



**PreK-6<sup>th</sup> Grade**  
**2011 - 2012**  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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## Table of Contents

PREFACE.....	vii
<b>SECTION 1: REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS</b>	<b>1</b>
PARENT INVOLVEMENT.....	1
Working Together.....	1
PARENTAL RIGHTS.....	2
Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights.....	2
“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities.....	2
Displaying a Student’s Artwork and Projects.....	3
Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff.....	3
Reviewing Instructional Materials.....	3
Inspecting Surveys.....	3
Accessing Student Records.....	3
Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student.....	4
Granting Permission to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction.....	4
Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom.....	4
Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction.....	4
Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags.....	5
Excusing a Student from Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence.....	5
Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct.....	5
Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment.....	6
Requesting Transfers for Your Child.....	6
Parents of Students with Disabilities.....	6
Request for the Use of a Service Animal.....	7
Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education.....	7
Parents of Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English.....	7
Accommodations for Children of Military Families.....	8
Student Records.....	8
Directory Information.....	10
Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes.....	10

<b>SECTION II: INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE.....	11
Compulsory Attendance.....	11
Attendance for Credit.....	12
Parent’s Note After An Absence.....	13
Doctor’s Note After An Absence for Illness.....	13
ACADEMIC PROGAMS.....	14
BULLYING.....	14
CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN.....	14
COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS.....	15
COMPUTER RESOURCES.....	15
CONDUCT.....	16
Applicability of School Rules.....	16
Disruptions of School Operations.....	16
Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones.....	16
Acceptable/Unacceptable Use of District Technology Resources.....	18
Social Events.....	18
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES/CONDITIONS.....	18
COUNSELING.....	18
Personal Counseling.....	18
Psychological Exams, Tests, Treatments.....	18
CREDIT BY EXAM.....	19
DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS.....	19
School Materials.....	19
Nonschool Materials from students.....	20
Nonschool Materials from others.....	20
DRESS AND GROOMING.....	21
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS.....	24
FEES.....	25
FUND-RAISING.....	26
GRADING GUIDELINES.....	26
HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, RETALIATION.....	27

Reporting Procedures.....	28
Investigation of Reported Harassment.....	28
Services for the Homeless and Title I Participants.....	28
HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS.....	29
Bacterial Meningitis.....	29
Food Allergies.....	30
Physical Activity for Students in Elementary and Middle School.....	30
School Health Advisory Council.....	30
Vending Machines.....	31
Tobacco Prohibited.....	31
Asbestos Management Plan.....	31
Pest Management Plan.....	31
HOMEWORK.....	32
INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY.....	32
IMMUNIZATION.....	34
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.....	34
Questioning of Students.....	34
Students Taken Into Custody.....	34
Notification of Law Violations.....	35
Limited English Proficient Students.....	35
MAKEUP WORK.....	36
Makeup Work Because of Absence.....	36
DAEP/ On-Campus Suspension Makeup Work.....	36
MEDICINE AT SCHOOL.....	37
Psychotropic Drugs.....	37
NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT.....	38
PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE.....	38
PRAYER.....	38
PROMOTION AND RETENTION.....	39
RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL.....	40
REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES.....	41
SAFETY.....	41
Accident Insurance.....	42

Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies.....	42
Fire Drill Bells.....	42
Tornado Drill Bells.....	42
Emergency Medical Treatment and Information.....	42
Emergency School-Closing Information.....	42
SCHOOL FACILITIES.....	42
Conduct Before and After School.....	43
Use of Hallways During Class Time.....	43
Cafeteria Services.....	43
Library.....	43
Meetings of Non-curriculum Related Groups.....	43
SEARCHES.....	43
Student’s Desks and Lockers.....	43
Electronic Devices.....	44
Vehicles on Campus.....	44
Trained Dogs.....	44
SPECIAL PROGRAMS.....	44
STEROIDS.....	44
STAAR(State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness).....	45
End-of-Course Assessments.....	45
Students in Protective Custody of the State.....	46
Suicide Awareness.....	46
TARDINESS.....	47
TEXTBOOKS and TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT.....	47
TRANSPORTATION.....	47
School Sponsored Trips.....	47
Buses and Other School Vehicles.....	47
VANDALISM.....	51
VIDEO CAMERAS.....	51
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL.....	51
General Visitors.....	51
Class Visitation Guidelines.....	51
WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL.....	52

GLOSSARY .....52

## PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2011-2012! 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 Pine Tree Pre K – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Student Handbook is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. In an effort to make it easier to use, the handbook is divided into two sections:

**Section I—PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES—** with 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.

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

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

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Pine Tree ISD *Student Code of Conduct*, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found as an attachment to this handbook, posted on our website at [www.ptisd.org](http://www.ptisd.org), or is available in the principal’s office. The student handbook is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the *Student Code of Conduct*. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy or other rules that affect student handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters and other communications.

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

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

Also, please complete and return to your child’s campus the following required forms: 1) Parental Acknowledgement Form, 2) Student Directory Information and Release of Student Information Form, 3) Release of Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education Form, 4) Consent/Opt-Out Form. [See **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights** on page 2 and **Directory Information** on page 10 for more information.

Please note that references to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. A copy of the district’s policy manual is available for review in the school office or online at [www.ptisd.org](http://www.ptisd.org).



## **SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

This section of the Pine Tree Pre K – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Student Handbook includes information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

### ***PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT***

#### **Working Together**

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Programs.**]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 41.]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policies at GKG and contact: Assistant Superintendent, K'Dawn O'Rear, 1701 Pine Tree Rd., Longview, TX., 75604, 903-295-5000
- Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include: PTO
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB. Contact your child's campus principal.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction. [See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and information in this handbook at **School Health Advisory Council** on page 30.]
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies at BE and BED for more information.]

- The **Parent Involvement Coordinator**, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs is Donna Gwin and may be contacted at 903-295-5135.

## ***PARENTAL RIGHTS***

### **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights**

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

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

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

### **“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities**

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

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

## **Inspecting Surveys**

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

## **Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff**

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

## **Reviewing Instructional Materials**

As a parent, you have a right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered to your child. [Also see **Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 4 for additional information.]

## **Displaying a Student's Artwork and Projects**

Teachers may display students' work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement. The district will seek parental consent before displaying students' artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, and the like on the district's Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication.

## **Accessing Student Records**

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

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,
- Teacher and counselor evaluations,

- Reports of behavioral patterns, and
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.

[See **Student Records** on page 7.]

### **Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student**

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

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

### **Granting Permission to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction**

As a parent, if your child is under the age of 14, you must grant permission for your child to receive instruction in the district's parenting and paternity awareness program or your 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.

### **Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom**

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

### **Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction**

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality (grades 6-12). 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 or acquired immune deficiency syndrome 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 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: Pine Tree ISD uses the “Choosing The Best” supplemental health curriculum. This curriculum is based on abstinence and is formatted to introduce information to students by grade level. Each grade level has a specific curriculum beginning with grade 6 and ending with grades 11-12. As a parent, you are entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, you may remove your child from any part of this instruction with no academic, disciplinary, or other penalties. You may choose to become more involved with the development of curriculum used for this purpose by becoming a member of the school district’s (SHAC). Please see the campus principal for additional information.

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

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows. [See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** on page 38 and policy EC (LEGAL).]

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

You may request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3–12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week (the week in which September 17 falls) unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child be excused, (2) the district determines that your child has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity. [See policy EHBK (LEGAL).]

### **Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct**

A non-custodial 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*.]

### **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, you must submit a written statement to the campus principal stating this decision. A signed statement must be provided each year.

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

### **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 board or its designee 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. See the Superintendent, 903-295-5000 for information. [See policy FDB.] [See **Bullying** on page 14, and policy FFI(LOCAL).
- To request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See policy FDE (LOCAL).]
- To request the transfer of your child to another campus or a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. [See policies FDE.]

### **Requesting Classroom Assignment for Multiple Birth Siblings**

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

### **Parents of Students with Disabilities**

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 at that campus. [See policy FDB(LOCAL).]

## **Request for the 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.

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

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

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

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent of his or her rights if the parent disagrees with the district. The district is required to give parents the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*. Additional information regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is available from the school district in a companion document, *A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

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

\*Texas Project First, at <http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/>

\*Partners Resource Network, at <http://www.partnerstx.org/howPRNhelps.html>

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is Cathy Schmidt, 903-295-5170.

## **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.

### **Accommodations for 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 related to leave or deployment activities may be excused by the district. The district will permit no more than five (5) excused absences per year for this purpose.

Additional information may be found at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=7995>

### **Student Records**

Both federal 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. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older OR who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

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

- The parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student's education records. Federal law requires that, as soon as a student becomes 18, 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.
- District school officials who have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records. School officials would include trustees and employees, such as the superintendent, administrator's, and principals; teachers, counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff; a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or volunteer); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties. "Legitimate educational interest" in

a student's records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility; or investigating or evaluating programs.

- Various governmental agencies.
- Individuals granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.

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

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

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 1701 Pine Tree Rd., Longview, TX., 75604

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction 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 principal or superintendent. 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 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. [See Finality of Grades at FNG(LEGAL), **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 41 and **Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns** on page 15 for an overview of the process.]

The district's policy regarding student records found at FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL) is available from the principal's or superintendent's office, or on the district's Web-site at

ptisd.org. The parent's or eligible student's right of access to and copies of student records do not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records-such as a teacher's personal notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher-do not have to be made available to the parents or student. **Please note:** Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with federal law regarding student records. The complaint may be mailed to: Family Policy Compliance Office; U.S. Department of Education; 400 Maryland Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20202-5901.

## **Directory Information**

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

However, release of a student's directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of your child's first day of instruction for this school year. (See the "Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information" included on the required PTISD Handbook Code of Conduct Acknowledgement form.)

## **Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes**

The district often needs to use student information for the following school-sponsored purposes: student recognition activities, yearbook or school newspaper, printed programs for extracurricular activities, news releases to local media, etc.

For these specific school-sponsored purposes, the district would like to use your child's: name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, grade level, dates of attendance, photograph, major field of study, degrees, honors, and awards received in school, most recent school previously attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, email address. This information will not be used for other purposes without the consent of the parent or eligible student, except as described above at Directory Information.

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

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

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

## **SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

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

### ***ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE***

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

#### **Compulsory Attendance**

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

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

A student in grades 3-8 will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program, which may occur before or after school or during the summer, if the student does not meet the passing standards on the state assessment for his or her grade level and applicable subject area.

#### **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance**

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

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Service as an election clerk; and

- Documented health-care appointments, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders.

In addition, a junior or senior student’s absence of up to two (2) days related to visiting a college or university will be considered an exemption, provided the student receives approval from the campus principal, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed.

### **Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance**

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

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

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

For a student younger than 12 years of age, the student’s parent could be charged with a criminal offense based on the student’s failure to attend school.

If a student between the ages 12 and 18 violates the compulsory attendance law, both the parent and student could be charged with a criminal offense.

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

### **Attendance for Credit**

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the approval of the judge presiding over the case will also be required before the student receives credit for the class.

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

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

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

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

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

### **Parent's Note After An Absence**

When a student must be absent from school, the student—upon returning to school—must bring a note, signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older.

### **Doctor's Note After An Absence for Illness**

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than 5 consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. [See policy FEC (LOCAL)].

### **Driver License Attendance Verification**

For a student between the ages of 16 and 18 to obtain a driver license, the Texas Department of Public Safety must be provided written parental consent to access the student's record's for purposes of verifying 90 percent attendance for credit for the semester.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

The school counselor provides students and parents information regarding academic programs to prepare for higher education and career choices.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students directs written or verbal expressions or physical conduct against another student and the behavior results in harm to the student or the student's property, places a student in fear of 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. See **School Safety Transfers** on page , or policy FFI(LOCAL).

## **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN**

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, which may be accessed in the District Improvement Plan. 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 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 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, the campus counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for 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.

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index.aspx?d=2820>

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

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

<http://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>)

## **COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS**

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

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

## **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

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

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

## **CONDUCT**

### **Applicability of School Rules**

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

### **Disruptions of School Operations**

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

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

### **Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones**

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess personal mobile telephones; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. A student must have approval to possess other telecommunications devices such as notebooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable computers. The use of mobile telephones or

any device capable of capturing images in locker rooms or restroom areas at any time while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event is strictly prohibited.

A student who uses a telecommunication device without authorization during the school day will have the device confiscated. The student or parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal's office for a fee of \$15.

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student's parents will be disposed of after the notice required by law [policy FNCE].

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel. [policy FNF.]

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

### **Possession and Use of Other Personal Electronic Devices**

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

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal electronic device may be searched by authorized personnel. [policy FNF.]

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

### **Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices**

In some cases, students may find it beneficial or might be encouraged to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must obtain prior approval before using personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional use. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use. When students are not using the devices for approved instructional purposes, all devices must be turned off during the instructional day. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### **Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources**

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in the use of district-owned technology resources for instructional purposes; specific resources may be issued individually to students. Use of these technological resources, which include the district's network systems and use of district equipment, is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement regarding the use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

## **Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources**

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, whether the equipment used to send messages is district-owned or personally owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as "sexting," will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct and may, in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement.

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

## **Social Events**

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

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

## ***CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS***

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. Students must be free from fever for 24 hours before returning to school.

The school nurse can provide information from the Department of State Health Services regarding these diseases.

## ***COUNSELING***

### **Personal Counseling**

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

### **Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment**

The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent. Parental consent is not necessary when a psychological examination, test, or treatment is required by state or federal law for

special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

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

### ***CREDIT BY EXAM-If Student Has Taken the Course***

A student who has previously taken a course or subject-but did not receive credit for it-may, in circumstances determined by the teacher, counselor, principal, or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject. Prior instruction may include, for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, correspondence courses, or independent study supervised by a teacher.

The counselor or principal would determine if the student could take an exam for this purpose. If approval is granted, the student must score at least 70 on the exam to receive credit for the course or subject.

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

A student may not use this exam, however, to regain eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities. For further information see the counselor and policy EEJA (LOCAL).

### ***CREDIT BY EXAM-If Student Has Not Taken the Course***

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course for which the student has had no prior instruction. The dates on which exams are scheduled during the 2010-2011 school year include:

Dates Scheduled: Contact District Assessment Coordinator.

A student will earn credit with a passing score of at least 90 on the exam.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the principal no later than (30) days prior to the scheduled testing date. The district will not honor a request by a parent to administer a test on a date other than the published dates. If the district agrees to administer a test other than the one chosen by the district, the parent must purchase a test from a university approved by the State Board of Education. [EEJB(LOCAL)].

## ***DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS***

### **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 newspaper and the yearbook are available to students.

All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal.  
[See **Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes** on page 10.]

### **Non-school Materials...from students**

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

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

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

### **Non-school Materials...from others**

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by policies at GKDA. To be considered for distribution, any non-school material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the superintendent for prior review. The superintendent 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, FNG, or GF.]

Prior review will not be required for:

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

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

## ***DRESS AND GROOMING***

It is the philosophy of Pine Tree ISD that parents have the responsibility to send students to school neatly groomed and dressed appropriately. Appearances should promote the good health, safety, and general well being of the student. Clothing should avoid brevity and/or design that may be offensive to the dignity of the rights of others. The school district further believes that if the parent gives up this responsibility and permits the student to come to school dressed inappropriately, the school officials have the responsibility and right to take corrective action.

### **GRADES (5 – 12)**

#### **Pants/Shorts/Dresses:**

- No holes are allowed on jeans/pants/shorts.
- Pants/shorts are to be worn at the waist and may not be oversized. (Absolutely no sagging allowed).
- Skirts/Dresses/Shorts can be no shorter than 3” above the knee while standing in a normal position.
- Garments must be worn over leggings/jeggings and can be no shorter than 5” inches above the knee.
- Wind pants are allowed.
- Athletic shorts **are not** allowed in grades (7-12).

#### **Shirts/Sweatshirts/Sweaters:**

- Polos/T-shirts may be worn out as long as they are not oversized (they should not extend past the wrist of a student who is standing in a normal position).
- Shirts that are worn out can hang no lower than the wrist when a student is standing in a normal position.
- Shirts designed to be buttoned must be buttoned.
- Shirts must cover the midriff and must cover the chest area (cleavage must be covered).

#### **Shoes:**

- Shoes must match and are to be fastened or tied at all times.

#### **Other Guidelines:**

- Distracting hairstyles such as unnatural hair colors, spikes, tails, Mohawks/FauxHawks, or partially shaved hair is not allowed. Hair must be uniformly cut with no designs or insignias cut in to the hair. Hair may not cover the eyes in any way.

- Pierced jewelry may be worn only in the ear. No gauging allowed.

**Not Allowed:**

- Oversized clothing of any kind. Clothing should fit in a manner where nothing can be concealed under or inside the clothing.
- Any type of holes in clothing.
- Clothing that may advertise or imply sex, drugs, alcohol, profanity, tobacco, death, suicide, violence, occult, or any writing or graphics that may disrupt the educational process.
- Tank tops, muscle shirts, spaghetti straps, backless shirts, or dresses.
- Pajamas.
- Leggings/jeggings (unless worn with clothing that is no shorter than 5” inches above the knee).
- Sweatpants.
- No writing is allowed across the seat of pants.
- See through clothing.
- Shirts that expose cleavage.
- Trench coats or long duster coats.
- Sunglasses or distracting eyewear.
- Caps, hats, head-coverings, hair nets, bandanas, or any type of head covering. Hoodies cannot cover the head at any time.
- Pocket chains.
- Tattoos must be covered.
- Any type of apparel that may represent clubs, gangs, or groups other than those sponsored by the school.

**\*The school has the right to ask students to change their dress, or hairstyle/color if it is of such nature as to disrupt the maintenance of order, modesty, and cleanliness, or to attract attention by dressing in a distracting manner. The campus principal may give approval to any special circumstances relating to school dress.**

**Please understand that a dress code violation is a discipline matter and will be dealt with as such. A student is subject to consequences for any dress code violation, (including placement in to the P.A.C.E. Alternative Center for repeated violations). The following consequences will be followed concerning dress code violations:**

1. **First Offense – parent is notified to bring appropriate clothing. Student is given written warning and placed in ISS until clothing is brought by parent.**

2. **Second Offense – (1) day ISS**
3. **Third Offense – (3) days ISS**
4. **Four or more offenses – Discretion of campus administrator. (Could result in PACE placement).**

## **GRADES (PRE-K – 4)**

### **Pants/Shorts/Dresses:**

- No holes are allowed on jeans/pants/shorts.
- Pants/Shorts are to be worn at the waist and may not be oversized. (No Sagging).
- Skirts/Dresses/Shorts must be an appropriate length. Shorts may be worn under dresses.
- Garments must be worn over leggings/jeggings and should be an appropriate length.
- Wind pants and athletic shorts are allowed.

### **Shirts/Sweatshirts/Sweaters:**

- Polos/T-shirts may be worn out as long as they are not oversized.
- Shirts designed to be buttoned must be buttoned.
- Shirts must cover the midriff and chest area.

### **Shoes:**

- Shoes must match and are to be fastened or tied at all times.

### **Other Guidelines:**

- Distracting hairstyles such as unnatural colors, spikes, tails, Mohawks/FauxHawks, or partially shaved hair is not allowed. Hair must be uniformly cut with no designs or insignias cut into the hair. Hair may not cover the eyes in any way.
- Pierced jewelry may be worn only in the ear. No gauging allowed.

### **Not Allowed:**

- Oversized clothing of any kind. Clothing should fit in a manner where nothing can be concealed under or inside the clothing.
- Any types of holes in clothing.

- Clothing that may advertise or imply drugs, alcohol, profanity, tobacco, death, suicide, violence, occult, or any writing or graphics that may disrupt the educational process.
- Pajamas.
- Tattoos.
- See through clothing.
- Shirts that are deemed inappropriate by the campus administrator.
- Trench coats or dusters.
- Sunglasses or distracting eyewear.
- Caps, hats, head-coverings, hair nets, bandanas, or any type of head covering.
- Pocket chains.
- Any type of apparel that may represent clubs, gangs, or groups other than those sponsored by the school.

**\*The school has the right to ask students to change their dress, or hairstyle/color if it is of such nature as to disrupt the maintenance of order, modesty, and cleanliness, or to attract attention by dressing in a distracting manner. The campus principal may give approval to any special circumstances relating to school dress.**

**Please understand that a dress code violation is a discipline matter and will be dealt with as such. A student is subject to consequences for any dress code violation.**

1. **First/Second Offense – parent is notified to bring appropriate clothing for student.**
2. **Third Offense – (1) day ISS.**
3. **Four of more offenses – Discretion of campus administrator.**

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS**

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

Eligibility for initial and continuing 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. If a student is involved in an academic, athletic, or music activity governed by UIL, the student and parent are expected to know and follow all rules of the UIL organization. [See <http://www.uil.utexas.edu>.] 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.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to ten absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum five absences for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of two absences for state competition. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.
- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.

### **Standards of Behavior**

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

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

### ***FEES***

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

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, yearbooks, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental.

- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that requires use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school.
- A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit because of absences and whose parent chooses the program in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.

Any required fee of deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the campus principal.

### ***GANG-FREE ZONES***

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

### ***FUND-RAISING***

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the principal at least 30 days before the event. [For further information, see policies at FJ and GE.]

### ***GRADING GUIDELINES***

In grades PK – K, achievement is reported to parents as indicators of academic progress.

In grade 1-2, achievement is reported to parents in a combination of letter grades and numerical grades.

In grades 3 - 6, achievement is reported to parents as numerical grades.

## ***DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION***

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

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

**Dating Violence** occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

**Discrimination** is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law, that negatively affects a student. **Harassment**, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office or on the district's website @[www.ptisd.org](http://www.ptisd.org).

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to, offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening or intimidating conduct; offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property. Examples of prohibited sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to, touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

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

Examples of prohibited sexual harassment may include, but not be limited to, touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances;

jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

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

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

### **Reporting Procedures**

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

### **Investigation of Report**

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

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

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

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

### **Services for the Homeless and for Title I Participants**

Other designated staff you may need to contact include:

- Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, who coordinates services for homeless students: Assistant Superintendent, James Skeeler at 903-295-5000.
- Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs: Director of Special Programs, Donna Gwin at 903-295-5131.

## ***HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS***

### **Bacterial Meningitis**

State law specifically requires the district to provide the following information:

- What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is most common and the least serious. Bacterial meningitis is the most common form of serious bacterial infection with the potential for serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease, but requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

- What are the symptoms?

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

Children (over 1 year old) and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pains, and drowsiness or confusion. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body.

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

- How serious is bacterial meningitis?

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

- How is bacterial meningitis spread?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing, sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes).

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

- How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include when there is a disease outbreak in a community or for people traveling to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. Also, a vaccine is recommended by some groups for college students, particularly freshmen living in dorms or residence halls. The vaccine is safe and effective (85-90 percent). It can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven to ten days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five years.

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

- Where can you get more information?

Your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or regional Department of State Health Services office to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the Web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>.

## **Food Allergies**

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

## **Physical Activity for Students in Elementary and Middle School**

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

Students in middle or junior high school shall engage in 30 minutes of moderate to 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.

## **School Health Advisory Council**

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council held meetings. 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, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, and employee wellness. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available from Assistant Superintendent, James Skeeler at 903-295-5000. [See also policies at BDF and EHAA.] See Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction on page 4 for additional information.

### **Physical Fitness Assessment**

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3-12 who are enrolled in a physical education course 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 campus office to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

### **Vending Machines**

The district has adopted policies and implemented procedures to comply with state and federal food service guidelines for restricting student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines see Michelle Mitchell, Food Services Director, 903-295-5087. [See policies at CO and FFA.]

#### **Tobacco Prohibited**

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

#### **Asbestos Management Plan**

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, is available in the maintenance office. If you have any questions, please contact Tony Hollins, Director of Maintenance, 903-295-5100.

#### **Pest Management Plan**

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 U. S. Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before 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 want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Tony Hollins, Director of Maintenance, at 903-295-5100.

## **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, Assistant Superintendent, James Skeeler, 903-295-5000.

## **HOMEWORK**

The amount of homework assigned depends upon the age and ability of the student. Daily reading and studying of basic math facts are beneficial.

## **INTERNET/NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Internet access is available to students and teachers at Pine Tree ISD. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Pine Tree ISD firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the District. The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided here so that you are aware of your responsibilities. As a user you are required to make efficient, ethical and legal utilization of the network resources. If a user violates any of these provisions, his or her access will be terminated and future access could possibly be denied. A signed Pine Tree ISD Acceptable Use Policy must be on file in the school office for any student or employee of Pine Tree ISD to access the Internet.

Internet - Terms and Conditions

1) **Acceptable Use** - The purpose of the Internet is to support research and education in and among academic institutions in the U.S. by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The use of your access must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the Pine Tree Independent School District. Transmission of any material in violation of any US or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities, use for product advertisement, or political lobbying is also prohibited.

2) **Privileges** - The use of Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. Network administrators will deem what is inappropriate use and their decision is final. Also, network administrators may close an account at any time as required. The administration, faculty, and staff of Pine Tree Independent School District may request the network administrator to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user access.

3) **Network Etiquette** - You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include (but are not limited to) the following: a) Be polite. Do not get abusive in your messages to others. b) Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden. c) Do not reveal personal addresses or phone numbers of yourself, students or

colleagues. d) Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system do have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities. e) Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by other users. f) All documents, data and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property

4) **E-mail** – E-mail, an integral part of the Internet, is a privilege that is offered to the users. They must use it properly. E-mail is not to be used during class time unless it is a part of school related activities. Attachments, chain letters, jokes, pictures and sending to large groups of people are easy prey for viruses and are not allowed if they are not part of an educational lesson.

5) **Security** - Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the network involves many users. If you feel you can identify a security problem, you must notify a network administrator or e-mail [jhahne@ptisd.org](mailto:jhahne@ptisd.org). Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Do not use another individual's account or allow anyone to use yours. Attempts to login to Internet as a network administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any attempts to bypass the districts network security, or internet filtering will result in the cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to Internet.

6) **Vandalism** - Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, destroy or disable any part of a computer, data, Internet access, or other networks that are connected to the Internet backbone. This includes, but not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

7) **Updating User Information** - Each student/faculty member will complete an Acceptable Use Policy form each school year. Only after the signed forms are returned will they be authorized the privileges described herein.

8) **Exception of Terms and Condition** - All terms and conditions as stated in this document are applicable to the Pine Tree Independent School District. These terms and conditions reflect the entire agreement of the parties and supersede all prior oral or written agreements and understandings of the parties. These terms and conditions shall be governed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas, and the United States of America. Pine Tree Independent School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing and will not be responsible for any damages including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via Pine Tree Independent School District is at your own risk. Pine Tree Independent School District denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

## **IMMUNIZATION**

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services, Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P. O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco/affidavit.shtm>. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student. The immunizations required are: diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella (German measles), mumps, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis (polio), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and varicella (chicken pox). The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the Department of State Health Services. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

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

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

### **Questioning of Students**

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

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

### **Students Taken Into Custody**

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

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.

- By 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 will verify the officer's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student.

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

### **Notification of Law Violations**

The district is required by state law to notify:

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

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

### **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS**

A student with limited English proficiency (LEP) is entitled to receive specialized services from the district. To determine whether the student qualifies for services, a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will be formed, which will consist of both district personnel and at least one parent representative. The student's parent must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC for a LEP student.

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

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STARR-L, as mentioned at **Standardized Testing**, below, may be administered to a LEP student. The Texas English Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to LEP students who qualify for services.

If a student is considered LEP and receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student's ARD committee will make these decisions.

## **MAKEUP WORK**

### **Makeup Work Because of Absence**

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

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

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

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

### **DAEP Makeup Work**

A student removed to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) during the school year will have an opportunity to complete, before the beginning of the next school year, a foundation curriculum course in which the student was enrolled at the time of removal. The district may provide the opportunity to complete the course through an alternative method, including a correspondence course, distance learning, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FOCA (LEGAL).]

### **On-Campus Suspension (OCS) Makeup Work**

A student removed from the regular classroom to on-campus suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, distance learning, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. FO(LEGAL).

## **MEDICINE AT SCHOOL**

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

- Only authorized employees, in accordance with policies at FFAC, may administer:
  - Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
  - Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
  - Herbal substances or dietary supplements provided by the parent when properly labeled, in the original container, accompanied by a parent's written request, and a written confirmation or recommendation from a U.S. licensed physician. The parental request and physician confirmation or recommendation must be updated on an annual basis.
- In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only:
  - In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district's medical advisor; and
  - When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district's form.

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

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

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

## **Psychotropic Drugs**

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

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A district employee who is a

registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate. [For further information, see policies at FFAC.]

## ***NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT***

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Pine Tree ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Title II of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, which incorporates and expands upon requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

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

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of gender: Assistant Superintendent, K'Dawn O'Rear, 1701 Pine Tree Rd., Longview, TX. 75604, 903-295-5000.
- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Director of Special Programs, Donna Gwin, 1701 Pine Tree Rd., Longview, TX. 75604, 903-295-5131.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: Superintendent, Dr. Teresa Farler, 1701 Pine Tree Rd., Longview, TX. 75604, 903-295-5000.

## ***PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE***

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. [See Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags on page 5.]

One minute of silence will follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others. [See policy EC(LEGAL) for more information.]

## ***PRAYER***

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

## ***PROMOTION AND RETENTION***

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the

student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards. [See EIE(LOCAL) for further information].

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 assessment 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.
- Because the 2011-2012 school year is the first year of implementation of the STAAR, students will not be required by state law to perform satisfactorily on the grade 5 or 8 STAARs for this one year only in order to be promoted to the next grade level.
- If a student in grade 5 or 8 is enrolled in a course that earns high school credit and for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment will be administered or in a course intended for students above the student's current grade level in which the student will be administered a state mandated assessment, the student will not be subject to the promotion requirements described above for the relevant grade 5 or 8 assessment. However, the student's score on the EOC assessment will be used in determining whether the student meets the minimum cumulative score required for graduation.
- If a student is enrolled in a class or course intended for students above his or her current grade level in which the student will be administered a state mandated assessment, the student will only be required to take an applicable state mandated assessment for the course in which he or she is enrolled.

.Parents of a student in grade 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 the normal school year.

With the exception of the 2011-2012 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. [See policies at EIE.]

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

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

### **RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

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

A student who will need to leave school during the day must bring a note from his or her parent that morning and follow the campus sign-out procedures before leaving the campus. Otherwise, a student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

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

### **Late Arrival to School**

A student who is tardy to school will have parent escort to the office before being admitted to class. Repeated instances of tardiness will be subject to consequences through the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Morning and Afternoon Procedures**

All parents dropping off or picking up car-riders should remain in their vehicles in the designated car-rider areas. For safety purposes, no student will be released to parents who walk up to get their child.

Students should not arrive at school before 7:30 a.m. After 7:30 a.m., students may report to designated supervised areas. Breakfast for students only will be served until 7:50 a.m. Students must be picked up at campus dismissal times. Proper authorities will be contacted when students are not picked up on time.

## **REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES**

Report cards with each student's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every nine weeks in Pre-K through 2nd grade, and once every six weeks in 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will be given a written progress report if their child's performance in any course (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 at the end of a grading period, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. [See **Working Together** on page 1 for how to schedule a conference.]

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

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

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report 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 the next school day.

## **SAFETY**

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

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

## **Accident Insurance**

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

## **Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies**

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

### **Fire Drill Bells**

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

### **Tornado Drill Bells**

1 continuous bell or announcement	move to the designated locations
2 bells	return to the classroom

## **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

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

## **Emergency School-Closing Information**

All emergency school closings are posted on the website at [www.ptisd.org](http://www.ptisd.org) and are usually covered by KLTN channel 7 or Channel 19. Contact the superintendent's office if you have a question regarding your child's campus. The AlertNow district-wide communication system will also be utilized.

## ***SCHOOL FACILITIES***

Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing the activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately.

## **Conduct Before and After School**

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on district premises and at school-sponsored events off district premises,

such as play rehearsals, club meetings, athletic practices, and special study groups or tutorials. Students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the *Student Code of Conduct* or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

### **Use of Hallways During Class Time**

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

### **Cafeteria Services**

The district participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily. Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. See campus secretary to apply.

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

### **Library**

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

### **Meetings of Non-curriculum-Related Groups**

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

## **SEARCHES**

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

### **Students' Desks and Lockers**

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

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

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

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

### **Electronic Devices**

Use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district. Any searches of personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with law, and the device may be confiscated in order to perform a lawful search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed. See policy FNG(LEGAL) for more information.

### **Vehicles on Campus**

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable cause to do so, with or without the permission of the student. The student has full responsibility for the security and content of his or her vehicle and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. [See also the *Student Code of Conduct*.]

### **Trained Dogs**

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

### ***SPECIAL PROGRAMS***

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact Donna Gwin, Director of Special Programs, 903-295-5131.

### ***STEROIDS***

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

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

Students participating in UIL athletic competition may be subject to random steroid testing. More information on the UIL testing program may be found on the UIL Website at [http://www.uil.texas.edu/athletics/health/steroid\\_information.html](http://www.uil.texas.edu/athletics/health/steroid_information.html).

## ***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
- Social studies in grade 8
- Science in grades 5 & 8

Successful performance on the reading and math assessments in grades 5 & 8 is required by law in order for the student to be promoted to the next grade level. For the 2011-2012 school year only, this requirement will be waived. See Promotion and Retention on page-- 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).

### ***End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments for Students in Grades 9-12***

Beginning with ninth graders in the 2011-2012 school year, end-of-course (EOC) assessments will be administered for the following courses:

- Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II
- English I, English II, and English III
- Biology, Chemistry, and Physics
- World Geography, World History, and U.S. History

Satisfactory performance on the applicable assessments will be required for graduation and will also affect the plan under which the student may graduate.

Normally, there will be three testing windows during the year in which a student may take an EOC assessment, which will occur during the fall, spring, and summer months. For the 2011-2012 school year, however, there will be only the spring and summer administrations of the EOC assessments.

In each content area (English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies), a student must achieve a cumulative score. To determine whether the student meets the cumulative score, the student's EOC assessment scores in each content area will be added together. If the student's total score on the assessments within the content area is not equal to or greater than the cumulative score. A student who does not achieve the minimum required score on any individual assessment will be required to retake that assessment.

A student may choose to retake an EOC assessment in situations other than those listed above as well.

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. These particular EOC assessments may have different testing windows than the general assessments, and the ARD committee will determine whether successful performance on the assessments will be required for graduation.

STAAR-L which is a linguistically accommodated assessment, will be available for students who have been determined to be limited English proficient (LEP) and who require this type of testing accommodation.

Additional information will be provided to students and parents prior to the spring 2012 administrations.

### **STUDENTS IN PROTECTIVE CUSTODY OF THE STATE**

The district strives to assist any student who has been placed in either temporary or permanent conservatorship (custody) of the state of Texas with the enrollment and registration process, as well as other educational services throughout the student's enrollment in the district.

Please contact James Skeeler, Assistant Superintendent, who has been designated as the district's liaison for children in conservatorship of the state, at (903) 295-5000 with any questions.

### **STUDENT SPEAKERS**

Please reference Board Policy FNA(LOCAL) for guidelines.

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

### **SUMMER SCHOOL**

Contact the Campus Principal on guidelines and times for summer school.

## **TARDINESS**

Repeated instances of tardiness could result in severe disciplinary action, in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

## **TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS AND TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT**

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

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

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

### **Buses and Other School Vehicles**

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted at the school. **For grades Pre-K – 2<sup>nd</sup> the bus driver is required to see a parent or guardian before allowing the student off of the bus. If no one is seen at the stop the student will be returned to the campus.**

A parent may also designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, you may contact Jack Davis, Director of Transportation, 903-295-5106.

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

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

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop nearest home.

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

When students ride in a district van or passenger car, seat belts must be fastened at all times.

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

### ***PTISD SCHOOL BUS GUIDELINES***

For the safety and security of your child and the other students on the bus the following guidelines and procedures must be followed. Students refusing to obey the instructions of the bus driver or the bus code of conduct will forfeit their privilege to ride the bus for a period of time determined by school administration or transportation director as set forth in bus discipline explained in the student handbook.

*Definition – A bus rider is any eligible student of Pine Tree I.S.D. that rides the bus 4 out of 5 days per week.*

- Only students assigned to a bus will be able to ride that bus.
- Students may not get on/off a bus anywhere except their designated stop.
- If a student misses the bus, he/she should go home immediately. It will then be the parent/guardian's responsibility to get their student to school.
- Students should be outside 5 minutes before scheduled pickup in clear view for the bus driver to see them 300' (or as far down the road as possible) before the stop. The bus driver will wait briefly for a student then they will proceed with the route.
- Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students will be picked up and dropped off at their address unless conditions exist that does not allow the bus ability to proceed safely with the route.
- Any student in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade or above may walk to a designated stop not to exceed two-tenths of a mile.
- The driver has the authority to assign seats for one or all students on the bus.

- The driver has the authority at any time due to safety issues to call for assistance or divert from the route and take the bus to the transportation department.
- No student will be able to use a note to get on/off a bus due to safety and security reasons.
- Buses will not stop during the route to allow a student to get on the bus from a vehicle or get off the bus into a vehicle.
- Any student needing to be added to a bus route or change a bus pick up or drop off must have a parent/guardian call the Transportation Department and report the change. The student's school should also be informed of the change.
- The only adults allowed to be on the bus are the employees of Pine Tree ISD.
- Students cannot stand in the aisle while the bus is in motion. For certain situations, seating may be assigned to accommodate not more than 4 students per bench.

## ***BUS CONDUCT***

### ***Minor Safety or Conduct Violations***

1. Refusing to sit properly or safely in assigned seat.
2. Moving from seat while bus is in motion.
3. Blocking the aisle in any manner.
4. Eating, drinking, or chewing gum on the bus.
5. Deliberately littering the bus.
6. Acting in a manner that distracts the driver while the bus is in motion.
7. Writing on or damaging any part of the school bus. (Student will be suspended until damages have been paid.)
8. Entering and/or exiting the bus in an unsafe manner.
9. Throwing, pitching, or shooting articles within the bus (without any injury)
10. Extending any part of the body, clothing, or other articles out of the window while the bus is in motion.
11. Using profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward other students.
12. Harassing, threatening or physically scuffling with another student (with no injury).
13. Cell phones are not allowed.

### ***Consequences for Minor Violations***

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense-Conference with school official and copy of report mailed to parent/guardian\*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense-Corporal Punishment by principal or suspension of bus riding privileges for 1 to 3 days and copy of report mailed to parent/guardian\*
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense-Suspension from all PTISD transportation 3-5 days and a copy mailed to parent/guardian\*
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense-Suspension from all PTISD transportation 5 to 20 days and a copy mailed to parent/guardian\*

Additional Offenses-Suspension from all PTISD transportation for at least 10 days and possibly through the remainder of the semester

**\*Provided that no other major violation has been reported.**

### ***Major Safety Violations or Misconduct***

1. Consuming tobacco in any form.
2. Acting and/or speaking disrespectfully toward the driver or profanity directed at any school employee.
3. Insubordination
4. Throwing, pitching, or shooting articles which either remain within the bus but causes an injury or which go out any window while the bus is in motion.
5. Other.

### ***Consequences for Major Violations or Misconduct***

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense-Suspension from all PTISD transportation for 3 days and copy of report mailed to parent and/or guardian.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense-Suspension from all PTISD transportation for 5 to 10 days, and copy of report mailed to parent and/or guardian.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense-Suspension from all PTISD transportation for at least 10 days or possibly through the remainder of the semester.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense-Suspension from all PTISD transportation for the remainder of the semester or through the remainder of the school year.

### ***Severe Conduct Violations***

1. Fighting with another student (or scuffling which results in any type of injury).
2. Possessing weapons, unsheathed pointed articles, or knives.
3. Striking matches or producing fire in any form.
4. Sexual Misconduct
5. Tampering with any emergency exit.
6. Other.

### ***Severe Clause***

Any infraction, even on the 1<sup>st</sup> occurrence, may be deemed to be severe by school officials.

### ***Consequences for Severe Misconduct***

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense-Minimum 10 day suspension from all PTISD transportation.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense-Suspension from all PTISD transportation for the remainder of the school year. Minimum 90-day suspension, which could carry over into the next school year.

**NOTE:** Misconduct of a severe nature may also result in suspension or expulsion from school. The Transportation Director or School Administrator may invoke an immediate suspension of PTISD bus riding privileges at any time due to a severe situation. A reasonable effort will be made to notify the parent and/or guardian prior to any temporary suspension of riding privileges.

## ***VANDALISM***

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

## ***VIDEO CAMERAS***

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

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

## ***VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL***

### **General Visitors**

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

Visits to individual classrooms will need to be scheduled in advance and the guidelines below should be followed:

### **Class Visitation Guidelines:**

- Visitors to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher (approximately 24 hours in advance).

- Visitors are permitted during instructional time as long as their duration (approximately 20 – 30 minutes) or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.
- All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

## **WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL**

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

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

## **GLOSSARY**

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

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

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

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

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

**EOC assessments** are end-of-course tests, which are stat-mandated, and are part of the STARR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments will be required for graduation beginning with students in grade 9 during the 2011-2012 school year. These exams will be given in English I, II, & II, Algebra I&II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, World Geography, World History, and U.S. History.

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

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

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

**LAT** stands for Linguistically Accommodated Testing, which is an assessment process for recent immigrant English language learners who are required to be assessed in certain grades and subjects under the NCLB Act.

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

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

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

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

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

**STAAR** is the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, the state's system of standardized academic achievement assessments, effective beginning with certain students for the 2011-2012 school year.

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

**STAAR Modified** is an alternative state-mandated assessment based on modified achievement standards that is administered to eligible students receiving special education services, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

**STAAR Linguistically Accommodated** is an alternative state-mandated assessment with linguistic accommodations designed for certain recent immigrant English language learners.

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

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

**TAKS** is the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, the state's standardized achievement test currently given to students in certain subjects in grades 10 and 11 and required for graduation for students at these grade levels.

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

**TxVSN** is the Texas Virtual School Network, which provides online courses for Texas students to supplement the instructional programs of public school districts. Courses are taught by qualified instructors, and courses are equivalent in rigor and scope to a course taught in a traditional classroom setting.

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