



**SOUTHWEST**

**S C H O O L S**

*Where Education Meets Exploration*

# Discovery Middle School



## Parent & Student Handbook 2021-2022

### **Mission**

Our mission is to prepare college and career- ready students for postsecondary success.

### **Vision**

We are a premier district of choice that meets the diverse needs of all students by creating an inclusive community that fosters a strong sense of self-worth.

# Southwest Schools Discovery Middle School

*Spyros Catechis, Ed.D.*  
*Founder*

*Felicia Adams Ed.D.*  
*Superintendent*

*Bianca Clark*  
*Secondary Schools Principal*

*Mashanda Walker-Shack*  
*Associate Principal*

*Spencer Lodree Ed.D.*  
*Assistant Principal*



# 12 Month Calendar Year 2021 - 2022

'21

August 2021 - (E-22 S-10)							September 2021 - (E-21 S-21)							October 2021 - (E-20 S-19)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
29	30	31																		

  

November 2021 - (E-17 S-17)							December 2021 - (E-13 S-12)							January 2022 - (E-20 S-19)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
28	29	30												30	31					

  

February 2022 - (E-20 S-20)							March 2022 - (E-18 S-18)							April 2022 - (E-19 S-19)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
27	28																			

  

May 2022 - (E-21 S-21)							June 2022 - (E-22 S-2)							July 2022 - (E-20 S-0)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
29	30	31																		

## KEY

E- # =Employee Days	S- # =Student Days
Agreement Start/End Date	
New Teacher In-Service Days	
Teacher In-Service Days	
District Welcome Back	
First and Last day of School	
Holidays	
Early Dismissal for Students	
Professional Dev. Days (No Students)	
End of Six Weeks	
Teacher Prep. Days (No Students)	
First day of Second Semester	
Make-up Days	

## HOLIDAYS

Labor Day	September 6, 2021
Fall Holiday	October 11, 2021
Thanksgiving	November 22-26, 2021
Winter Break	December 20-31, 2021
MLK Day	January 17, 2022
Spring Break	March 14-18, 2022
District Observance of Chavez/Huerta Day	April 1, 2022
Spring Holiday	April 15, 2022
Memorial Day	May 30, 2022
Independence Day	July 4, 2022

## Report Cards Dates

October 4, 2021
November 15, 2021
January 3, 2022
February 21, 2022
April 18, 2022
June 2, 2022

## SIGNIFICANT DATES

First/Last Day of Agreement	August 2, 2021/July 29, 2022
First Day for New Teachers/New to SWS	August 6, 2021
First Day for Returning Teachers	August 11, 2021
First Day of School	August 18, 2021
Last Day of First Semester	December 16, 2021
First Day of Second Semester	January 4, 2022
Last Day of School	June 2, 2022
Last Day for Teachers	June 3, 2022

## MAKE-UP DAYS

<b>June 3, 2022</b>
First make up day if needed, moves Teacher Prep Day to June 6 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>June 6, 2022</b>
Second make up day if needed, moves Teacher Prep Day to June 7 <sup>th</sup> .

## SEMESTER DATES

<b>First Semester</b>
August 18, 2021-December 16, 2021
<b>Second Semester</b>
January 4, 2022-June 2, 2022

## Six Weeks Grading Periods

Cycle I	8/18/21-9/27/21	28 Days	Cycle IV	1/4/2022-2/14/2022	29 Days
Cycle II	9/28/21-11/8/21	28 Days	Cycle V	2/15/2022-4/8/2022	33 Days
Cycle III	11/9/21-12/16/21	23 Days	Cycle VI	4/11/2022-6/2/2022	37 Days

Instructional Days: 178

Employee Work Days: 223

\*Calendar is subject to change

# Discovery Middle School

## 2021-2022 Daily Schedule

Regular Day		Early Dismissal Day	
7:35pm Entry Bell		7:35pm Entry Bell	
7:45 am – 8:35 am	1 <sup>st</sup> Period	7:45 am – 8:15 am	1 <sup>st</sup> Period
8:39 am – 9:29 am	2 <sup>nd</sup> Period ADA 9:15am	8:19 am – 8:49 am	2 <sup>nd</sup> Period ADA 8:30am
9:33 am – 10:23 am	3 <sup>rd</sup> Period	8:53 am – 9:23 am	3 <sup>rd</sup> Period
10:27 am – 12:27 pm	4 <sup>th</sup> Period Lunch A Lunch 10:27 AM – 10:57 AM B Lunch 10:57 AM – 11:27 AM C Lunch 11:27 AM – 11:57 AM D Lunch 11:57 AM – 12:27 AM	9:27 am – 9:57 am	4 <sup>th</sup> Period
12:31 am – 1:21 pm	5 <sup>th</sup> Period	10:01 am – 12:01 pm	5 <sup>th</sup> Period A Lunch 10:00 AM – 10:30 AM B Lunch 10:30 AM – 11:00 AM C Lunch 11:00 AM – 11:30 AM D Lunch 11:30 AM – 12:00 PM
1:25 pm – 2:15 pm	6 <sup>th</sup> Period	12:04 pm – 12:34pm	6 <sup>th</sup> Period
2:19 pm – 3:10 pm	7 <sup>th</sup> Period	12:38 pm – 1:10 pm	7 <sup>th</sup> Period
3:10 pm Student Dismissal		1:10 pm Student Dismissal	

The Discovery Middle School Parent & Student Handbook was developed to acquaint students and parents with the school's programs, policies, and expectations. It is important that each student understand both school regulations and school policy and parents/guardians encourage children to follow rules and regulations as we continue to provide an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning.

# A

## ATTENDANCE POLICY (COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE)

To optimize success in school, students are expected to be on time and present in school every day. ADA attendance is taken at 9:15 AM each day and is also taken in every class. Every student enrolled at Southwest Schools is expected to attend school each day.

State law requires students to be in attendance ninety percent (90%) of the days each class is offered during a semester to receive credit for a class. If a student is absent without an excuse for ten full or partial days within a six-month period or three or more days in a four-week period, the student's parent/guardian is subject to prosecution under Section 25.093. This is classified as a Class C Misdemeanor (i.e., charge of "Failure to Attend School") and is subject to a fine of up to \$500 for each day of unexcused absence after the warning letter is issued. Regular attendance is essential for students to make the most of their education.

## DOCUMENTATION AFTER AN ABSENCE

When a student is absent from school, the student—upon arrival or within five school days of 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 or is an emancipated minor under state law. All notes must describe the reason for the absence and include the parent's contact numbers. Parent notes may be sent by e-mail but must come from a parent's verified e-mail account and be sent to the school's daily attendance clerk. If the student fails to bring a note or the parent does not send an e-mail as required within the five school-day period, the absence will be coded as an unexcused and will count against the student's official attendance record. **Notes for excused absences may be written or emailed to the attendance clerk and should contain the following information:**

Current date

Date of absence

Full name of student

Reason for absence

Daytime phone number of parent/guardian

Name and phone number of physician, dentist (if applicable) or if absences exceed the limit for the semester

***Note: Unless the absence is for a statutorily allowed reason under compulsory attendance laws, the district is not required to excuse any absence. Once coded as an unexcused absence, the coding will not be changed without the approval of a campus principal.***

## DOCTOR'S NOTE AFTER AN ABSENCE FOR ILLNESS

Upon return to school, a student absent for four or more 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. Notes must be turned in within five school days of the student's return to campus. Otherwise, the student's absence may be considered unexcused. Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's absence from school in order to determine whether the absence(s) will be excused or unexcused.

## PREPLANNED/ANTICIPATED ABSENCE

Notes for preplanned or anticipated absences should be sent to the school principal or designee at least three school days before the absences occur to determine if the absences will be excused. Regardless of whether an absence is marked excused or unexcused, students will have an opportunity to complete any missed work upon their return to school. The number of days given to make up work assigned during an absence will be equal to the number of days missed. Teachers are not required to provide assignments or class work for students to complete during the time they are absent.

## PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES WHEN ABSENT

Students who are absent from school for all or part of the day for any reason will not be allowed to participate in school-related activities on that day or evening without a release from an administrator.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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

## ATTENDANCE FOR CREDIT OR FINAL GRADE

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student in kindergarten–grade 12 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 or a final grade 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 or a final grade 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, or a final grade lost because of absences. In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

- All absences, whether excused or unexcused, must be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed 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.
- In reaching a decision about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student's parent could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.

The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit or a final grade. The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the by filing a written request with the Superintendent. The actual number of days a student must be in attendance, in order to receive credit or a final grade will depend on whether the class is for a full semester or for a full year.

## ATTENDANCE VERIFICATION FOR DRIVER'S LICENSE

For a student between the ages of 16 and 18 to obtain a driver license, written parental permission must be provided for the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to access the student's attendance records and, in certain circumstances, for a school administrator to provide the student's attendance information to DPS. A verification of enrollment (VOE) and attendance form may be obtained from the registrar, which the student will need to submit to DPS upon application for a driver license.

# B

## BULLYING

Bullying is defined in Section 37.0832 of the Education Code as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression through electronic means, or physical conduct against another student that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, or damaging the student's property; or
- Places a student in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student's person.
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or
- Infringes on the rights of the targeted students at school. **Bullying includes cyberbullying.**

**Cyberbullying is defined by Section 37.0832 of the Education Code as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.**

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, or ostracism.

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, school counselor, principal, or another District employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct. The district will also provide notice to the parent of the alleged targeted student and the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in bullying.

# C

## CAFETERIA

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly fashion in the cafeteria. Tables must be cleaned, and all trash must be thrown in the trash receptacles. Students may eat lunch in the cafeteria or in designated areas only.

Under no circumstances are students to go into the parking lot during the lunch period or any other time during the school day. Students are not allowed to sit in cars or go to their cars at any time without permission of an Administrator. Students are prohibited from ordering and requesting delivery of food through Uber eats, Grub Hub, Door Dash, or any other food delivery service.

## **CLOSED CAMPUS**

Students may be dropped off at the MPR beginning at 7:15am. Student drop off before 7:15am will not be supervised as no staff is on duty until 7:30am to help with student's supervision. The campus of Discovery Middle School is closed and no student following his/her arrival shall leave the campus except in emergencies approved by the office. Students that have met the eligibility requirements for off-campus must have ID on them to leave campus during the designated times only.

Students may not bring visitors to school to attend class or to have lunch. Parent/Guardians may observe classes or have lunch with their child with the approval of an administrator. All visitors must sign in at the main office for a visitor's pass.

## **CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

Extra-curricular activities are sponsored by a schoolteacher or staff member. Student clubs and organizations may establish rules of conduct—and consequences for misbehavior—that are stricter than those for students in general. If the violation of an organization's rules occurs that is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the school shall apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization.

## **COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOL**

Communities in Schools Communities in Schools helps to identify challenges students face in school or home and coordinate with community partners to bring outside resources inside schools. Examples of support include food, clothing, and counseling. If you have questions about Communities in Schools, please contact the front office.

## **COMPUTER ACCESS**

Only students who have been authorized by the school and are under direct supervision of designated school employees are permitted to use a school computer or to access any local network or outside telecommunications services such as the Internet. Prior to such authorization, the student and the student's parent must sign and return the School Acceptable Use Form acknowledging their responsibilities and the consequences of violations. For a violation of the acceptable use policy, the teacher or other staff member will report the violation in writing to administration.

## **CONFERENCES/CONCERNS/COMPLAINTS**

Students or parents who have questions or a concern should first address the problem with the teacher. If the outcome of that discussion is not satisfactory, they can request a conference with the teacher and/or administrator.

Parents wishing to set up a conference with a teacher may do so by contacting the school secretary. Teachers are available for conferences and to return phone calls during their conference periods, before and after school. Parents who want to meet with all their child's teachers can request a conference before or after school. Parents should report to the office when arriving for any conference. Visitors are not allowed to go directly to a teacher's classroom or to interrupt instruction. Teachers may also be reached by e-mail.

Parents desiring a conference with an administrator may contact the office to schedule an appointment. If not satisfied at that level, the parent may request a conference with the Superintendent or designee. Ultimately, a student and/or parents may appear before the Board of Trustees in accordance with Board policy.

A concern regarding the placement of a student with disabilities who is not eligible for special education or a concern about school programs and services available to the student should be brought to the attention of the Principal and/or the Director of Special Education.

## **CONFISCATED ITEMS**

The school requests the cooperation of students and parents in refraining from bringing inappropriate or illegal items to school, such as laser lights, laser pointers, water guns, knives or other weapons, and toys or other items that could disrupt the educational environment or items that campus administrator's direct students not to bring on campus. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any student in possession of inappropriate/illegal items on campus. The item or items will be confiscated.

## **PROHIBITED MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

School personnel may confiscate the following items:

1. Hats, caps, head coverings of any kind, or sunglasses.
2. Hats that are required for a school activity will be an exception.
3. Headbands and bandanas tied from the forehead to the back of the head.
4. Jewelry or accessories with inappropriate lettering, decorations, or advertisements.
5. Large book bags, athletic type bags, and duffel bags will not be allowed in the classroom.
6. Toys, water guns, water balloons, dart guns, etc.
7. Accessories identified as gang related.
8. Laser pointers or laser lights of any kind.
9. Any other item that disrupts the normal operation of the school.

# **D**

## **DELIVERIES TO STUDENTS**

The delivery of flowers, balloons, gifts, cookies, food and etc. to school during the school day is not allowed. These items will not be sent to students during class time, and the school will not accept responsibility for any items left on school property by a delivery company or individual. Students may not bring balloons or oversized stuffed animals to school as they may distract from instruction. Food brought by parents will be delivered during the lunch period only. Food will not be delivered during the instructional period.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIAL/POSTING OF SIGNS**

All aspects of school-sponsored newspapers and/or yearbooks are completely under the supervision of the teacher sponsor and the campus principal. Written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials may not be sold, circulated, or distributed by anyone without the approval of the principal and in accordance with campus regulations. All material intended for distribution to students that is not under the school's editorial control must be submitted to the principal for review and approval. If the material is not approved within 48 hours of the time it was submitted, it must be considered disapproved.

## **DRESS CODE**

All students are expected to adhere to the campus dress code. Students found in violation of the dress code will be issued a consequence according to the Student Code of Conduct. Full cooperation of students and parents/guardians must be followed. The school administration will determine whether a student's dress is appropriate for school. We encourage all students to dress for success and to dress with pride. Time out of class as a result of a dress code violation is unexcused.

## **THIS DRESS CODE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO:**

- Adhere to good taste, appropriateness, modesty, and dignity.
- Create an atmosphere of good personal hygiene, respect for authority, safety, and decency in grooming.
- Have set standards of dress and grooming,
- Reflect a sense of pride in the school, pride in academic achievement, and pride in self.

## MINIMUM STANDARDS ARE AS FOLLOW:

### *Hair and Grooming*

- Students at Discovery Middle School shall practice body cleanliness, grooming, and dress, which are socially acceptable to fellow students, parents, teachers, and administrators.
- Students' hair shall be clean, neatly groomed, and not obstruct or impair vision.
- Extreme hairstyle and make-up are subject to correction and disciplinary action.
- Personal grooming should take place in the restrooms only, not the cafeteria, the commons area, or the classroom.
- No visible tattoos.

## STUDENT MODE OF DRESS

Standards of dress will include a well-groomed appearance that is indicative of pride in self and school. At all times, students will wear the following approved school apparel:

- Tennis shoes or dress/casual shoes only. No flip-flops, house-shoes, or other inappropriate shoes permitted.
- Graphics/photos on clothing/backpacks must not allude to violence, gangs, sex, drugs, or other lawlessness; the same applies to jewelry and other types of accessories.
- Over-sized, baggy clothing is not acceptable.
- No headwear can be worn, i.e., bandanas, headbands, wave cap, etc.
- Dress code guidelines are subject to change during the school year if necessary to ensure the safety and climate of academia.
- In all matters of student dress, the school administration will make the final determination of appropriateness and any subsequent remedies.

Monday	Students <b>MUST</b> wear their Southwest Schools shirts. Students may wear navy blue, black or khaki pants, shorts, or skirts ( <b>NO cargo</b> ). <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shorts or skirts must be longer than finger-length when standing.</li><li>• Pants/shorts must be fitted around the waist.</li></ul>
Tuesday - Thursday	Students <b>MUST</b> wear collared polo-styled Red or Gray or their Southwest Schools shirt. Students may wear navy blue, black or khaki pants/shorts ( <b>NO cargo</b> ). <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shorts or skirts must be longer than finger-length when standing.</li><li>• Pants/shorts must be fitted around the waist.</li></ul>
Friday	Students may wear jeans on Friday <b>ONLY</b> with a Southwest Schools shirt or college/university spirit shirt <b>OR</b> wear the Tuesday-Thursday uniform.
Outerwear	Students may wear the Southwest Schools hoodie. Students may wear non-hooded jackets or sweaters( <b>School Colors Only</b> ) and must remain unzipped/unbuttoned so the uniform shirt is visible

### Consequences for violations of dress code:

Students who are dressed inappropriately will have the opportunity to correct it, if students are unable to correct it a parent will be notified, and a consequence may be issued to a student. Continuous violation of the dress code may escalate disciplinary actions.

# E

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND CELLULAR PHONES**

The district believes technology is a powerful tool that enhances learning and enables students to access a vast number of academic resources. The district's goal is to increase student access to digital tools and facilitate

immediate access to technology-based information. Students will be provided a school laptop/computer to use for instructional purposes only.

### **Cell Phone and Distractor Policy**

Cell phones and other electronic devices can be a distractor to learning in classrooms and are prohibited during instructional time. Students may use their cell phones only when directed by the teacher for instructional purposes. Students should not have their devices (or earbuds) visible while walking in the hallway. Students may use their cell phones and electronic devices during lunch, and before or after normal school hours.

However, students will have their cell phone or electronic device confiscated on school grounds if they: 1. Take photos or videos. 2. Participate in a videoconference (e.g., FaceTime). 3. View inappropriate pictures, videos, or games. 4. Utilize social media inappropriately (e.g., bullying or posting derogatory statements) 5. Use it during instructional time without the teacher's permission.

### **If a student violates the cell phone policy, their cell phone maybe confiscated.**

**1<sup>st</sup> offense**-Student can pick up at the end of the day.

**2<sup>nd</sup> offense**-Student can pick up at the end of the day; the student will be assigned after school detention.

**3<sup>rd</sup> offense**- A fee of \$20 will be charged; the parent must pick up the phone from administration

**Further offenses**-Consequences at the discretion of the administration (in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct)

*All Confiscated items will be placed in a locked storage area on school property. Discovery Middle School is not responsible for any theft or destruction of confiscated items that are placed in locked storage.*

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION**

Stay tuned to local radio and television stations for information about school closing during inclement weather and other emergency situations. Information on overnight weather closings can be obtained through Southwest Schools website [www.swschools.org](http://www.swschools.org) , social media platforms, automated callouts, and/or messages that may be placed on the Southwest phone line (713-954-9528).

#### Disaster Drill:

Students will hear an announcement over the public address system announcing the drill. Students will move into the halls or other secure areas of the building. An alarm tone will signal the return to class. The principal and/or security personnel will notify students when it is safe to return to the classroom. In case of severe weather without warning (tornado, high winds, etc.), teachers are to move students away from windows. Students are to drop to the floor, protect their heads, and follow instructions.

#### Fire Drill:

An alarm will be sounded for students to leave the building with their teacher and walk outside to the designated safe areas. While outside, students are to remain quiet and calm. Students are expected to stay with their classmates and teacher. Students will hear an alarm tone over the public address system signaling the return to the classroom. Students will always return to class in an orderly manner. In case of a power failure, only the fire alarm buzzer will sound. The administrative team will notify teachers and students when it is safe to re-enter the building. A map indicating exits will be posted in each room.

#### Shelter in Place Drill:

Students and teachers will hear an announcement over the public address system announcing the drill. Students will move to a secure area in the room, as directed by the teacher. An administrator will notify teachers and students when it is safe to move about the room.

## **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES**

No employee of the district shall, when acting in an official capacity, refuse to permit any student to participate in any school program because of the student's race, religion, color, sex, or national origin.

# **F**

## **FREE & REDUCED LUNCH PROGRAM**

Southwest Schools participate in the school nutrition program. All students receive free breakfast and lunch daily. The eligibility standards and application forms will be distributed on the first day of school. Completed application forms should be returned to the school office. Students should return this form within the first 15 days of enrollment.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Students who go on field trips must have all assignments ready to turn in at the designated times. Students should get assignments from teachers prior to the field trip. A student shall not be permitted to participate in any school-related activity on or off campus that would require, permit, or allow the student to be absent more than eight (8) days during the 180-day school year. Absences over the allowed eight (8) days will be counted as unexcused.

# **G**

## **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.

## **GRADES/GRADING POLICY**

Texas law requires each school district to adopt a grading policy, including provisions for the assignment of grades on class assignments and examinations, before each school year. Discovery Middle School has adopted the following grading system /policy. Grades reflect the quality of the student's mastery of the learning standard.

Letter	Grade Range	Quality
A	90-100	Excellent
B	80-89	Good; Above Average
C	75-59	Satisfactory; Average
D	70-74	Poor; Below Average
F	0-69	Failing

## **GRADING COPONENTS**

At Discovery Middle School, grades reflect academic achievement and are not based on nor adjusted for nonacademic criteria such as discipline, attendance, tardies, or participation in extracurricular activities. Students will complete, on average, two assignments each week of instruction in each class with at least 2 major grades per six-weeks grading period. For each grading period, the grade for the 6-weeks will be comprised of at least 12 individual grades.

Percentage	Type	Examples
50%	Major Assignments	Assessments, Projects
40%	Daily Assignments	Classwork, Quizzes
10%	Practice	Homework, Enrichment

## **GRIEVANCE POLICY FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

The governing body (“Board”) of Southwest Schools adopts the following policy which shall be effective on the date that the policy is adopted by the Board. This policy governs student and parent complaints, employee grievances, and citizen complaints. For purposes of this policy, “days” means school calendar days. With the exception of a complaint against the CEO/Superintendent of Schools, each complaint must initially be brought at the lowest level of review, at the School Principal Review level. The Board encourages all complaints to be resolved at the lowest level possible.

### **Section 1. Campus Principal Review of Complaint**

Where a(n) Southwest Schools employee, student, guardian of a student, or a member of the public has a complaint or concern regarding Southwest Schools, the individual shall first bring their complaint or concern in writing to the appropriate campus principal. The complaint must be brought within 15 school days of the date that the complainant knew or should have known of the alleged harm. The complaint must be specific, and where possible suggest a resolution. The principal must hear the complaint, attempt to remedy the complaint in the best interest of the affected parties, and document the outcome. The principal must respond to the complainant and issue a final decision in writing within 10 days of the principal’s receipt of the complaint.

### **Section 2. Superintendent Review of Complaint**

If the individual bringing the complaint is not satisfied with the campus principal’s final decision, then the individual may file a written appeal to the CEO/Superintendent of Southwest Schools. This written appeal shall be filed with the CEO/Superintendent’s office within 10 days of the individual’s receipt of the campus principal’s final decision. The complaint shall include a copy of the written complaint to the campus principal along with a copy of the campus principal’s final decision. A copy of the appeal shall also be delivered to the campus principal. The appeal must be specific, and where possible suggest a resolution. The complaint shall not include any new issues or complaints unrelated in the original complaint expressed to the campus principal. The CEO/Superintendent, or designee, shall respond to the complaint and issue a final decision in writing within 15 days of receipt of the written appeal.

### **Section 3. Board of Directors Review of Complaint**

If the individual bringing the complaint is not satisfied with the CEO/Superintendent’s final decision, then the individual may appeal their complaint in writing to Southwest School’s Board of Directors within 10 days of receiving the CEO/Superintendent’s final decision. The complaint shall be directed to the President of the Board and shall include a copy of the written complaint to the CEO/Superintendent of Schools along with a copy of the CEO/Superintendent’s final decision. A copy of this appeal shall also be delivered to the CEO/Superintendent of Schools.

#### **Requesting an appeal**

- If you wish to file an appeal to the CEO/Superintendent of Schools, please submit your request in writing within 10 days of receipt of written notification of decision
- Request must be in writing and submitted via email within 10 days.
- Requests must be emailed to CEO/Superintendent of Schools and copied to Chief Human Resources Officer with the subject line “Appeal Request.”

## **H**

### **HALL PASS**

Students are not to leave class without a pass from the teacher. No passes will be issued the first or last 10 minutes of class.

## HEALTH SERVICES

### Emergency Medical Treatment

Parents shall complete an emergency card form each year that includes a place for parental consent for school officials to obtain medical information for the student, as provided by law. Parents shall also be asked to supply other information that could be required in case of an emergency. **If an ambulance is summoned to render emergency aid, Empowerment High Schools is not liable for any costs or fees associated with the medical emergency.**

### 24 Hour Rule

Students who demonstrate signs and symptoms of illness or a possible communicable disease should be referred to the campus attendance clerk for further assessment. Those with an elevated temperature of 100.4 degrees or above or those who vomit or have diarrhea must be isolated and sent home. The student must be fever free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours before he/she can be allowed back in school. Those excluded due to vomiting or diarrhea must also be free of symptoms without the use of preventative medications before being allowed back in school. (Administrative Regulation FFAD) The 24-hour period is used as the standard length of time to determine if indeed symptoms have subsided.

### Covid- Related Procedures

Safety is priority at Southwest Schools. In order to ensure Southwest Schools is providing a high-quality education during a global pandemic the following provisions are outlined to promote the safety of students and staff during on-campus learning while addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Students may choose to wear approved masks or face shields or other coverings over the nose and mouth when in the classroom, hallways and in all communal spaces (e.g., restrooms, school buses).
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after using the restroom, after blowing the nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Covering the mouth or nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or use the inside of the elbow.
- Throw used tissues in a trashcan immediately after use

Parents/Guardians are to notify the school if their student is exhibiting symptoms of COVID: sore throat, cough, chills, body aches for unknown reasons, shortness of breath for unknown reasons, new loss of smell, new loss of taste, diarrhea, headache, fever at or greater than 100.3 degrees Fahrenheit

## HONOR ROLL PROCEDURES

A campus may choose to recognize students with outstanding academic performance through the Honor Roll system. The Elementary and Secondary Honor Roll Report will list students who meet any of the options below:

- Option All = All of the Honor Roll types
- Option 1 = grades are all A's (90-100 range)
- Option 2 = grades are one B (80-89) and the rest are all A's (90-100)
- Option 3 = grades are two B's (80-89) and the rest are all A's (90-100)

Honor Roll will be awarded at the following intervals:

- At the end of each six-week grading cycle
- At the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester grading cycle
- Honor Roll **for the year** if a student met honor roll at both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester

# I

## IMMUNIZATIONS

All students must be immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical or religious reasons, the student should not be immunized before they can be registered for school. The immunizations required are diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella. See the *Texas Minimum State Requirements for Students* sheet for additional information.

## IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR TEXAS STUDENTS

On March 5, 2009, the Executive Commissioner on Health & Human Services approved several revisions to the “Immunization Requirements for Children and Students in Texas Public and Private School”.

- **Hepatitis A Vaccine:** Beginning 8-1-2009, all students entering kindergarten, statewide will be required to have two (2) doses of Hepatitis A vaccine.
- **Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) Vaccine:** Beginning 8-1-2009, all students entering kindergarten will be required to have two (2) doses of measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.
- **Varicella Vaccine:** Beginning 8-1-2009, all students entering kindergarten and 7<sup>th</sup> grades will be required to have two (2) doses of varicella vaccine. If the student has had chicken pox, a written statement from a parent, guardian, physician attesting to the date of the illness will be accepted.
- **Tetanus, Diphtheria and acellular pertussis-containing vaccine (Tdap):** Beginning 8-1-2009, all students entering the 7<sup>th</sup> grade will be required to have one (1) dose of Tdap vaccine. Students in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade will be required to have a booster dose of Tdap only if it had been five (5) years since their last dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine.
- **Meningococcal Vaccine:** Beginning 8-1-2009, all students entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade will be required to have one (1) dose of meningococcal vaccine.

## INCOMPLETE GRADES/REPORT CARDS/FINAL EXAMS

Incomplete grades on report cards (INC) must be made up before the end of two weeks into the next grading period or within two weeks after the student returns to school. Students who are ill and must be absent at the end of the school year are responsible for planning to get assignments and turning them in to the teacher before the end of the school year.

Students who are ill during final exam week must also arrange with their teacher to take final exams after school is out. These special arrangements must be made before administrators and teachers leave for the summer. Failure to turn in assignments or failure to take final exams will result in the student’s failing the course.

# L

## LAPTOPS

All students have been issued a school laptop, charger, and laptop case. The student and the student’s parent/guardian must sign and return the School Acceptable Use Form acknowledging their responsibilities and the consequences of violations. For a violation of the acceptable use policy, the teacher or other staff member will report the violation in writing to school administration and consequences will be issued as outlined in the Student Discipline Handbook. Lost items will need to be replaced and students/parents/guardians will be responsible for paying the following fees:

Damaged Laptop: \$100

Lost Laptop: \$775 (HP) or \$550 (Dell)

Lost/ Damaged Laptop charger: \$25

Lost/ Damaged Laptop case: \$20

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and found will be in the CIS room (232). Students who find items should turn them in to the CIS coordinator.

# **M**

## **MEDICATION POLICY**

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

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

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

Whether a student is at the elementary or secondary level, if sunscreen needs to be administered to treat any type of medical condition, this should be handled through communication with the school nurse so that the district is made aware of any safety and medical issues.

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 campus administrator 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 principal for information.

# **N**

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

It is the policy of Southwest Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap in its vocational programs, services or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Southwest Schools will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

# P

## Visitor's Parking

Visitors to the campus may park in front of the school in the designated visitor parking spaces. Visitors should not park in reserved or handicapped spaces or in the fire lane. Visitors must check in at the main office and obtain a visitors pass.

## **PROPERTY**

Personal – Students are responsible for their personal property. Teachers cannot be responsible for items left in the classroom.

School – The building and all its contents are school property. Destruction and/or defacing school property is a violation of the Discipline Management Plan and Student Code of Conduct, as well as state law.

## **PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS**

A student must maintain a 70 or above in all four core courses (Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies) at the end of every 6-week grading period. Students must also have at least 90% attendance rate for the school year. Low attendance can affect grades and possibly lead to a student being retained.

# R

## **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

The parent(s) or legal guardian must accompany the student for initial registration. Verification of residence must be furnished to the Registrar PRIOR to enrollment/scheduling of classes.

Following are the minimum requirements for proof of residency:

- For students residing in a house or rental property, a utility bill (e.g., gas, electric, water, or copy of driver's license) showing the parent's name and address. If a utility bill is not available, a lease agreement (with both parent's and student's names listed) or a rental contract will be accepted.
- If both parent(s) or student are temporarily living with a relative or friend, the parent must complete an affidavit to verify current or temporary address. In addition, campus and/or District personnel may request a utility bill from the relative or friend as well as a copy of the parent's identification with address listed.
- If warranted, the campus principal can ask the parent(s) or guardian for additional information regarding custody and/or residency issues.
- Students should also have a report card and/or withdrawal card from the previous school, where applicable, as well as a birth certificate and immunization record when registering.

# S

## **SAFETY**

Student safety on campus or at school-related events is a top priority of the school. With safety in mind, the school has implemented policies and committed resources. However, the school can address only part of the challenge; the essential remaining part is the cooperation of students, including:

- Avoiding conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Following the code of conduct and any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal or teachers.
- Remaining alert to and promptly reporting safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.
- Knowing emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Following immediately the instructions of teachers, administrators, and other school employees who oversee to the welfare of students.

- Reporting any dangerous or disruptive behavior to appropriate Empowerment High School personnel
- Report any illegal substance

Parents can assist by keeping emergency care information up to date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies to medications, etc.). Please contact the school to update any information. Having current information will be of critical importance should an accident or injury occur that requires medical attention.

## **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.

A student's clothing, personal property, electronic equipment, or method of transportation may be searched, whether the student is present or not, when there is reasonable suspicion to believe the search will reveal articles or materials prohibited by the district or a rule violation or criminal activity. Additionally, the District may conduct unannounced, random and blanket inspections and searches of school property used by the student, or school property used by the student may be searched when there is reasonable suspicion to believe the search will reveal articles or materials prohibited by the district, whether the student is present. Additionally, the District has a right to conduct unannounced and blanket inspections and searches when there is reasonable suspicion to believe the search will reveal articles or materials prohibited by the district. Students are responsible for ensuring that any personal property, method of transportation, or school property used by the student does not contain prohibited items. Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of assigned desks and lockers, and must be certain that the locker is locked, and that methods of entry are not available to others. Students may be disciplined for possession of prohibited items discovered during a search. The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found.

When it comes to searches it may be helpful to understand that “probable cause” is the standard used in criminal matters and refers to sufficient reason based upon specific facts to believe a crime has been or will be committed or that certain property is connected with a crime. In other words, the criminal activity “more likely than not” has occurred, is occurring, or will occur. Reasonable suspicion, on the other hand, is a lesser standard to justify a search of a student. Reasonable suspicion requires a mere awareness of facts that there may be a reason for a school official to suspect that a search will uncover evidence of a rule violation or criminal activity.

## **STUDENT IDENTIFICATION BADGE**

Students will be given an identification badge at the start of the school year or during the initial enrollment. If the identification card needs to be replaced, students may purchase student identification badges from the front office for \$5. Students will always wear ID badges visible.

# **T**

## **TARDINESS**

A student who is tardy to class may be assigned consequences according to the Student Code of Conduct. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe disciplinary action, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. For students in grades 6-12, attendance is taken in every class. Students who arrive late to class will be marked tardy. Students who arrive 20 or more minutes late will be marked as absent.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

Discovery Middle School has adopted a policy of using classroom sets. Each teacher will have a class set of textbooks for students to use during class. Students also have access to online textbooks for home use. If a class textbook is lost, the student must pay for the book before a second book can be issued. Students may also be charged for damaged or defaced books. To pay for textbooks, students should see the school secretary.

## **TRIBUNAL-TRUANCY PROCEDURES**

Attendance is compulsory and Empowerment High School has a process for supporting students and their families/guardians in helping students attend school regularly. In order to help parents/guardians avoid court fees and judicial process for failing to meet attendance requirements, Empowerment High School has put in place Truancy procedures as follows:

At 3 absences, a letter will be sent home.

At 5 absences, the truancy officer will complete a home visit and possible referral to Community in Schools for services.

At 7 absences, a school administrator will meet with student and parent/guardian and create a growth plan.

At 9 absences, the school principal will meet with student and parent/guardian to review the growth plan.

At 10 or more absences, student and parent will be required to meet with District Tribunal.

If truancy procedures are not successful in helping a student maintain acceptable attendance, parent/guardian will be referred to juvenile court.

## **V**

### **VALUABLES**

Students should not bring large sums of money to school nor wear expensive jewelry that must be removed to participate in physical education or athletics. When going to physical education, students should leave their valuables, cell phones, and purses in their locked classroom. The school does not assume any responsibility for personal property that is lost or stolen at school.

### **VISITORS**

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit. All visitors must first report to the main office. Visitors are required to always wear a Visitor's Pass. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only with approval of an administrator, and such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment. Students from other schools are not permitted to visit our campus during the school day, unless they are prospective SWS students and are visiting with an administrator. Trespassers will be prosecuted.

Students who leave items at home that they must have during the school day (books, lunch money, assignments, etc.) or students who are unsure of their ride home are responsible for checking with the secretary in between classes or during lunch to see if the item has been brought to school or a message has been left by a parent. Parents are welcome to bring necessary items to the office for their children to pick up, but please understand that only a very limited number of class interruptions are allowed by the education code. Parents are asked to help reinforce this system with their child so that checking with the office for items brought to school will be a routine procedure for all students. In true emergency situations, a principal can get a student out of class.

# W

## WITHDRAWALS

The withdrawal process begins in the Registrar's office. A parent/guardian should be present on the date of withdrawal to check the student out of school. A parent must be present to sign the withdrawal form for any student who is under the age of eighteen. All money owed for fees, fines, lost books and equipment must be paid before any student records will be released. It takes a minimum of 24 hours to complete the withdrawal paperwork.

## CODE OF CONDUCT/STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Disciplinary consequences shall be administered when necessary to protect students, school employees or property and to maintain essential order and discipline.

Students shall be treated fairly and equitably. Every student will be given the opportunity to present his/her side to an administrator before an appropriate consequence is given. Consequences shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case unless disciplinary action by the school is mandated for certain offenses, as outlined by Board policy, the Texas Education Code, or the Southwest Middle & High School Parent/Student Handbook. The administrator will make the determination based on the severity of the offense, the attitude of the student, the cumulative discipline record of the student, and the potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment.

Student consequences for minor offenses involve progressive discipline assignments beginning with the teacher warning the student, assigning teacher detention, and contacting the student's parent/guardian. Repeated infractions will be treated as serious, persistent misbehavior with the teacher referring the student to the office for a conference with an administrator. The administrator will then decide on the consequence appropriate for the student in that given situation. Consequences can include additional hours of detention, suspension (unsupervised home study), teacher removal from class, and as a last resort, expulsion.

Progressive discipline assignments will not be followed in some instances. Examples include but are not limited to the following: violation of the State and Federal Penal Codes; violation of alcohol, narcotics, or drug policy; fighting policy; and cheating/plagiarism policy. Many violations have specified consequences. Progressive discipline assignments will not be followed if a student commits an expellable offense.

The teacher will make every effort possible to contact a student's parent before referring a student to an administrator except in the case of a severe disruption. Subsequent offenses will include accumulated discipline referrals from all teachers and will be handled as serious offenses. The administrator can set up a conference with a student, parent, and teachers involved.

## CLASSIFICATION OF OFFENSES

### CLASSROOM VIOLATIONS

Teachers establish classroom rules and define behavioral expectations of their students. The following minor acts of misconduct are not considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and the teacher in accordance with that teacher's rules, **rather than the Student Code of Conduct**, will discipline the student.

- Chewing gum
- Eating or drinking in class
- Out of seat without permission
- Not respecting others' feelings, property, and/or space
- Violating classroom management rules
- Uncooperative/negative attitude
- Not following directions

**Persistent or severe instances of these minor acts of misconduct could be considered a violation of the Code of Conduct and result in discipline in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.**

**Additionally, students that ride the Metro Transportation system are expected to conduct themselves as if they are on school grounds. All school rules apply, and any violations will result in an appropriate punishment.**

### **MINOR OFFENSES (Possible detention)**

A minor offense is any violation of the code of conduct that is not listed as serious or expellable and is not a violation of state and/or federal law. Minor offenses repeated more than once in one grading period or more than twice in a semester are serious or persistent offenses. Examples of some minor offenses include, but are not limited to the following:

- Tardies
- Dress Code Violations
- Hall Pass Violations
- Failure to follow check-in and check-out procedures
- Inappropriate display of affection/tangible courtship
- Any other violation of school policy deemed inappropriate that is not listed as a serious or expellable offense or a violation of federal and/or state law

### **CHEATING/PLAGIARISM POLICY**

Cheating is defined as any act of deceit, trickery, or fraud on an assignment or test. It includes the using or copying of another person's work or lending one's work to another. It could also include but is not limited to using written notes on a test; giving or receiving hand signals; looking at another student's test; or allowing another student to copy one's answers. Collaborative assignments or group assignments made by a teacher will not be considered cheating. Plagiarism is defined as using another person's original ideas or writing, as one's own without giving credit to the true author.

*Note: Both cheating and plagiarism are considered stealing and will not be tolerated. Punishment may include an additional assignment, suspension, and/or up to an expulsion.*

### **ADMINISTRATOR DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

We have high expectations for Southwest students and are committed to creating an environment in which they can succeed. Disciplinary consequences are designed to deter the student from making errors in judgment or engaging in misconduct that interferes with the student's (or other students') ability to be academically successful.

*Note: If a student misses an assigned detention, student will not be allowed to return to school without a parent/guardian conference with an administrator. Failure to attend will result in additional detentions and/or expulsion.*

Misconduct is categorized into five levels:

**Level I:** Violation of classroom rules; generally corrected by the teacher or parent contact.

**Level II:** Administrative/teacher intervention; generally, more serious in nature or a repeated violation under Level I.

**Level III:** Misconduct that disrupts the instructional process in class, at school, or school-related activities; repeated violation of Level I and II offenses; considered to be a serious offense.

**Level IV:** Criminal offenses; any felony, whether school-related or not, are included here unless it is categorized as a Level V. Such an offense requires removal of the student from Southwest Middle & High School.

**Level V:** Acts of misconduct that may result in expulsion include, but are not limited to assault, possession of weapons, drug distribution, and other criminal offenses. Such an offense requires removal of the student from Southwest Middle & High School.

**Consequences for Level 1, 2, and 3 offenses include the following:**

- Lunch Detention
- Before school or after school detention,
- Suspension (3 days max),
- Student Contract with Parent Conference

**Level I**

1. Arriving tardy to class
2. Running or making noise
3. Neglecting to bring materials or work to class
4. Failing to follow classroom/cafeteria rules
5. Violating the dress code
6. Throwing objects
7. Talking back/arguing or name calling
8. Horse playing/scuffling (not fighting)

**Level II**

1. Persistent offenses from Level I (minor acts of misconduct)
2. Inappropriate language (verbal or written)
3. Noncompliance with the directives; disrespectful
4. Repeated tardies
5. Physically contacting student creating a disruptive environment
6. Encouraging or promoting a fight
7. Repeated Violation of dress code
8. Creating/participating in disturbance/inappropriate activity
9. Failing to serve detention
10. Abusing the use of a hall pass
11. Possessing lighters, matches, tobacco-less cigarettes, or tobacco-related paraphernalia
12. Possessing a laser pointer
13. Possessing a current prescription (student's own medication); or possessing or using one's own nonprescription drug, natural and/or homeopathic-like substances, dietary supplements, or energy pills
14. Possessing toys/nuisance items, including paintballs
15. Violating the guidelines for cellular telephones/electronic devices during instructional day (first and second offense) (sec.)
16. Possessing a look-alike weapon
17. Violating the Network/Internet Use Agreement
18. Telling a falsehood to an adult (not associated with an investigation)
19. Defacing or damaging classroom materials or textbooks, including removal of bar codes; defacing/damaging another's property
20. Using or possessing visible personal entertainment devices during instructional day (high school)
21. Possessing or using a camera, video/cassette recorder, etc. (high school)
22. Possessing or using a camera, radio, CD player, MP3 player, video/cassette recorder, Game Boy, or other unauthorized electronic device (elem./jr. high)
23. Being present in area without authorization
24. Cheating or copying the work of another
25. Engaging in an act of familiarity with another and/or inappropriate public display of affection
26. Loitering on school campus before or after school
27. Selling or soliciting for sale unauthorized merchandise
28. Posting or distributing unauthorized publications
29. Violating parking rules/procedures (high school)

### **Level III**

1. Persistent offenses from Level II
2. Disrupting the school environment or educational process
3. Using profane, vulgar, obscene, or threatening language, including hit lists (written or verbal); or obscene gestures
4. Intentionally or knowingly making libelous or slanderous remarks (verbal or written) about others
5. Using ethnic, racial or gender-related slurs (verbal or written) or inappropriate acts toward others
6. Fighting
7. Using lighters or matches
8. Possessing or using tobacco
9. Using a laser pointer
10. Possessing, distributing, or using fireworks, stink bombs, smoke bombs, other noxious chemicals, or “shock” pens
11. Possessing/using a paging device (third and subsequent offenses — elem.); Violating the guidelines for paging devices during instructional day (third and subsequent offenses — sec.)
12. Possessing drug paraphernalia, aerosol paint, or fixative spray
13. Possessing ammunition
14. Possessing, distributing, or creating pornographic or sexually oriented material or material that promotes violence or other illegal activities
15. Possessing, distributing, or concealing a weapon not included as a removable or expellable offense
16. Selling, giving, or delivering to another person a non-prescription drug; possessing or using a non-prescription drug other than one’s own; or possessing, transmitting, selling, attempting to sell, or exhibiting what is represented to be a prohibited substance
17. Attempting to sell/purchase a prohibited substance through verbal or written communication without being in possession
18. Stealing or unauthorized possession of another person’s property, theft; committing burglary
19. Forging or altering school records, parent notes, forms, or other school/home
20. Exhibiting, delivering, using, or selling look-alike weapons
21. Assault of another student or an adult that is not a removable or expellable offense
22. Vandalizing, defacing or damaging school property, including non-felony graffiti
23. Engaging in behavior that is illegal that does not constitute an expellable offense
24. Failing to disclose information, hiding/covering up info/evidence for self or others, committing perjury, or lying as a witness
25. Engaging in inappropriate sexual conduct
26. Sexual harassment (verbal or written), including stalking
27. Hazing; harassing or stalking (non-sexual); bullying
28. Creating a potential health or safety hazard or a situation that may result in possible injury
29. Engaging in inappropriate behavior on overnight trips not addressed elsewhere
30. Gambling
31. Hacking (illegal or unauthorized entry or attempted entry into computer system)
32. Interfering with school activities, including trespassing, boycotting, and group demonstrations, falsifying a “safety net” report; or making a 9-1-1 call that does not constitute a mandatory removable offense
33. Participating in an unauthorized organization, secret society, or gang activity
34. Committing extortion, coercion, or blackmail
35. Tampering with a fire extinguisher, an automated external defibrillator (AED), or their storage cabinet

**The consequences for serious offenses (Levels IV and V) will be suspension or expulsion.**

### **Level IV:**

1. False alarm/report; terroristic threat
2. Conduct punishable as a felony

3. Assault with bodily injury
4. Marihuana or controlled substances (non-felony)
5. Dangerous drugs (non-felony)
6. Alcohol (non-felony)
7. Abusing volatile chemicals
8. Public lewdness/indecent exposure
9. Retaliation against any school employee (regardless of location)
10. Possession of a device designed to propel a projectile (BB-guns, pellet guns, air soft guns, slingshots, etc.)
11. Title V felonies (off-campus)
12. Gang activity
13. Fraternity, sorority, or secret society activity
14. Expellable offenses occurring on another district's property in Texas
15. #5, #7, or #9 (below) against a student (regardless of location)
16. Registered sex offenders under court supervision
17. Persistent misbehavior at Level III
18. Non-Title V felonies (off-campus)
19. Registered sex offenders not under court supervision

#### **Level V:**

1. Firearm
2. Illegal knife
3. Club
4. Prohibited weapon
5. Aggravated assault, sexual assault, or aggravated sexual assault
6. Arson
7. Murder, capital murder, or criminal attempted murder or capital murder
8. Indecency with a child
9. Aggravated kidnapping
10. Aggravated robbery
11. Manslaughter
12. Criminally negligent homicide
13. Continuous sexual abuse of young child or children
14. Marijuana or controlled substances (felony)
15. Dangerous drugs (felony)
16. Alcohol (felony)
17. Retaliation against an employee or volunteer (regardless of location involving #1-15 above)
18. Assault against an employee or a volunteer (on campus or within 300')
19. Deadly conduct (on campus or
20. within 300')
21. Retaliation against an employee or volunteer (regardless of location)
22. Criminal mischief (felony)
23. #5, #7, or #9 (above) against a student (off-campus)
24. Expellable offenses occurring on another district's property in Texas
25. Title V felonies under 37.0081

## **DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES**

### **Detention-Level I-III**

Campus administrators and/or teachers may assign students detention at their discretion. The teacher will inform the parent 24-hours before the detention so that parents can make transportation accommodations.

### **Suspension-Levels IV-V**

Suspension is a disciplinary action whereby a student is removed from the normal school setting. A student may be suspended for a period not to exceed three (3) days per disciplinary infraction. There is no limit to the times per semester or school year that a student may be suspended. A student can be suspended for any offense for which the student could be assigned to an alternative educational program by a campus administrator. A suspension may cause a student to be removed from a club or organization as specified in the organization's constitution or by-laws.

**Examples of offenses for suspensions include, but are not limited to the following:**

- Persistent classroom misbehavior
- Fighting/disorderly conduct
- Destruction or defacing school property
- Chronic infraction of school rules
- Violations of alcohol, narcotics, or drug policy
- Distribution of unauthorized literature
- Misconduct at school or school functions
- Any type of demonstration or threat of demonstration that might disrupt the normal operation of the school
- Abusive and inappropriate language
- Insubordination (failure to follow reasonable directive or request of an administrator, faculty, or staff member)

### **Sanctions/Penalties-Levels IV-V**

Students who are suspended will not be allowed on campus or at any school function during the suspension assignment; violations of this policy will bring additional disciplinary penalties and/or trespass charges.

### **DISORDERLY CONDUCT/DISTURBING THE PEACE**

Fighting, disorderly conduct, and disturbing the peace are behaviors that will not be tolerated. It is our goal to help students resolve a problem before a fight develops.

The consequence for all students involved in the fight will be suspension and/or up to an expulsion from school.

### **DISRUPTION OF CLASSES/DISRUPTION OF LAWFUL ASSEMBLY**

Students who disrupt classes and who interfere with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with their students are subject to having charges filed against them in addition to disciplinary action.

### **DRUG/ALCOHOL POLICY**

Southwest Middle & High School is a drug-free school zone. No student shall possess, use, transmit, or attempt to possess, use, or transmit, or be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol on school premises or off school premises at a school-related activity, function, or event. Possession or being under the influence will result in suspension and/or expulsion, and/or citation. This includes behavior and characteristics which are suspicious of being under the influence.

### **MODEL SOUTHWEST STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

Students are asked to sign a contract upon enrollment at Southwest. The contract is a binding agreement that stresses the importance of academic and behavioral success. The following criteria are referred to as being a "Model Southwest Student":

- 1) Arrive and attend school on time
- 2) 100% adherence to the dress code policy
- 3) 100% adherence to all school rules and regulations
- 4) Strive to maintain academic success of 75% or higher in each class

## EXPULSION PROCESS

Students may be recommended for expulsion if they engage in severe infractions of the Student Code of Conduct, or if they have not met expectations of being a “Model Southwest Student”. Additionally, they may be recommended for expulsion/removal from Southwest for frequent, less severe, violations of the code of student conduct. A school level hearing with a committee comprised of administrators and teachers shall be offered when a student is recommended for expulsion. A student’s parent or guardian shall be given notice of the charges and an opportunity for a hearing before the school committee. If the parent or guardian is not satisfied with the decision of the committee, then they must file written notice with the Campus Principal or their designee within two school days of receipt of the decision of the school committee. At that point a hearing will be scheduled with an administrator or their designee within five days after the notice of the appeal is received unless scheduled at a later date by mutual consent of the parents and principal. After the hearing, the administrator or designee will provide the parent or guardian written notice of the outcome of the hearing within three school days.

### 37.007. EXPULSION FOR SERIOUS OFFENSES.

(a) A student shall be expelled from a school if the student, on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property:

(1) uses, exhibits, or possesses:

- (A) a firearm as defined by Section 46.01(3), Penal Code;
- (B) an illegal knife as defined by Section 46.01(6), Penal Code, or by local policy;
- (C) a club as defined by Section 46.01(1), Penal Code; or
- (D) a weapon listed as a prohibited weapon under Section 46.05, Penal Code;

(2) engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of:

- (A) aggravated assault under Section 22.02, Penal Code, sexual assault under Section 22.011, Penal Code, or aggravated sexual assault under Section 22.021, Penal Code;
- (B) arson under Section 28.02, Penal Code;
- (C) murder under Section 19.02, Penal Code, capital murder under Section 19.03, Penal Code, or criminal attempt, under Section 15.01, Penal Code, to commit murder or capital murder;
- (D) indecency with a child under Section 21.11, Penal Code;
- (E) aggravated kidnapping under Section 20.04, Penal Code;
- (F) aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code;
- (G) manslaughter under Section 19.04, Penal Code; or
- (H) criminally negligent homicide under Section 19.05, Penal Code; or

(3) engages in conduct specified by Section 37.006(a)(2)(C) or (D), if the conduct is punishable as a felony.

(b) A student may be expelled if the student:

(1) engages in conduct involving a public school that contains the elements of the offense of false alarm or report under Section 42.06, Penal Code, or terroristic threat under Section 22.07, Penal Code;

(2) while on or within 300 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line, or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property:

(A) sells, gives, or delivers to another person or possesses, uses, or is under the influence of any amount of:

(i) marihuana or a controlled substance, as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code, or by 21 U.S.C. Section 801 et seq.;

(ii) a dangerous drug, as defined by Chapter 483, Health and Safety Code; or

(iii) an alcoholic beverage, as defined by Section 1.04, Alcoholic Beverage Code;

(B) engages in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to an abusable, volatile chemical under Sections 485.031 through 485.034, Health and Safety Code;

(C) engages in conduct that contains the elements of an offense under Section 22.01(a)(1), Penal Code, against a school district employee or a volunteer as defined by Section 22.053; or

(D) engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of deadly conduct under Section 22.05, Penal Code;

(3) subject to Subsection (d), while within 300 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line:

- (A) engages in conduct specified by Subsection (a); or
- (B) possesses a firearm, as defined by 18 U.S.C. Section 921; or

(4) engages in conduct that contains the elements of any offense listed in Subsection (a)(2)(A) or (C) or the offense of aggravated robbery under Section 29.03, Penal Code, against another student, without regard to whether the conduct occurs on or off of school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property.

(c) A student may be expelled if the student, while placed in an alternative education program for disciplinary reasons, continues to engage in serious or persistent misbehavior that violates the district's student code of conduct.

(d) A student shall be expelled if the student engages in conduct that contains the elements of any offense listed in Subsection (a), and may be expelled if the student engages in conduct that contains the elements of any offense listed in Subsection (b)(2)(C), against any employee or volunteer in retaliation for or as a result of the person's employment or association with a school district, without regard to whether the conduct occurs on or off of school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property.

(e) In accordance with 20 U.S.C. Section 7151, a local educational agency, including a school district, home-rule school district, or open-enrollment charter school, shall expel a student who brings a firearm, as defined by 18 U.S.C. Section 921, to school. The student must be expelled from the student's regular campus for a period of at least one year, except that:

- (1) the superintendent or other chief administrative officer of the school district or of the other local educational agency, as defined by 20 U.S.C. Section 7801, may modify the length of the expulsion in the case of an individual student;
- (2) the district or other local educational agency shall provide educational services to an expelled student in a disciplinary alternative education program as provided by Section 37.008 if the student is younger than 10 years of age on the date of expulsion; and
- (3) the district or other local educational agency may provide educational services to an expelled student who is 10 years of age or older in a disciplinary alternative education program as provided in Section 37.008.

(f) A student who engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of criminal mischief under Section 28.03, Penal Code, may be expelled at the district's discretion if the conduct is punishable as a felony under that section. The student shall be referred to the authorized officer of the juvenile court regardless of whether the student is expelled.

(g) In addition to any notice required under Article 15.27, Code of Criminal Procedure, a school district shall inform each educator who has responsibility for or is under the direction and supervision of an educator who has responsibility for, the instruction of a student who has engaged in any violation listed in this section of the student's misconduct. Each educator shall keep the information received under this subsection confidential from any person not entitled to the information under this subsection, except that the educator may share the information with the student's parent or guardian as provided for by state or federal law. The State Board for Educator Certification may revoke or suspend the certification of an educator who intentionally violates this subsection.

(h) Subject to Subsection (e), notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a student who is younger than 10 years of age may not be expelled for engaging in conduct described by this section.

(i) A student who engages in conduct described by Subsection

(a) may be expelled from school by the district in which the student attends school if the student engages in that conduct:

- (1) on school property of another district in this state; or

(2) while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of a school in another district in this state.

## **GAMBLING**

Gambling or playing games for monetary gain is strictly prohibited. Monies involved will be confiscated and turned over to the Security Officer and appropriate charges may be filed in addition to the students involved being suspended from school.

## **Public Displays of Affection (PDA)**

Public displays of affection are not allowed at Southwest. This issue is dealt with at the discretion of the teacher/administrator based on the severity of the incident; however, students should be aware that inappropriate displays of affection are typically considered a Level II or III misconduct in accordance with the *Code of Student Conduct*.

## **SEXUAL HARRASSMENT**

### **Tangible Courtship/Inappropriate Sexual Conduct**

This refers to students showing any public display of romantic affection or engaging in inappropriate sexual contact disruptive to other students or the school environment. Any case of sexual harassment will be dealt with severely up to and including expulsion.

*Appendix A*  
**Receipt of Parent/Student Handbook/Code of Student Conduct**

This handbook has been written to help the student and parent/guardian have a good understanding of school procedures and the Code of Conduct. It is important for the student and parent/guardian to read and discuss the contents of the handbook.

Each student is expected to follow the rules and regulations outlined in the handbook. Student and parent/guardian cooperation should help the student be more successful at school.

There is a mutual understanding that once the Parent & Student Handbook has been given to the student that both parent and student will be responsible for all its contents, including any additional policies or procedures that may be amended within the 2016-2017 school year.

Your signature acknowledge that you have received a copy of the 2016-2017 handbook and have read discussed its contents.

☐ I **agree** to allow the school to release information concerning my child only to organizations that are affiliated with the District, approved by the Superintendent or designee, and need such information to provide school-related services to students (e.g., school pictures, honor roll).

☐ I **do not agree** to allow the school to release information concerning my child only to organizations that are affiliated with the District, approved by the Superintendent or designee, and need such information to provide school-related services to students.

---

Parent/Guardian (print)

Student (print)

GRADE

---

Parent/Guardian (signature)

Student (signature)

***Appendix B***  
**Options and Requirements**  
**For Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties**  
**or Who Need or May Need Special Education Services**

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

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

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

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

Contact Person: Paul Kandola  
Director of Special Education

Phone Number: 713-784-6345

### *Appendix E, Continued...*

#### **Opciones Y Requisitos para Ofrecer Asistencia a Estudiantes que Tienen Dificultades de Aprendizaje o que Necesitan o Pueden Necesitar Servicios de Educación Especial**

Si un niño experimenta dificultades de aprendizaje el padre o la madre puede ponerse en contacto con la persona que se menciona abajo para aprender sobre el sistema global de investigación o remisión para educación general del distrito para los servicios de apoyo. Este sistema vincula a los estudiantes con una variedad de opciones de apoyo, inclusive los remite a una evaluación para educación especial. Los estudiantes que tienen dificultades en la clase normal deberían ser considerados para servicios de tutorías, compensatorios u otro servicio de apoyo académico o de comportamiento, que están disponibles para todos los estudiantes y que incluyen un proceso basado en la Respuesta a la Intervención (RtI, por sus siglas en inglés). La implementación de la RtI tiene el potencial para producir un impacto positivo en la habilidad de las agencias locales de educación, para cubrir las necesidades de todos los estudiantes con dificultades.

El padre o la madre tienen derecho a pedir una evaluación para los servicios de educación especial en cualquier momento. El distrito debe decidir si la evaluación es necesaria dentro de un período razonable de tiempo. Si la evaluación es necesaria, el padre o la madre será notificado/a y se le pedirá que presente un consentimiento informado por escrito para la evaluación. El distrito debe completar la evaluación y el informe dentro de los 60 días calendario a partir de la fecha en que el distrito recibió el consentimiento por escrito. El distrito debe entregar una copia del informe al padre o la madre.

Si el distrito determina que la evaluación no es necesaria, el distrito le entregará al padre o la madre una notificación por escrito donde explique por qué el niño no será evaluado. Esta notificación incluirá una declaración en la que se le informa sobre sus derechos, si éste/a no está de acuerdo con el distrito. Además, la notificación deberá informarle al padre o la madre cómo obtener una copia de la *Notificación de las Salvaguardas del Procedimiento - Derechos de los Padres de los Estudiantes con Discapacidades* (*Notice of Procedural Safeguards-Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*).

La persona designada con quien puede comunicarse en relación a las opciones que tiene un niño que experimenta dificultades en el aprendizaje o para una recomendación para la evaluación para educación especial es:

Nombre de la persona: Paul Kandola  
Director de educación especial

Numero de teléfono: 713-784-6345

## *Appendix F*

### **Confidentiality of Student Records**

Southwest Middle & High School complies with federal and state regulations related to the right of students, parents or adult students, ie. Those students who are 18 years of age or older, to access, inspect, and review the confidential school records of the student. Southwest Middle & High School complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (34.CFR part 99), and other related statutes, 34.CFR 300.127; 34 CFR 300.560-300.575; TEC 26.004; 19 TAC 89.1050), which protect the confidentiality of students' records at their collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages.

Highlights of these safeguards are:

- (1) Southwest Middle & High School permits parents or adult students to inspect and review any educational records relating to the student without unnecessary delay, in no case more than 45 days after the request is made.
- (2) The right to inspect and review education records includes the right to a response to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records, the right to request copies of the records if inspection and review are not feasible, and the right to have a representative of the parent or adult student inspect and review the records.
- (3) The education records which may be inspected and reviewed include:  
Attendance records, test scores, grades, disciplinary records, counseling records, psychological records, admission applications, health and immunization information, teacher and counselor evaluations, and reports of behavioral patterns
- (4) A parent or an adult student who believes that information in education records collected, maintained or used is inaccurate or misleading or violates the privacy or rights of the student may request that records be amended. Southwest Middle & High School will decide whether to amend the information in accordance with the request within a reasonable period of time. If Southwest Middle & High School decides not to amend the information, it will inform the parent or adult student of the refusal and advise them of the right to a hearing under Section 300.568. If as a result of the hearing, Southwest Middle & High School decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student rights, it shall amend the information accordingly and so inform the parent/adult student in writing. If as a result of the hearing, Southwest Middle & High School decides the information is not inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of student rights, it shall inform the parent/adult student of the right to place a statement commenting on the information or setting forth any reasons for disagreeing with the decision of Southwest Middle & High School. This explanation is then maintained and disclosed as part of the student records.
- (5) Southwest Middle & High School does not disclose information from education records to officials/other participating agencies without parent/adult student consent unless authorized by 34.CFR Part 99. (One example of disclosure under this part is the exchange of information between schools at enrollment when a student transfers). Southwest Middle & High School keeps a record of parties obtaining access to educational records, collection, maintained or used, except by parents, adult students, or authorized Southwest Middle & High School employees, including the name, date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records. Southwest Middle & High School provides parents/adult students on request a list of the types and locations of education records collected, stored, or used by Southwest Middle & High School staff.
- (6) Southwest Middle & High School staff collecting or using personally identifiable information receive training regarding federal and state guidelines. The Principal of Southwest Middle & High School assumes responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable general information and the Director of Special Education assumes responsibility for the confidentiality of any current listing of the names and positions of employees who have access to personally identifiable information.