Communications with Students by District Employees

Teachers and other approved employees are permitted by the district to use electronic communication with students within the scope of the individual's professional responsibilities, as described by district guidelines. 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 tests. As a parent, you are welcome to join or become a member of such a page.

However, text messages sent to an individual student are only allowed if a district employee with responsibility for an extracurricular activity needs to communicate with a student participating in the extracurricular activity.

The employee is required to include his or her immediate supervisor and the student's parent as recipients on all text messages.

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 education records without written consent. “Directory information” is information that is generally not considered harmful or an 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 schoolwide or classroom recognition; a student’s name and photograph posted on a district-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 publication to recognize the A/B honor roll for a specific grading period. Directory information will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, a parent or eligible student 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 [See the “Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information” included in the forms packet.]

The district has identified the following as directory information: student name; address; telephone listing; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; degrees, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; grade level; most recent educational institution attended; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and weight and height of members of athletic teams. . If you object to the release of the student information included on the directory information response form, your decision will also apply to the use of that information for school-sponsored purposes, such as the honor roll, school newspaper, the yearbook, recognition activities, news releases, and athletic programs.

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 the 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. Note: 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

Human Sexuality Instruction

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) is involved with the selection of course materials for such instruction.

State law requires that any instruction related to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) must:

- Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;
- Devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;
- Emphasize that abstinence is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- Direct adolescents to a standard of behavior in which abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; and
- If included in the content of the curriculum, teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates.

In accordance with state law, below is a summary of the district's curriculum regarding human sexuality instruction:

The board shall select any instruction relating to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) with the advice of the SHAC. The instruction must:

1. Present abstinence as the preferred choice of behavior for unmarried persons of school age;
2. Devote more attention to abstinence than to any other behavior;
3. Emphasize that abstinence is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, infection with HIV or AIDS, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
4. Direct adolescents to a standard of behavior in which abstinence before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and infection with HIV or AIDS; and
5. Teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates, if instruction on contraception and condoms is included in the curriculum.

As a parent, you are entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, you may remove your child from any part of the human sexuality instruction with no academic, disciplinary, or other penalties. You may also choose to become more involved with the development of curriculum used for this purpose by becoming a member of the district's SHAC. Please see the campus principal for additional information.

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 U.S. government extends diplomatic immunity. [See policy EHBK(LEGAL).]

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 U.S. 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 on page 77 and policy EC(LEGAL).]

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 and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by state law.

Tutoring or Test Preparation

Based on informal observations, evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests, or results from diagnostic assessments, a teacher may determine that a student is in need of additional targeted assistance in order for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills. The school will always attempt to provide tutoring and strategies for test-taking in ways that prevent removal from other instruction as much as possible. In accordance with state law and policy EC, the school will not remove a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the school days on which the class is offered, unless the student's parent consents to this removal.

The school may also offer tutorial services, which students whose grades are below 70 will be required to attend. [Also refer to policies EC and EHBC, and contact your student's teacher with questions about any tutoring programs provided by the school.]

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

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.

You are also entitled to request that the school allow your child to take home any instructional materials used by the student. If the school determines that sufficient availability exists to grant the request, the student must return the materials at the beginning of the next school day if requested to do so by the child's teacher.

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.]

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

You may request information regarding any state or district policy related to your child's participation in assessments required by federal law, state law, or the district.

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.
- Graduation requirements.

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

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

Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments

Multiple Birth Siblings

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, which includes cyberbullying, as defined by Education Code 37.0832. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the 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 on page 35, 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 a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether the 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 Use by Students

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

Students in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)

A student who is currently in the conservatorship (custody) of the state and who enrolls in the district after the beginning of the school year will be allowed credit-by-examination opportunities outside the district's established testing windows, and the district will grant proportionate course credit by semester (partial credit) when a student only passes one semester of a two-semester course.

A student who is currently in the conservatorship of the state and who is moved outside of the district's or school's attendance boundaries, or who is initially placed in the conservatorship of the state and who is moved outside the district's or school's boundaries, is entitled to continue in enrollment at the school he or she was attending prior to the placement or move until the student reaches the highest grade level at the particular school. In addition, if a student in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request to receive a diploma from the previous district if he or she meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district. In addition, for a student in the conservatorship of the state who is eligible for a tuition and fee exemption under state law and likely to be in care on the day preceding the student's 18th birthday, the district will:

- Assist the student with the completion of any applications for admission or for financial aid;
- Arrange and accompany the student on campus visits;
- Assist in researching and applying for private or institution-sponsored scholarships;
- Identify whether the student is a candidate for appointment to a military academy;
- Assist the student in registering and preparing for college entrance examinations, including, subject to the availability of funds, arranging for the payment of any examination fees by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS); and
- Coordinate contact between the student and a liaison officer for students who were formerly in the conservatorship of the state. Contact Melinda McCarty at 325-235-8601 for more information.

Students Who Are Homeless

Melinda McCarty is the district's Homeless student liaison and may be contacted at 325-235-8601. Children who are homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain district provisions, including:

- Proof of residency requirements;
- Immunization requirements;
- Educational program placement, if the student is unable to provide previous academic records, or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness;
- Credit-by-examination opportunities;
- The award of partial credit (awarding credit proportionately when a student passes only one semester of a two-semester course);
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities; and
- Graduation requirements.

Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her 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 making a referral for a special education evaluation. For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, schools must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts 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](#)

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services is Kirk Stroman at 325-235-8601.

The district will notify the parent of a student, other than a student enrolled in a special education program, who receives assistance from the district for learning difficulties, including intervention strategies, that the district provides assistance to the student.

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 Melinda McCarty at 325-235-8601.

[See policy FB.]

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.

SECTION II: INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Topics in this section of the handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is arranged by broad topic to give you a broad overview of Sweetwater High School and its policies. Should you be unable to find answers to your questions, please contact Jeff Withrow, SMS principal, at (325) 236-6303.

School Day

Delayed or cancellations of the school day for SISD will be announced by 6:30 a.m. Please check the following for details:

1240 AM KXOX
96.7 FM KXOX
KTXS CHANNEL 12
KTAB CHANNEL 10
KTAB CHANNEL 32 (SATELLITE)
SCHOOL WEBSITE—www.sweetwaterisd.net
SCHOOLMESSENGER – Phone Message System

Bell Schedule

Breakfast will be served in the cafeteria from 7:15 - 7:55 for \$1.20 1st period athletic classes will eat at the end of their scheduled class period. Campus Announcements will be at the beginning of 2nd period.

Tutorial Hours: 7:45am - 8:10am

Regular Bell Schedule: 8:10 am – 4:00 pm

Student's Legal Name

While we recognize that there are circumstances when a parent may wish his or her child to be enrolled under a name other than the child's legal name, we are required to maintain all school records for your child under the child's legal surname as shown on the birth certificate or other recognized document to prove the child's identity or as shown in a court order changing the child's name.

Change of Address/Phone Number

If a student changes his/her residence, mailing address, or phone number during the school year, he/she should report the change immediately to the SHS main office.

Admission

These are the basic requirements for admission to district schools:

1. The student lives in the district with a parent or legal guardian or one of the student's parents lives in the district, even if the student does not live with that parent.

- To be eligible for admission based on just the parent's residence in the district, the court that issued a final order in a divorce proceeding must have designated that parent as a managing or possessory conservator for the child.

- The parent enrolling a student based on only the parent's residence in the district must provide a copy of a current final order, signed by the judge and showing a file stamp from the court, designating the parent as a managing or possessory conservator.

2. The student is under age 18 and, subject to District policy at FD (LOCAL) and FDA (LOCAL), lives in the district with an adult resident of the district who has accepted a Power of Attorney from the child's parent or legal guardian or who is a grandparent, adult aunt or uncle, or adult sibling who has accepted responsibility for the child by an Authorization Agreement in compliance with Texas Family Code § 34.002. The school district has Power of Attorney forms to be completed by both the parent and the person the student lives with.
3. The student is under age 18 and does not reside in the district, but a grandparent who provides a substantial amount of after-school care for the person resides in the district. "Substantial amount of after-school care" means the grandparent provides after-school care for the student at least four days each school week.
4. Students under the age of 18 must be enrolled by a parent, legal guardian, or adult resident who has a valid Power of Attorney for the student. Students who are 18 or older, who are legally married, or who have ever been legally married, and who have not graduated from high school can enroll themselves.
5. The adult enrolling the student must present current immunization records or show proof that the required immunizations have been begun.
6. No later than 30 days after a student has been enrolled, the adult enrolling the student must provide a copy of a birth certificate or other acceptable identification for the child and copies of the education records from the school the child last attended.

Unauthorized Persons

In accordance with Education Code 37.105, a school administrator, school resource officer (SRO), or district police officer has the authority to refuse entry or eject a person from district property if the person refuses to leave peaceably on request and:

- The person poses a substantial risk of harm to any person; or
- The person behaves in a manner that is inappropriate for a school setting and the person persists in the behavior after being given a verbal warning that the behavior is inappropriate and may result in refusal of entry or ejection.

Appeals regarding refusal of entry or ejection from district property may be filed in accordance with FNG(LOCAL) or GF(LOCAL).

[See also Student Code of Conduct.]

Visitors

All visitors must first report to the office where they will be issued a visitor's pass before going anywhere on campus. Visitor's status is subject to approval by the campus administration. Adult visitors who obtain prior approval from the main office, such as parents or youth ministers may visit students in the cafeteria during their lunch period

Student visitors living outside local area may only be allowed to visit in the cafeteria during lunch periods, and they must conform to the dress code of SHS students. School-age students who have recently attended or recently graduated from SHS will not be permitted to each lunch in the cafeteria.

Visitors with emergency situations must first report to the office where they will either be issued a visitor's pass or be escorted through the campus.

Early Dismissal

Because class time is important, doctor's appointments should be scheduled, if possible, at times when the student will not miss instructional time. A student who will need to leave school during the day must follow the campus sign out procedures before leaving the campus, and bring a note upon returning to school.

Should a student become ill at school, the school nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the Principal. The nurse will contact the student's parent after she has received approval from the

Principal for the student to go home. **Any student that leaves school without the Principal's approval will receive an unexcused absence and will be subject to truancy violations.**

In cases of emergency or dire hardship, a student may be dismissed from the main office by telephone contact with the student's parent.

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. Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing the activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus. After dismissal from school in the afternoon, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately. The following areas are open to students before school:

- Tutorial classrooms
- Upper gym or area designated by principal

Student-organized, student-led non-curriculum-related groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the principal before and after school. These groups must comply with the requirements of local policy. A list of these groups is available in the principal's office.

School Authority over Student Conduct

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at, before, and after school activities on SISD property, and at school-sponsored activities off district property. 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 code of conduct for participants established by the sponsor in accordance with school board policy.

Lost And Found

Most articles that have been lost are usually turned in by the finder and placed in the lost and found receptacles in the cafeteria and attendance office of the high school. All articles, including textbooks, should be turned in to this department. Small and valuable turned in items are kept in the main office vault.

Tardies

Between class periods there is a three-minute interval for passing. A student is tardy to class if he/she is not in his/her assigned room when the bell rings for the class to begin. When a student is tardy, he/she must report to the office. Tardies are generally unexcused. A student who comes to school late should sign in at the main office before going to class. Late students will not be admitted to class without a sign-in slip. A tardy of 20 minutes or more will be considered an absence.

Hall Passes

Loitering or standing in the halls during class is not permitted. During class time, a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Students without passes are subject to disciplinary action

Pledges of Allegiance

Texas law requires students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag each day (unless excused— see Section III). All students are required to stand during the pledges.

A moment of silence follows recitation of the pledges. Students may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity as long as it does not interfere with or distract others.

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.

Tutorials/Double Block/Academic Enrichment

Each student will be assigned a tutorial, double block, or academic enrichment period each school day. We will not remove your child from a regularly scheduled class in order to provide remedial tutoring or test preparation if that removal

would cause the student to miss the regularly scheduled class more than 10 percent of class time, unless you provide written consent for removal from the class for remedial tutoring or test preparation

Assemblies

Assembly of all students and teachers is held from time to time. Students are expected to act like ladies and gentlemen. Those guilty of booing, whistling, stamping of feet, applauding inappropriately, or any other improper conduct are subject to serious disciplinary measures. A student's failure to attend an assembly is considered truancy and is dealt with accordingly. Students who act poorly during assemblies may be asked to leave the auditorium and/or not participate in future assemblies.

Guidance and Counseling

The best guidance possible is given to students by their teachers, school counselors and administrators. The school counselors provide guidance services to SHS students in the following areas:

1. Providing graduation and career planning.
2. Providing information to students and parents on all aspects of the school program, providing educational and vocational information for present and future planning, and assisting in educational and vocational plans and decisions.
3. Counseling by helping students to better understand their behavior, to cope with their problems, and to adjust more effectively to their environment.
4. Administering various achievement, ability, interest, and personality tests, maintaining student records, and making available tests and test information to provide objective data concerning a student's ability and achievement.

School Trips

Throughout the school year various groups of students are given an opportunity to broaden their educational opportunities by attending clinics and conventions, participating in various contests, and representing their high school in other respects. According to state law, students may miss no more than 15 days per class in a school year for extracurricular activities.

Students participating in school-sponsored trips must go and return with the school group in transportation provided by the school unless the student's parent personally requests the student to go with him or her because of extenuating circumstances. SISD shall not be liable for any injuries that occur to students riding in vehicles not provided by the school.

FACILITIES AND SCHOOL PROPERTY

School Property

Buildings, equipment, and materials are provided through local, state, and federal funding. It is the responsibility of the students and should be an expression of their appreciation to respect all school property. Any marking, cutting, breaking—abuse of any sort—is a reflection on all. If a student neglectfully or willfully breaks or damages school property, he/she must pay for the damage. One of the best indications of good citizenship is a well-kept school

Student Desks

Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student. Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of their assigned desks and lockers. Students must be certain that their lockers are locked, and that the combinations are not available to others. Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by policy, whether or not a student is present. The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker. The district will use trained dogs to alert school officials to the presence of prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol.

Textbooks

Most textbooks used in Sweetwater High School are furnished to students by the state of Texas. The books are issued through the teacher and must be cared for by the student until they are returned to the teacher. The student will be charged for any lost book and will be fined for any damage beyond normal wear.

School law requires that all textbooks be covered. When a student is issued a textbook, he/she should immediately write in ink, in the space provided, his/her name and the school year. No other writing should be done in the book.

Teachers are asked to make systematic checks on textbooks throughout the school term. The student is responsible for books "lost" from lockers unless he/she releases the name of the individual who might be responsible for their disappearance to the principal's office and proof is established. Textbooks left in classrooms and other parts of the school buildings are brought to the main office.

Library

Sweetwater Middle School maintains a staffed library that contains books, periodicals, computers, and other materials for students and faculty. The library serves two purposes for the school. First, it supports the classroom curricula, providing materials to augment classroom information instruction. Second, it teaches students how to retrieve information and prepares them to use college, university, and public libraries after they leave high school. The library has four OPAC (on-line public access catalog) computers for accessing the library's holdings. In addition, four computers with Internet access and word processing capability are available for independent student use.

The materials in the library are school property and students must enter their personal ID assigned by the District in order to check out materials. Each student is responsible for the care and prompt return of all materials borrowed on his/her card. Students should not loan their cards to other students as they then become responsible for whatever the other students have borrowed on their cards. Accrual of fines or overdue items by a student results in the suspension of his/her checkout privileges until the overdue items are returned and/or charges are paid.

Most books may be checked out for a period of two weeks at a time and may be renewed, provided the books are brought in for renewal. Periodicals are for library use only. Reference books and books placed on reserve may be checked out for one period during the school day or at the end of the school day for overnight use. Overnight checkouts are due by the beginning of 1st period the following school day whether the student is present at school or not.

The library maintains an atmosphere conducive to reading and study. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is not distractive or disruptive to others. Students are welcome to work independently, but library staff is available for assistance.

Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy (AUP)

SISD Student Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy (AUP)

Scope of Coverage for All Technology Policies (SOC)

You are being given access to the District's technology resources, meaning electronic communication systems and electronic equipment. Policies, guidelines and rules described in this document refer to all technology resources. This includes, but is not limited to I-Pads, computers, tablets, handhelds or PDAs, MP3 players, portable memory storage devices, calculators with interfacing capability, cell phones, digital cameras, technology infrastructure, associated peripheral devices and/or software:

- Owned by, leased by and/or on loan to Sweetwater Independent School District.
- Owned by, leased by and/or on loan to Region 14 Educational Service Center, which provides Sweetwater Independent School District with Internet connectivity and other services.
- Owned by, leased by and/or on loan to any third party engaged in providing services for Sweetwater Independent School District.
- Any computing or telecommunication devices owned by, in the possession of or being used by district students and/or staff that are operated on the grounds of any district facility or connected to any equipment at any district facility by means of direct connection, telephone line or other common carrier or any type of connection including both hardwired, fiber, infrared and/or wireless.

As a user of the District's technology resources, you will be able to access:

- An unlimited number of databases, libraries, and resources;
- The Internet and other electronic information systems/networks, which can be used to communicate with schools, colleges, organizations, and individuals around the world; and
- Shared electronic equipment, which may have stored temporary Internet and electronic files of other users.

Please note that the Internet is a network of many types of communication and information networks. It is possible that you may run across some material you might find objectionable. Sweetwater ISD utilizes filtering technology to restrict

access to such material. However, it is not possible to absolutely prevent such access. It will be your responsibility to follow the rules for appropriate use.

If you are being issued a District technology device that can be used off campus, you will be given additional materials addressing the proper use, care, and return of these devices.

Appropriate Use of District Technology Resources:

- Students will be assigned individual user accounts for hardware and internet access, and are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of their individual account passwords.
- Student accounts are to be used primarily for educational purposes, but some limited personal use will be acceptable.
- Students must comply with the Student Handbook, Code of Conduct, and Federal and State Laws.
- Students will be held responsible at all times for the proper use of their individual accounts. SISD may suspend or revoke access to technology resources if the student is determined to be in violation of the rules.
- Use of SISD technology resources are not confidential and can be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use.
- While on campus and utilizing SISD devices, students must use the District’s Internet services and are prohibited from using a personal wireless service.

Inappropriate Use of District Technology Resources:

- Using the resources for any illegal purpose.
- Accessing the resources to knowingly alter, damage, or delete District property or information, or to breach any other electronic equipment, network, or electronic communications system in violation of the law or District policy.
- Damaging electronic communication systems or electronic equipment, including knowingly or intentionally introducing a virus to a device or network, or not taking proper security steps to prevent a device or network from becoming vulnerable.
- Disabling or attempting to disable any Internet filtering device.
- Using someone’s account without permission.
- Pretending to be someone else when posting, transmitting, or receiving messages.
- Attempting to read, delete, copy, modify, or interfere with another user’s posting, transmittal, or receipt of electronic media.
- Using resources to engage in conduct that harasses or bullies others.
- Sending, posting, or possessing materials that are abusive, obscene, pornographic, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another’s reputation, or illegal, including cyberbullying and “sexting.”
- Using e-mail or Web sites to engage in or encourage illegal behavior or to threaten school safety
- Using inappropriate language such as swear words, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs, and any other inflammatory language
- Violating others’ intellectual property rights, including downloading or using copyrighted information without permission from the copyright holder.
- Wasting school resources through improper use of the District’s technology resources, including sending spam.
- Gaining unauthorized access to restricted information or resources.

Consequences for Inappropriate Use

- Suspension of access to the District’s technology resources;
- Revocation of permission to use personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus;
- Revocation of the account; or
- Other disciplinary or legal action, in accordance with the District’s policies and applicable laws

Sweetwater Independent School District shall not be liable, under any circumstances, for any errors, omissions, loss or damages claimed or incurred due to any student Internet posting.

CIPA Compliance:

Sweetwater ISD is in compliance with the Children’s Internet Protection Act requirements and has implemented an Internet safety policy addressing: (a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet; (b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications; (c) unauthorized access,

including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities by minors online; (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and (e) measures restricting minors' access to materials harmful to them.

Sweetwater ISD STUDENT - PARENT IPAD USER AGREEMENT / POLICY 2017-2018

NOTE: In this agreement "we", "us" and "our" means Sweetwater ISD and "you" and "your" means the parent/guardian and student enrolled in Sweetwater ISD. The "property" is an Apple iPad and all accessories issued and owned by Sweetwater Independent School District.

Terms: You will pay a deposit of \$50 before receiving a loaned device. The deposit, minus any repair/missing equipment charges, is refundable upon the return of all loaned property and submission of the deposit refund form.

You will comply at all times with the Sweetwater ISD *Student Handbook and Code of Conduct*, including the *SISD Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy*. Failure to comply may terminate your rights of possession effective immediately, and we may repossess the iPad.

SWEETWATER ISD PROVIDES THE APPLE IPAD "AS-IS". SWEETWATER ISD MAKES NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, OF MERCHANTABILITY, MARKETABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE OR OTHERWISE, EXCEPT AS SET FORTH HEREIN. ANY IMPLIED WARRANTIES ARE EXPRESSLY DISCLAIMED AND EXCLUDED.

Title: At all times, the legal title to the iPad is maintained by Sweetwater ISD. Your right of possession and use is limited to and conditioned upon your full and complete compliance with this *Agreement* and the *SISD Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy*, which is available on the Sweetwater ISD web site: www.sweetwaterisd.net

Electronic resources owned by the District should not be released to anyone including, but not limited to, law enforcement agencies. The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to violations of computer crime laws.

You have no rights of confidentiality when using the iPad. Contents of email, information regarding your internet usage, and network communications may be reviewed at the sole discretion of Sweetwater ISD. By signing this Agreement, you further acknowledge that Sweetwater ISD is required by law to comply with the Texas Public Information Act.

As such, you agree to fully and timely comply with any and all directives issued by Sweetwater ISD in its efforts to comply with the Public Information Act. You further recognize that this may mean that email content, Internet use history, network communications, and other similar information shall be releasable to third parties, if so required by law.

Insurance Coverage, Loss or Damage:

By accepting loaned property, you are responsible for returning all Sweetwater ISD property in good working condition and without breakage or damage beyond normal wear. You are responsible for all costs associated with fixing or replacing loaned property – up to total replacement costs which could exceed \$325.

Periodic checks of Sweetwater ISD property will be made. Property discovered to be in need of repair or replacement will be collected and fixed. You are responsible for these repair/replacement costs before the property will be returned to you. The property deposit will not be used to pay any repair costs unless the student is withdrawing from Sweetwater ISD.

Sweetwater ISD provides no insurance coverage to you, but does make such policies available to you at a cost.

Repossession:

If you do not fully comply with all terms of this *Agreement*, the *Student Code of Conduct*, and the *SISD Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy*, Sweetwater ISD shall be entitled to declare you in default and take possession of the iPad.

Term of Agreement:

Your right to use and possess the iPad terminates no later than the last day of the school year, unless otherwise terminated earlier by Sweetwater ISD, or upon withdrawal from Sweetwater ISD. You may continue to use the property during the Summer Months at an additional cost, otherwise Sweetwater ISD will collect and store the property until the next school term.

Appropriation:

Your failure to return the property in a timely manner will be considered unlawful appropriation of the Sweetwater ISD property. Your continued use of the iPad for non-school purposes without our consent may also be considered unlawful appropriation of the District's property.

Use of iPads on Networks:

Sweetwater ISD is committed to the availability of technology resources for student work. Internet Access from within the school district is content filtered in order to provide appropriate resources to children. Inappropriate content is not allowed on iPad devices. (See *SISD Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy*) Presence of pornographic materials, inappropriate language, weapon-related content, alcohol, drug, and/or gang related symbols or pictures will result in disciplinary action. You are encouraged to monitor and/or restrict Internet usage when students are away from school.

Storage

The iPad affords limited electronic storage space. If you are lacking a sufficient amount of storage space on the iPad device, you will be required to delete apps, music, photos, and so forth, in order to make necessary educational-related programs accessible. You are encouraged to back up, duplicate or archive files to an independent storage space. It is your responsibility to ensure that work is not lost due to mechanical failure, accidental deletion or re-imaging.

Use for Non-School-Related Purposes

School District computers, devices, networks and Internet services are provided for purposes related to educational programs, school operations, and performance of job responsibilities. Music, books, apps, and other content not provided by the District can be downloaded through your personal accounts at your expense. Content must be school appropriate and follow all terms of this *Agreement* and the *SISD Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy*.

Recording Feature and Camera

The iPad comes equipped with a microphone, front and rear-facing camera, and video capabilities. Sweetwater ISD retains the rights concerning any recording and/or publishing of any student or staff member's work or image. You must obtain permission from the principal or designee before recording an individual or group or publishing a photograph or video of any school related activity. Unauthorized recordings are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the *SISD Student Acceptable Use Policy*.

No Lending or Borrowing iPads

It is not permissible to loan, borrow, or share Sweetwater ISD property with other students. Never share passwords, pass codes, or usernames with others. Access to another person's account or iPad without consent or knowledge is considered hacking and is prohibited. This is subject to discipline in accordance with the *Student Handbook and Code of Conduct*.

Modification of the iPad

You should NOT modify the iPad in such a way that will permanently alter it, either physically and/or electronically. Sweetwater ISD property will be labeled in order to identify and track each device. You are prohibited from altering these identifying marks.

Property Requirements

You are required to bring a fully charged iPad to school. You are also responsible for getting all coursework completed even when you do not bring a device to school.

Bring Your Own Device

Students may choose to purchase or bring their own device to school. You are responsible for any devices you bring to school. Sweetwater ISD will provide support for the use of the Apple iPad and provide course materials for only such branded devices. (Course materials may also be compatible with other devices)

Indemnity Provision:

You shall defend, exempt, indemnify and hold harmless Sweetwater ISD, its officers, agents, servants, representatives and/or employees from any and all claims, suits, actions, legal proceedings, demands, damages or judgments, including all expenses, attorney fees, witness fees, costs and expenses of appeals there from, arising out of your use of the property, including but not limited to, your intentional or negligent acts and/or omissions. This paragraph shall survive termination of this Agreement.

Cafeteria

The district participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Breakfast is provided in the cafeteria for \$1.20 from 7:15-7:55 am. Lunch is served daily to students and may be purchased by sending money to school with your child. For students, lunches are \$2.70. Parents or guardians may add money to their child's account in the school cafeteria or at the Food Service Office. Charges will not be allowed. Vending machines will not be available during school hours.

Free and reduced-price lunches are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. Contact the school's office for more information. The price of a reduced lunch is \$.40 per day. The district follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day. **Parents may bring a lunch to their child only. Parents may not bring a lunch to a student that is not their child. Students will not be called out of class to get food that is being delivered. Parents need to make prior arrangements with their child to meet at the beginning of the child's lunch period.**

Energy Drinks

Energy drinks are not allowed on school property or at any school functions.

Lunch period guidelines:

- Students may eat lunch in the cafeteria or cafeteria courtyard. Students are to stay between the new gym and cafeteria and are not to go west of the cafeteria/gym drive or east of the library entrance walk.
- Students are not to go into the building, upstairs or downstairs, during lunch.
- Students may go to the library in lieu of lunch and are to remain in the library until the end of their lunch period.
- Students are not to go to their cars or with anyone to a car during lunch.
- Students are not to remove dishes, utensils, glasses, etc., from the cafeteria.
- Students are not to go into the gym or gym complex during their lunch period.
- Parents may bring food for their child ONLY, and it must be delivered through the attendance office.
- Students will not be called out of class to get food that is being delivered. Parents need to make prior arrangements with their child to meet at the beginning of the child's lunch period.

Telephone

Students are asked to refrain from using the telephone in the main office except in case of emergency. No personal social calls are to be made, and students desiring to use the telephone must secure permission from office personnel. Students will not be called to the telephone during class periods except in case of emergency, and messages received during class periods will be sent to the student's teacher to give the student at the end of the period.

Telephone messages will be taken from parents or employees only.

Transportation

SISD provides a school bus service for qualified students (those who live more than two miles from school on an approved

bus route, and normally ride the bus). 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.

Our priority is to transport students safely. Good student behavior at all times will help in many ways to make for safe transportation and allow the driver to pay full attention to the roadway and other drivers. Students being transported in school-owned vehicles should comply with the Student Code of Conduct.

Please review the following information with your child:

1. Be respectful to and obey the bus driver
2. No standing or changing of seats while the bus is in motion
3. Keep all body parts and limbs inside the bus at all times
4. Do not throw anything out of the windows
5. No loud talking or laughing
6. No tobacco use
7. No fighting
8. No weapons
9. No use of obscene and/or unacceptable language
10. No littering on the bus
11. No food or drink allowed on the bus
12. No tampering with the bus and/or equipment
13. No tolerance for possession or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, alcohol, or any other prohibited substance

Consequences for misconduct are as follows:

First conduct report

The student will have a conference with the principal wherein disciplinary action may be taken. The student will remain riding privileges contingent upon the student not receiving another conduct report.

Second conduct report

The student will lose bus privileges for up to 5 days

Third conduct report

The student will lose bus privileges for up to 10 days

Fourth conduct report

The student may lose bus privileges for the remainder of the semester or year.

******In each instance, the parent or guardian will be notified and in the event the student is involved in a major offense he/she may lose bus privileges for an undetermined length of time.**

Parents/Guardians:

1. Review all school bus rules with your child.
2. Teach your child that the driver is the person of authority on the bus and is to be respected.
3. Make sure that your child is outside waiting for the bus at the place that the driver designates.
4. Provide supervision for your child going to and from the bus and while waiting for the bus if necessary.
5. Make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather conditions.
6. Have a plan for your child in case he/she misses the bus.
7. Discuss with your child about avoiding suspicious people and vehicles. Have a plan of action the child should take if they encounter a problem.
8. Provide transportation for your child if the privilege of riding the bus is withdrawn.
9. Please make a reasonable effort to understand and cooperate with those responsible for student transportation
10. Accept responsibility for the proper conduct of your child.

For route information, problems concerning buses or drivers please contact: Scott Lambert 235-4181. Changes to the bus schedule will be posted at the schools and on the district web site.

Prohibitions and Restrictions

Dress Code for School Year 2017 - 2018

The dress code of Sweetwater ISD is established to instill discipline, prevent disruption, instill pride in self and school, avoid safety hazards and teach respect for authority. Students are expected to wear neat and appropriate dress to school. Any article or mode of dress that is determined by the campus administration to be disruptive, unsafe or disturbing is subject to correction. Administrators shall have the authority to appraise current fashions and determine their appropriateness for school. If an item of clothing is deemed inappropriate, the student may be required to wear items provided by the school or the parent will be called to bring appropriate clothes.

Dress Code for School Year 2017-2018

The dress code of Sweetwater ISD is established to instill discipline, prevent disruption, instill pride in self and school, avoid safety hazards and teach respect for authority. Students are expected to wear neat and appropriate dress to school. Any article or mode of dress that is determined by the campus administration to be disruptive, unsafe or disturbing is subject to correction. Administrators shall have the authority to appraise current fashions and determine their appropriateness for school. If an item of clothing is deemed inappropriate, the student may be required to wear items provided by the school or the parent will be called to bring appropriate clothes.

Dress Code

Pants, shorts, slacks, skorts and skirts:

- Must be worn at the natural waist (no more than one size larger than the natural waist size).

- Belts must be worn appropriately in belt loops and at the natural waist.
- Extremely torn clothing will not be permitted.
- Pants may have no holes showing skin 3” above the knee cap.
- Shorts, skorts, dresses and skirts may end no more than 3 inches above the top of the kneecap. If garments have slits, the top of the slit must not be more than 3 inches above the top of kneecap.
- Sleepwear, including pajama pants, is not permitted.

Tops, Shirts:

- NO halter tops, tube tops, or tops with the shoulder straps less than 1 inch wide.
- NO tops that show cleavage, which is defined by the Webster’s Dictionary as the depression between a woman’s breasts especially when made visible by a low-cut neckline.
- NO nude or see-through tops, including sheer garments, without proper underclothing that meets the dress code.
- All racer/razor back tops must have all other straps covered beneath the shirt, unless the undershirt follows the dress code.
- Tops and bottoms must meet at the waist and can not reveal bare skin, or midriff, while the student is in a relaxed state.
- No tall t-shirts, unless deemed size appropriate by the principal or designee.
- No clothing or jewelry is allowed that advertises, depicts or advocates tobacco, alcohol, drugs, illegal substances, gangs, has sexual representations or connotations or displays lewd or offensive statements. References to death, murder or suicide are prohibited.

Shoes

- :
- Specifically prohibited footwear is bathroom slippers (without a hard sole) or footwear not intended for outdoors wear.
 - Any shoes that are deemed unsafe are prohibited.

Accessories:

- NO hats, caps,, visors or any other type of head covering, including hoodies.
- NO visible piercing of the body except for ears.
- NO visible gauging or spacers.
- NO visible tattoos.
- no notched eyebrows
- NO dog collars, choker-chains, spiked metal necklaces, wallet chains, or safety pins.
- Bandanas are not allowed on campus.

Hair and Grooming:

- Students must wear their hair clean and well groomed at all times.
- Extreme modes of hair design will not be permitted.
- Hair must be styled so that eyebrows are visible and hair does not hide the eyes.
- Facial hair permitted at principal's discretion

Any style in hair or dress that is extreme or inappropriate to the point that causes undue or critical attention to the wearer is subject to question and approval by administration.

Students who violate the Dress Code will be referred to the Principal's office. The final decision regarding a dress code violation is at the discretion of the campus Principal or designee. Students that are out of dress code may may be asked to wear alternative clothing assigned by the principal or receive other disciplinary consequences.

Student Pick up and Drop off Locations

The buses will drop off and load students at the back of the school. During the bus drop off and loading time parents are not allowed to park, drive or pick up their child where the buses are parked. Drop off and pick up locations

for parents are:

Drop Off Pick Up

- 6th grade - Avenue C Avenue C or Front of School
- 7th grade - Front of School Front of School
- 8th grade - Front of School Front of school

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.

The school yearbook is available to students.

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

Nonschool Materials**From Students**

Students must obtain prior approval from the campus principal before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing more than 10 copies of written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any nonschool material must include the name

of the sponsoring person or organization. The decision regarding approval will be made within two school days.

The Principal has designated the reception area of the campus as the location for approved nonschool materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection by students. [See policy FNAA.]

A student may appeal a decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). Any student who sells, posts, circulates, or distributes nonschool material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

From Others

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by policy GKDA. To be considered for distribution, any nonschool 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 campus principal for prior review. The principal 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.]

The principal has designated the school reception area as the location for approved nonschool materials to be placed for voluntary viewing or collection.

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 nonschool materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from district property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

Employee Dress Code

Employees will be expected to adhere to the student standard of dress or higher. This includes facial piercings and visible tattoos.

Food for Celebrations Limited

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** .]

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.

Toys and Distracters

Toys and other items that distract from the normal learning environment such as spinners, video games, non-athletic use balls/implements should not be taken to school. Students who bring these items will be given a warning to put the item away. If used a second time, the item will be turned into the main office for parental pick up.

Note: The use of fidget spinners or other devices that parents may consider to help their student in the learning environment must be included in a student's IEP, individual 504 plan, Bilingual/ESL Committee, or a doctor's note must be provided stating the necessity of such a device is needed in order for the student to be successful in their learning environment.

Tobacco Use on School Grounds

Students in all grades shall not possess or use tobacco products, including but not limited to, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, snuff, or chewing tobacco, on school property. Any violation of this policy will subject a student to suspension from school or removal to an alternative campus. The police will also be called to issue a citation.

Parties at School

Parties at school must have prior approval of the campus administration. Parents are not permitted to bring food during the lunch period to pass out to other students to celebrate birthdays or other events. If you are not sure, check with the Main Office as to whether not food items for class or lunchtime are permitted.

Cell Phones

All electronic pagers, cell phones and other electronic devices will not be used during the instructional class time, unless for academic purposes. **Students will be required to put their phone in a pocket organizer that will be provided by each teacher on the campus when they enter the classroom.** These items will be confiscated if a student is using the device without permission from a staff member. Students will be allowed to use their electronic devices before and after school and during their lunch time. In cases of an emergency, a student shall seek permission to use a school phone or report to the office and use their device in the presence of an administrator.

In the event that the device is confiscated due to unauthorized use, there will be a time frame for the return of the device. If the device is confiscated on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, it will be returned to a parent or guardian on Friday at the end of the school day. If the device is confiscated on Thursday or Friday, it will be returned to a parent or guardian on the following Monday at the end of the school day. There will be a \$15.00 fee applied for each incident that must be paid before the phone is returned. The device will be sealed and secured upon confiscation and returned in the same condition. The money collected from the phone fees will be deposited in the "Student Scholarship" fund. In addition to the \$15.00 fee, students will be subject to disciplinary consequences for repeated violations.

Students may not possess any electronic equipment device during the administration of any state-mandated test. According to the state regulation, if a student displays, turns on or uses any electronic equipment during the administration of a state test, the student's test will be coded as a "no score or zero." This code designates a test administration irregularity and determines that the student's test will not be scored by the state.

Discipline

Hazing

Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off campus directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated to, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include other students. Hazing will not be tolerated by the district. If an incident of hazing occurs, disciplinary consequences will be handled in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. It is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or

having occurred and fails to report this to the principal or superintendent.

Corporal Punishment

If you do not want corporal punishment to be administered to your child as a method of student discipline, submit a written statement to the campus principal within 10 days of the beginning of school. Corporal punishment is limited to spanking or paddling the student and is governed by the following guidelines:

1. The student is told the reason for the corporal punishment
 2. Corporal punishment may be given by the principal, assistant principal, or a teacher.
 3. The instrument to be used shall be approved by the principal.
 4. Corporal punishment shall be administered in the presence of one other SISD professional employee in the principal's office.
 5. Parents may be summoned to witness corporal punishment.
- A record shall be maintained on each instance of corporal punishment.

Harassment

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from harassment and that their welfare is best served when they can work free from discrimination. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. District employees are expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, or disability. Prohibited harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office and on the district website <http://www.sweetwaterisd.net>. Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature. However, romantic and other inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Reporting Procedures

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited harassment should immediately report the problem to a teacher, counselor, and principal or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent.

Investigation of Reported Harassment

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 will be promptly investigated. The district will notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited harassment by an adult associated with the district.

In the event alleged harassment involves another student, the district will notify the parents of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited harassment when the allegations, if proven, would constitute "sexual harassment" or "other prohibited harassment" as defined by policy.

If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited harassment occurred, appropriate disciplinary or corrective action will be taken to address the harassment. The district may take disciplinary action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint did not rise to the level of harassment prohibited by law or policy.

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

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with local policy.

Law Enforcement Agencies

Questioning of Students

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

- The principal, or designee, 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 will require the law enforcement officer to fill out a "student interview form" and to sign his name to the form. If the officer request that the parent/guardian not be contacted, SHS will fully cooperate with the officer's request.

Students Taken Into Custody

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

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

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

The principal will notify the superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person requests that notification not be made in a particular circumstance. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a student's release to a law enforcement officer, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

Notification of Law Violations

The district is required by state law to notify:

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

Lunch Detention

When a student is assigned to lunch detention they will be expected to follow the instructions of the lunch detention monitor. While in lunch detention they are not allowed talk, sleep, or be disruptive. They will need to bring school work with them and be prepared to work after they finish their lunch. If a student does not attend lunch detention on the day that it was assigned that student may be given one more opportunity to attend the next day and if he/she does

not attend on that day they will be placed in OCS. After they have finished their OCS placement, they will then be required to finish their original lunch detention assignment. Additional days could be added to any lunch detention assignment if the student does not follow the detention monitor's instructions.

On Campus Suspension

Students who continue to misbehave or who commit more serious offenses may be placed in O.C.S. Students in O.C.S. are responsible for getting make-up work from their teachers for the days out of class. Students that have received multiple OCS placements may be assigned to DAEP.

Suspension

The CBC may suspend a student for a maximum of three days (out of school) if the student violates the code of conduct by engaging in any prohibited conduct. Both the length of the suspension and restrictions on participation in school-sponsored or school-related extracurricular activities during the suspension are left to the discretion of the administrator.

After School Detention

Students that are assigned to after school detention are required to stay after school until 4:30 pm. The student will be allowed to call his/her parents to inform them of their after school detention. While in after school detention they are not allowed talk, sleep, or be disruptive. They will need to bring school work with them and be prepared to work. If a student does not attend after school detention on the day that it was assigned to them, that student may be given one more opportunity to attend the next day and if he/she does not attend on that day they will be placed in OCS. After they have finished their OCS placement they will then be required to finish their original after school detention assignment. Additional days could be added to any after school detention assignment if the student does not follow the detention monitor's instructions.

Disciplinary Procedures

1. Warning by teacher or staff.
2. Conference with teacher or team.
3. If misbehavior persists, the teacher or principal will:
 - a. Notify parents.
 - b. Assign lunch detention.
 - c. Assign mandatory tutorials or after-school detention.
 - d. Refer student to office.
4. If misbehavior continues, additional consequences may be added and violations dealt with individually.
5. If misbehavior still persists, the team of teachers, administration and parents may meet to decide a proper behavior intervention plan. This may result in placement in On-Campus-Suspension for Long-term which could be five or more days or DAEP placement. **At the end of each 6 weeks each student will begin with a clean slate.**

Attendance and Absences

The Sweetwater Independent School District considers good attendance habits a key part of the education process. Research, as well as common sense, suggests better achievement for students who attend school regularly. In addition, punctuality and dependability are important traits to develop regardless of one's lifetime pursuits.

Texas Compulsory Attendance Law requires parents to ensure that every child in the state who is as much as six years of age and who has not reached 19 years of age attend school a minimum of 90% of the regular school term. Sweetwater provides 180 days of instruction annually and encourages parents and students to be diligent in adhering to the letter of the law as well as the spirit of the school attendance policy. There are legal and legitimate reasons for being absent, and parents should submit written excuses within three (3) school days of the absence to school principals, who are responsible for monitoring and implementing attendance laws and policy. *Education Code* 25.085(a), (b), and (d) (1). Students with

excessive tardies and students who are not in attendance at least 90% of the days a class is offered are subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including action by juvenile authorities, but may not be suspended or expelled. Students are expected to be present at school if they want to participate in extracurricular activities that day. School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction (termed "accelerated instruction" by the state) assigned by a grade placement committee and basic skills for ninth graders; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

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

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

For any student required to attend school, the student's parent can be charged with a criminal offense for contributing to the student's failure to attend school.

Any student 12 years of age or older who violates the Texas compulsory attendance law must be referred to truancy court for adjudication.

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 19th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year. If a student 19 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester the district may revoke the student's enrollment. The student's presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. [See policy FEA]

Absence Procedure/Notification

The parent or guardian of a student who is unavoidably absent should call the SHS main office by 9:00a.m. on the day of the absence. The telephone number is 235-4371. It is the current practice in SISD to call the parents of absent students on the day of the absence. Our automated phone system will notify you your student has been marked absent.

Within three (3) days of returning to school after an absence, a student must bring a written explanation of the absence signed by the parent to the main office, preferably before the 8:00 bell. If no documentation is brought, the absence automatically becomes unexcused. Personal illness for more than four (4) consecutive days must have a statement from a physician or health clinic verifying the student's absence from school and stating when the student may return to school. After a student has accumulated ten (10) unexcused absences during a school year, or has been referred to truancy court, he/she must bring documentation from a medical professional in order for an absence to be excused.

If a student is absent for 3 consecutive days the school attendance officer will make a home visit and the student or parent must present an excuse note to the officer at that time or the student's absences will be unexcused. If the attendance officer cannot make contact with the parent or student, the student's absences will be considered unexcused. At the midpoint of the semester, an attendance letter is sent to the parents or guardians of students with five (5) or more absences. When the maximum number of allowable absences has been exceeded, the student will be notified that he/she has exceeded the maximum number of allowed absences and will not receive credit for the course. Written notification will also be sent to the parents.

Attendance Requirement

Separate from the compulsory attendance requirements, students in all grade levels K- 12 must attend school a certain amount of time in order to get credit or a final grade for a class. State law generally requires students to be "in attendance" for at least 90 percent of days a class is taught during a semester or year. All absences from class, excused or unexcused, are counted in determining whether a student has met attendance requirements for credit or a final grade.

Students who are in attendance in a class at least 75% of the days but less than 90% are eligible to receive credit or a final grade if they complete a plan approved by the principal providing for the student to meet the instructional requirements for the class.

All students must be in attendance 90% of the days of each semester to receive credit for passing. Those in attendance less than 90% of the days will not receive credit unless they appeal to the campus Attendance Committee and the committee determines that credit will be given. Even though a student receives a passing grade, he/she may not get credit due to absences. Absences due to participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities shall not constitute a part of this policy.

Absence Appeal Procedure

A student who accrues more than the allowable absences in a course but who successfully meets the other course requirements may appeal for credit in the course if the student believes that there were extenuating circumstances which caused him/her to exceed to allowable number of absences. It is the student's responsibility to obtain an appeal form from the main office.

The campus Attendance Committee will review the appeal request and determine the student's eligibility for credit. This eligibility will be recommended only if extenuating circumstances such as an extended illness, hospital confinement, a death in the immediate family, or other emergencies recognized by the Attendance Committee are clearly present. Vacations and recreational trips do not justify an appeal.

If necessary to determine the student's eligibility for credit, the Attendance Committee may conduct a hearing on the appeal. Appeals based on extensive personal illness (four consecutive days or a recurring illness) must be supported by a doctor's statement.

The appeal process will begin approximately 2-3 weeks before the end of each semester. Appeal forms should be turned in to the office prior to the semester exams of the semester being appealed. Appeals will not be accepted after 30 days from the last day of the semester being appealed.

Unexcused Absences

Absences are deemed unexcused when no absence documentation is provided or when the absence does not meet the criteria to be considered excused. When an absence is unexcused, the parent and student are contacted.

Excused Absences

Excused absences are defined by state law as temporary absences resulting from personal sickness, sickness or death in the family, quarantine, weather or road conditions making travel dangerous, or any other cause acceptable to the superintendent or principal of the school in which the student is enrolled. Excused absences **may** include Medical appointments, Religious Holidays, Court Appearances, Foster Care Activities, Sounding "Taps" at a Veterans Funeral, Citizenship/Naturalization Activities, Military Deployment and Election Clerk Activities. Documentation must be provided for each type of absence. Please contact the campus principal for more information on excused absences.

Dental and medical appointments, other than emergencies, should be scheduled outside of school hours, if possible. If a child must visit a physician or dentist for treatment during school, every effort should be made for the child to lose as little time from school as possible. Students should not consider allowable absences as entitlements, but as absences that are deemed necessary because of personal illness, doctor's appointments, family emergencies, etc.

Prior Approval Absences

An absence that would otherwise be unexcused may be considered excused WITH PRIOR APPROVAL. This prior approval requires two steps:

1. Prior to the absence, the parent must contact the principal or assistant principal stating the date of the proposed absence and the reason for it.
2. The student must obtain a prior approval form at the main office and have it signed by each of his teachers stating the work to be made up.
3. He/she must turn in all work, or make arrangements with the teachers to make up agreed work upon returning, before he/she leaves.
4. A prior approval absence is still an absence and will count when determining if a student has been in attendance 90% of the school days.

Medical Appointments

Students who are temporarily absent due to an appointment with a health care professional may not be counted absent if:

1. The student is in attendance at least half the class period before signing out.
2. The student returns to school on the same day as the medical appointment and attends at least one (1) class.
3. A note from the health care provider is furnished to the school, within three (3) days after the absence,

- with the time of the appointment and the time leaving the appointment.
4. Only a reasonable amount of travel time is included.

This provision also applies to the absences of students who are parents and are absent to take the student's child for a medical appointment. The campus administrator will make any final decision on this policy.

Make-Up Work

As far as is possible, a student who has an absence is permitted to make up work missed. Upon his return to school, it is the student's responsibility to ask his teacher for assignments on work missed and to complete all oral and written assignments missed as soon as possible. The teachers are not expected to remind students that their work has not been made up. After being contacted by the student, teachers will schedule make-up work.

Students who are absent for school-sponsored trips or other trips approved by the principal, should make up their work according to school policy. The minimum days allowed for make-up work will equal the number of days absent.

If a student is ill for at least three consecutive school days, but feels well enough to do a portion of his/her make-up work before returning to school, he or his parents should call the main office by 9:00a.m. the fourth day. This will allow time for teachers to make assignments and have them ready to be picked up by the end of the school day. It is the responsibility of any student who misses his/her second semester final examinations to come to the main office and make them up. Failure to take these exams within 30 days after the end of the semester will result in a zero for each one not made up.

Withdrawal from School

In order for a student to withdraw from school, his/her parent must come to the counseling office and sign a withdrawal form. The student then takes the form to all of his/her teachers to obtain current course grades and return pertinent school property (textbooks, sports equipment, etc.), and to the librarian for final record clearance. After this procedure is complete, the student returns the withdrawal form to the main office and is issued another form to be presented to the new school upon enrollment. All books and other records must be clear before a transcript is sent to another school.

Students who are age 18 or older, who are legally married, or who have ever been legally married are adults and can withdraw themselves from school.

Academics

Accountability under State and Federal Law (All Grade Levels)

Sweetwater 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; and
- Information compiled by TEA for the submission of a federal report card that is required by federal law.

This information can be found on the district's website at www.sweetwaterisd.net. 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](#).

Grading Policies

In grades 6-8, achievement is reported to parents as Six-Week Report Cards. Homework is assigned at the teacher's

discretion. Grading policies for Sweetwater ISD are as follows:

Six-Week grades shall be derived by the following formula:

- Major tests and projects shall count 50% of the six-week grade. Minimums of three major grades are required each six weeks.
- In-class work, quizzes, report, notebooks, etc, shall count at least 25% of the six week grade.
- Homework shall count no more than 25% of the six-week grade.

All numerical averages are rounded to the nearest number (ex., 84.5 = 85; 84.4 = 84).
A grade of 69 will be rounded to a 70.

Report Cards and Progress Reports

Report cards with each student’s grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every six weeks.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will be given a written unsatisfactory progress report if their child’s performance in any course (in English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies) is near or below 70, or is below the expected level of performance. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject during a grading period, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject.

Teachers follow grading guidelines approved by the principal that have been designed to reflect each student’s academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the Board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the District’s grading policy.

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

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and should be returned to the school within 5 days. Progress shall be reported as numerical scores.

Promotion and Retention

In grades 6-8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100, based on course-level, grade-level standards (TEKS) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in Language Arts and

Mathematics and either Science and Social Studies. In addition to the above criteria, students must pass the appropriate state assessment in Mathematics and Reading.

In all above instances, students not passing the state assessment will be given the opportunity to retest during final exam week (with a released test for appropriate state assessment). Students not mastering the retest will be required to attend summer remediation until mastery is proven.

All students affected by grade retention according to this policy have the right to request a review by the campus GPC (Grade Placement Committee).

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

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

Parents of a student in grades 3–8 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year.

a student in grade 5 or 8 will have two additional opportunities to take a failed assessment. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, **the decision of the committee must be unanimous** and the student must complete additional special instruction before beginning the next grade level. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year.

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

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student in a middle school or beyond who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment test or is determined by the District as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9. The PGP will be designed and implemented by a guidance counselor, teacher, or other staff member designated by the principal. The plan will identify the student's educational goals and include consideration of the parent's educational expectations for the student.

Students with Disabilities

Promotion standards and appropriate assessment and acceleration options, as established by individualized education programs (IEP) or grade-level classification of students for special education, shall be determined by the ARD committee. Upon the recommendation of the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee, a student with disabilities who receives special education services may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her IEP.

Summer School

Summer school for grades 6-12 is held yearly in a central location in Sweetwater during June and July. Summer school for grades 3-12 will be for STAAR remediation or STARR review and testing.

STAAR(State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) Grades 3–8

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state-mandated assessments, such as the STAAR, in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8
- Reading, annually in grades 3–8
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7

- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

Successful performance on the reading and math assessments in grades 5 and 8 is required by law in order for the student to be promoted to the next grade level. Refer to the Promotion and Retention section for additional information.

STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate, for students receiving special education services, will be available for eligible students, as determined by the student’s ARD committee.

STAAR-L is a linguistically accommodated assessment that is available for certain limited English proficient (LEP) students, as determined by the student’s Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC).

Physical Fitness Activity/Assessment

In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, and FFA, the district will ensure that students in kindergarten through grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week. Students in middle or junior high school will engage in [30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters OR at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within each two-week period for at least four semesters]. For additional information on the district’s requirements and programs regarding elementary, middle, and junior high school student physical activity requirements, please see the principal.

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to the principal to obtain the results of his or her child’s physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

Special Programs

SISD provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, and migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as about services offered by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the principal at (325) 236-6303.

Gifted/Talented Philosophy

It is the philosophy of the Sweetwater ISD gifted and talented program that all children, regardless of race or socioeconomic status, should be given the opportunity to succeed in an educational environment that challenges them to achieve their fullest potential. To this end, SISD is committed to providing educational programs for the gifted that extend beyond the regular curriculum and that address the needs of those students recognized to have exceptional potential in one or more of the following areas:

- General intellectual ability,
- Specific subject matter aptitude,
- Creative/productive thinking ability,
- Leadership ability.

In order to meet the needs of these students, SISD works cooperatively with Region XIV Education Service Center to provide extended opportunities for student development.

The philosophy of SISD reflects its understanding of student uniqueness, its recognition of district responsibility in providing opportunities for these students, and its commitment to educational excellence.

Cheating/Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism is the use of another person’s original ideas or writing as one’s own without giving credit to the true author. Plagiarism will be considered cheating and the student will be subject to academic disciplinary action that may include loss of credit for the work in question. Teachers who have reason to believe a student has engaged in cheating or other academic dishonesty shall determine the academic penalty to be assessed. The use of academic penalties is not governed by the policies pertaining to student discipline, but students and parents may appeal the teacher’s decision, using the student complaint policy.

Career and Technology Programs

Sweetwater Middle School offers career and technology programs in keyboarding, technology applications, and technology education. SMS will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

Student Conduct and Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities are a privilege. Students participating in extracurricular activities can be held to a higher standard than non-participating students. An extracurricular participant found guilty of criminal misconduct outside of school activities or while representing Sweetwater Independent School District or of conduct unbecoming of an extracurricular participant are subject to discipline as determined by their respective sponsors and/or written guidelines such as by-laws, student contracts, etc. and/or as specified in the Student Code of Conduct.

Unacceptable conduct includes any admission of guilt or wrongdoing on the Internet or any other electronic device. Extra attention and severity will be appropriate if the offenses are repeated. Any disciplinary action involving extracurricular activities may be appealed by the student or parent subject to students' rights of due process as defined in SISD Policy FNG (Local)

Please note: Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior--including consequences for misbehavior--that are stricter than those for students in general. Those involved in athletics will follow the athletic participation guidelines. The athlete and his or her parent(s) will sign and abide by the SISD athletic policies in order to participate in any athletic event.

Extracurricular Eligibility Requirements

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

- A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than an Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate course; or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or language other than English—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- The District shall permit a student to be absent nine times per semester to participate in UIL or other extracurricular activities. This shall not include post-District competition, in which case, five additional days shall be allowed for UIL or other extracurricular activities.
- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.

Rules Concerning Athletic Contests

1. Spectators are not to enter the playing area or court during or following a game. The only exceptions are players, coaches, cheerleaders, band members, officials, and police.
2. The use of fireworks, fire batons, or fire of any form is prohibited.
3. Signs displayed in the school gym must be approved by the principal or sponsor.
4. Only uniformed school groups may form lines on the football field through which the football teams pass entering or leaving the field.
5. Spectators are not to use abusive language towards officials or participants.
6. Fans are not to throw any items onto the playing field or court and may be removed if they do so.

Medical and Safety Issues

Accidents and First Aid

At all times the school exercises every care to prevent the injury of students at school while on school property, in

athletic contests, or on school-sponsored trips. When accidents occur and injuries result, students or teachers should report them to the office immediately. First aid equipment is available in the school nurse's office for minor injuries.

Any student participation in a UIL activity should have some type of personal injury insurance. The school district is not responsible for the payment of any medical bills. The school district does purchase a secondary injury policy which is a coinsurance policy only. This policy may be acted upon only after the personal insurance has been filed and payment has been made or denied to the medical provider. Certain conditions must be met in order for the coinsurance to go into effect. Because of this, any injury that occurs during or resulting from an activity must be reported to the coach, sponsor, or school office immediately. Failure to do so may result in the coinsurance policy becoming void in regards to a claim. The classroom insurance plan offered to students by SISD will not cover UIL Interscholastic Athletes.

When a student enrolls in one of the shop classes, he/she takes on a responsibility that other students do not have. He/she is responsible for his own safety and the safety of his/her fellow students in these shops. There are safety devices on all machines and if these devices are used, accidents are minimized. Students may be required to pass safety tests prior to using power machinery.

Other than in the cases mentioned, SISD will not assume responsibility for any injury resulting from accidents on the school grounds, in athletic contests, or on school-sponsored trips.

Asbestos Management Notice:

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's Asbestos Management Plan is available in the superintendent's and the principal's office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact Scott Lambert, the district's designated asbestos coordinator at scott.lambert@sweetwaterisd.net.

Communicable Diseases/Condition

To protect other students from contagious illness, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. The school nurse or the principal's office can provide information from the Texas Department of Health regarding these diseases. Parents of a student with a communicable or contagious disease should phone the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

Fire and Emergency Drills

Fire and other emergency drills are held regularly at unannounced periods throughout the school year. Students and teachers are given materials concerning fire drills and tornado safety rules, and bulletins are posted in all classrooms. Students should familiarize themselves with this information and be prepared at all times for any emergency that might occur.

Both obstructed and unobstructed fire drills are held in order to accustom students to the use of different exits. During the drills, order should be considered before time. The following signals are used for fire drills:

Fire drill	3 bells	walk out of buildings in orderly fashion (no talking or pushing)
Return	2 bells	walk back into room
Stop	1 bell	stand at attention
After stopping	2 bells	return to room

In case of tornadoes, students are to stay inside the school building, away from windows, and remain near an inside wall or a lower floor. The auditorium and gymnasiums should be avoided. A continuous ringing of bells signals a tornado drill.

Food Allergies

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 student shall be cared for in accordance with District Policy.

Gang Free Zones

All District schools and other property owned, rented or leased by the District are "gang-free zones." Certain criminal offenses that occur in, on or within 1,000 feet of a school or any other property owned, rented or leased by the District will

be enhanced in the criminal justice system to the next highest category of offense if they are committed by a person who is a member of a criminal street gang, unless is already punishable as a first degree felony.

Head Lice (All Grade Levels)

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. If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent to determine whether the child will need to be picked up from school and to discuss a plan for treatment with an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student has undergone one treatment, the parent should check in with the school nurse to discuss the treatment used. The nurse can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments and how best to get rid of lice and prevent their return.

Notice will also be provided to parents of elementary school students in the affected classroom.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website [Managing Head Lice](#).

Immunizations

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical or religious reasons, the student will not be immunized. The immunizations required are diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles(rubella), mumps, hemophilus influenza, varicella (chicken pox) and the Hepatitis A/B. Beginning in 2009- 2010 new vaccination guidelines we put in place by the State of Texas. More information may be found on the SISD website www.sweetwaterisd.net or online at <https://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco/affidavit.shtm>.

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 maybe personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student's religious beliefs conflict with the requirement that the student be immunized, the student must present a statement signed by the student (or by the parent if the student is a minor) which states that immunization conflicts with the beliefs and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the student is an adherent or member. This statement must be renewed annually.

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 which states that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required would be harmful to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed annually unless the physician specifies a lifelong contraindication.

Integrated Pest Management Notice:

The district is required to follow integrated pest management (IPM) procedures to control pests on school grounds. Although the district strives to use the safest and most effective methods to manage pests, including a variety of non-chemical control measures, pesticide use is sometimes necessary to maintain adequate pest control and ensure a safe, pest-free school environment.

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area. Parents who have further questions or who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Scott Lambert , the district's IPM coordinator, at scott.lambert@sweetwaterisd.net.

Invasive Examinations or Screenings:

We do not perform any invasive physical examinations or screenings as a condition of attendance. We do perform vision, hearing, acanthosis, nigricans, and scoliosis screenings, as required by state law. Please contact the principal if you have questions regarding those screenings.

Medication at School

Only authorized employees, in accordance with policies at FFAC may administer medications. District employees will not give a student prescription medication, non-prescription medication, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements, with the following exceptions:

- Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.
- Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student’s individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student non –prescription medication, but only:

- In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district’s medical advisor; and
- When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district’s form.

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

If the student has been prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day, the student and parents should discuss this with the school nurse or principal. In accordance with a student’s individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. See the school nurse or principal for information.

Safety (All Grade Levels)

Student safety on campus, at school-related events, and on district vehicles 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, campus behavior coordinator, 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.

School Health Advisory Council

Information regarding the District’s School Health Advisory Council, including the number of meetings scheduled or held during the year and information regarding vending machines in District facilities and student access to the machines is available from the principal. 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. Additional information regarding the district’s School Health Advisory Council is available from the principal.

School Insurance

SISD offers a student insurance plan. **This plan will not cover accidents incurred in UIL Interscholastic Athletics**, but will cover other accidents in which the student is involved at school. If a parent is interested in purchasing insurance for his/her child, he/she or the child may pick up packets in the administration building.

Psychotropic Drugs

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

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

Steroids/Drug Testing Information

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for medical use only, and such use can only be prescribed by a physician. Bodybuilding, muscle enhancement, or the increase of muscle bulk or strength through the use of an anabolic steroid or human growth hormone by a healthy student is not a valid medical use and is a criminal offense.

All students participating in extracurricular activities or driving to school will be drug tested.

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 the following Web sites or contact the school counselor for more information related to suicide prevention and to find mental health services available in your area:

- www.texasuicideprevention.org
- <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhservices-search/>

Vending Machines (All Grade Levels)

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

Video Cameras

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

Section III: Parental Rights And Responsibilities

This section of the SHS Student Handbook includes information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

Parental Involvement

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements of the graduation programs with your child, if your child is entering ninth grade.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See Guidance and Counseling, Section II]
- 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 at (325) 235-4371 for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school.
- Becoming a school volunteer
- Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include:
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, contact Principal at (325) 235-4371 for campus committees or SISD Administration at (325) 235-8601 for district committees.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring that local community values are reflected in health education instruction.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations.

Parental Rights

Video or Audio Tape

Parents who do not want the school to video or audio tape their child for educational or safety reasons must notify the principal in writing within ten school days of the child's first day of instruction for the current school year. State law, however, permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:

1. When it is to be used for school safety,
2. When it relates to classroom instruction or a co curricular or extracurricular activity, or
3. When it relates to media coverage of the school.

Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges

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 moment of silence or silent activity that follows. [See Pledges of Allegiance and Moment of Silence in Section I]

Excusing A Student From Reciting A Portion Of The Declaration Of Independence

You may request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in 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.

Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct

A noncustodial parent may request in writing that he or she be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to his or child's misconduct that may involve placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) or expulsion. [See Policy and the Student Code of Conduct.]

Bullying

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression or physical conduct against another student and the behavior:

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

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, assault, demands for money, confinement, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, and 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. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying and will take appropriate disciplinary action if an investigation indicates that bullying has occurred. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited.

SHS may use a Bullying Contract with all students involved in the bullying incident to clearly communicate expectations for future interactions.

School Safety Transfers

As a parent, you have a right:

- To request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the campus administration to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. Contact the superintendent for information at (325) 235-8601.
- To request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds.
- To request the transfer of your child to another campus or a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault.

Schoolmessenger Information

SISD will use SchoolMessenger to notify you and your child about important events. An automated message will be sent out to your home phone and/or cell phone in the event of an emergency or school closing. Your child may also receive

a non-emergency message from their teachers or coaches about assignments or changes in athletic events. It is very important that your phone numbers are current. Notify the school office of any changes in address or phone number.

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 <http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/177902/>. 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. 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 campus 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 (TDFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp.

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

<http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/signs.cfm>

<http://sapn.nonprofitoffice.com/>

<http://www.taasa.org/member/materials2.php>

http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml

http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml

Reports may be made to:

The Child Protective Services (CPS) division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (1 800-252-5400 or on the Web at <http://www.txabusehotline.org>).

A child who feels that they are victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment should contact the school counselor to obtain assistance and intervention.

School	Counselor	Phone Number
Sweetwater High School	Amy Clark, Ruth Ann Campbell	(325) 235-4371
Sweetwater Middle School	Anita Withrow, Mickey Scott	(325) 236-6303
Sweetwater Intermediate School	Melissa Howard	(325) 235-3491
Southeast Elementary School	Crystal Bibb	(325) 235-9222
East Ridge Elementary School	Jimmy Bennett	(325) 235-5282

Multiple Sibling Placements

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.

Request For Use Of A Service Animal

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

Parents of 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.

Information for Parents

As a parent, if you do not want your child's artwork, special projects, photographs, and the like to be displayed on the district's Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication, you must notify the principal in writing.

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. Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks.

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

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. Publications prepared by outside persons or agencies must be approved by the Superintendent of Sweetwater ISD. Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the principal at least two weeks before the event.

Complaint Procedure

All parents should be aware that there is a local school board complaint procedure. A level one complaint begins with the principal. Forms are available upon request and the procedure can be accessed through SISD's Policy Manual at: [http://www.TASB.ORG/policy/pol/private/177902/LMP/FNG\(L\)-B.ht](http://www.TASB.ORG/policy/pol/private/177902/LMP/FNG(L)-B.ht)

Student Handbook Statement: English

Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or 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 (RTL). The implementation of RTL has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

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

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with prior written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights, if they disagree with the district. The district is required to give parents the Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities. Additional information regarding the IDEA is available from the school district in a companion document A 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

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

Contact Person: Kirk Stroman

Phone Number: (325) 235-8621

Información sobre el manual del estudiante: Español

Asistencia para estudiantes que tienen dificultades de aprendizaje o necesitan servicios de educación especial.

Si un niño tiene dificultades de aprendizaje, el padre puede comunicarse con la persona mencionada abajo para informarse sobre la remisión a educación general en términos generales o sistema de evaluación para los servicios de apoyo del distrito. Este sistema conecta a los estudiantes con una variedad de opciones de apoyo, incluyendo remisiones para una evaluación de educación especial. Los estudiantes que tienen dificultades en el aula normal deberían tomarse en cuenta para tutoría, compensación y otros servicios de apoyo académicos o del comportamiento que están disponibles para todos los estudiantes, incluyendo un proceso basado en la respuesta a intervención (RtI). La implementación de la respuesta a intervención tiene el potencial de tener un efecto positivo en la habilidad de los distritos de cubrir las necesidades de todos los estudiantes con dificultades.

El padre tiene derecho, en todo momento, a solicitar una evaluación para los servicios de educación especial. En un periodo de tiempo razonable, el distrito debe decidir si dicha evaluación es necesaria. Si la evaluación es necesaria, el padre será notificado y se le pedirá que provea un consentimiento informado por escrito para realizar la evaluación. El distrito debe

completar la evaluación y el informe en 60 días del calendario desde la fecha en que el distrito recibió el consentimiento escrito. El distrito debe darle al padre una copia del informe de la evaluación.

Si el distrito determina que no es necesaria la evaluación, el distrito le proporcionará al padre un aviso previo por escrito que explica por qué no se evaluará al niño. El aviso por escrito incluirá una explicación que les informa a los padres sobre sus derechos, si están en desacuerdo con el distrito. El distrito tiene la obligación de darles a los padres el Aviso Sobre Procedimientos de Protección- Derechos de los Padres de Estudiantes con Discapacidades. El distrito escolar tiene información adicional sobre IDEA en un documento complementario Guía para el Proceso de Admisión, Revisión y Retiro. Los siguientes portales de internet proveen información a aquellas personas interesadas en obtener información y recursos específicos para estudiantes con discapacidades y sus familias:

Texas Project First
Partners Resource Network

La persona designada con quien se debe comunicar para obtener información sobre las opciones para un niño que tiene dificultades de aprendizaje o una remisión para una evaluación para los servicios de educación especial es:

Persona con quien comunicarse: Scarlett Whitteker

Número de teléfono: (325) 235-8621
