

Dear Parents:

On behalf of our Board of Education and staff, I enthusiastically welcome you to Comstock Independent School District! Our primary interest is to provide a quality education for all of our students. It is our goal to help every student have the best opportunity to learn and grow and be successful while attending school in Comstock. We look forward to working closely with you to make your student's school experience the most productive and positive as possible. This handbook has been carefully prepared to provide you with many important and useful information items. The policies and procedures contained in this handbook are designed to help the school run smoothly so you and your student will have a successful year at Comstock I. S. D. No handbook can cover all situations. In cases where the handbook does not cover a particular situation, decisions of the administration will prevail.

A student's education is dramatically enhanced when parents are involved. Therefore, we strongly encourage your involvement in any and every way possible. From attending school events and activities to checking on your student's work, it all will make a difference in your student's performance. Being involved in your child's education will not only help your child, but also help make Comstock School a better place to learn. I am excited that your child is a part of Comstock School! If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher, the principal, Mrs. Loeffler, or myself. I look forward to a successful year at Comstock I. S. D.

Sincerely,
O.K. (Buddy) Wolfenbarger III
Superintendent of Schools

SCHOOL SONG

**PANTHER PROWESS IS OUR PRIDE
WE'RE FEARLESS, BRAVE AND BOLD.
ON TO VICTORY IS OUR CRY
AND VALOR IS OUR GOAL.**

**EVER LOYAL, EVER TRUE
TO OUR GREEN AND WHITE.
WE WILL ALWAYS SEE YOU THROUGH
AND FOR YOUR HONOR FIGHT.**

**FIGHT TEAM!
FIGHT TEAM!
FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!**

Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information

State law requires the district to give you the following information:

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows the procedures for requesting the information unless the parent or guardian objects to the release of the directory information about the student. If you do not want Comstock ISD to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing within ten school days of child's first day of instruction for this school year.

This means that the district must give certain personal information (called "directory information") about your child to any person who requests it, unless you have told the district in writing not to do so. In addition, you have the right to tell the district that it may, or may not, use certain personal information about your child for specific school-sponsored purposes. The district is providing you this form so you can communicate your wishes about these issues. [See **Directory Information** on page 11 for more information.]

For the following school-sponsored purposes Comstock ISD has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Photograph
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Most recent school previously attended
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height, if a member of an athletic team
- Enrollment status

For all other purposes, Comstock ISD has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Grade level
- Most recent school previously attended
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Enrollment status

Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education

Federal law requires that the district release to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, upon request, the name, address, and phone number of secondary school students enrolled in the district, unless the parent or eligible student directs the district not to release information to these types of requestors without prior written consent.

Table of Contents

PREFACE	1
SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	3
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	3
Working Together	3
PARENTAL RIGHTS	4
Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights.....	4
“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities	4
Inspecting Surveys	4
Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff.....	5
Reviewing Instructional Materials	5
Displaying a Student’s Artwork and Projects	5
Accessing Student Records.....	5
Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student.....	6
Granting Permission to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction	6
Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom	6
Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction	6
Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags	7
Excusing a Student from Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence	7
Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct	7
School Safety Transfers	7
Requesting Classroom Assignment for Multiple Birth Siblings.....	8
Parents of Students with Disabilities	8
Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education.....	8
Accommodations for Children of Military Families	9
Student Records	9
Directory Information	11
Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes.....	11
Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education	11
SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS..	12
ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE	12
Compulsory Attendance.....	12

Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance	12
Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance	13
Attendance for Credit.....	13
Parent’s Note after an Absence.....	14
Doctor’s Note after an Absence for Illness.....	14
Driver License Attendance Verification	14
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY	14
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS	15
ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY	15
ASSEMBLIES	15
ATHLETICS.....	16
AWARDS AND HONORS	16
BACKBACKS	17
BICYCLES	17
BULLYING	18
CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) PROGRAMS.....	18
CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE	18
CLASS RANK / TOP TEN PERCENT / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT.....	19
CLASS SCHEDULES	20
COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES	20
COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS	21
COMPUTER RESOURCES.....	21
CONDUCT	21
Applicability of School Rules.....	21
Corporal Punishment	22
Disruptions.....	22
Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones.....	22
Other Electronic Devices	22
Inappropriate Use of Technology	23
Social Events.....	23
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS	23
CORRESPONDENCE COURSES.....	23
COUNSELING.....	23
Academic Counseling	23

Personal Counseling.....	24
Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment.....	24
CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Taken the Course.....	24
CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course.....	24
DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION	25
Dating Violence	25
Discrimination.....	25
Harassment.....	26
Sexual Harassment.....	26
Retaliation.....	26
Reporting Procedures.....	26
Investigation of Report	26
DISCRIMINATION	27
DISTANCE LEARNING	27
DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS	27
School Materials	27
Nonschool Materials...from students	27
Nonschool Materials...from others.....	28
DRESS AND GROOMING	28
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS	30
Standards of Behavior.....	31
Drug Testing	31
Offices and Elections	31
FEES	31
FUND-RAISING	32
GANG-FREE ZONES	32
GRADE CLASSIFICATION	33
GRADING GUIDELINES	33
GRADUATION.....	34
Requirements for a Diploma.....	34
Graduation Programs	34
Certificates of Coursework Completion	36
Students with Disabilities	36
Graduation Activities	36

Graduation Speakers	37
Graduation Expenses	37
State Scholarships and Grants.....	37
GUM/FOOD/DRINKS	37
HALL REGULATIONS.....	38
HARASSMENT	38
HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS	38
Bacterial Meningitis.....	38
Physical Activity for Students in Elementary and Middle School	39
School Health Advisory Council (SHAC).....	39
Other Health-Related Matters	40
Physical Fitness Assessment.....	40
Tobacco Prohibited	40
Asbestos Management Plan	40
Pest Management Plan.....	40
HOMELESS STUDENTS	40
HOMEWORK.....	40
IMMUNIZATION	40
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES	41
Questioning of Students	41
Students Taken Into Custody	41
Notification of Law Violations	42
LOCKERS	42
LOST AND FOUND	42
LUNCH.....	42
MAKEUP WORK	43
Makeup Work Because of Absence.....	43
DAEP Makeup Work.....	43
In-school Suspension (ISS) Makeup Work.....	43
MEDICINE AT SCHOOL.....	43
Psychotropic Drugs.....	44
NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT.....	44
PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS.....	45
PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE.....	45

PRAYER.....	45
PROMOTION AND RETENTION.....	46
RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL	47
REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES	47
RETALIATION	48
SAFETY	48
Accident Insurance.....	48
Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies.....	48
Fire Drill Bells	48
Tornado Drill Bells	48
Emergency Medical Treatment and Information	48
Emergency School-Closing Information	49
SAT, ACT, AND OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS	49
SCHOOL FACILITIES	49
Use by Students Before and After School	49
Conduct Before and After School.....	49
Use of Hallways During Class Time	49
Cafeteria Services	50
Library.....	50
Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups.....	50
SEARCHES	50
Students’ Desks and Lockers	50
Vehicles on Campus	51
Trained Dogs.....	51
Metal Detectors.....	51
Drug-Testing	51
SPECIAL PROGRAMS	51
STEROIDS	51
STUDENT PARKING REGULATIONS.....	52
STUDENT SPEAKERS	52
SUMMER SCHOOL	53
TAKS (TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS)	53
TARDINESS.....	53
TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, AND TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT..	53

TOYS	54
TRANSFERS	54
TRANSPORTATION.....	54
School-Sponsored Trips.....	54
Buses and Other School Vehicles	54
TRUANCY	55
TUTORIALS	56
VANDALISM.....	56
VIDEO CAMERAS.....	56
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL	56
General Visitors	56
WEBSITE PHOTO PERMISSION	56
WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL	57
Glossary	58

PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2010–2011! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students.

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

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

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

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

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Comstock ISD Student Code of Conduct, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found as an attachment to this handbook and posted at www.comstockisd.net

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

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

After reading through the entire handbook with your child, keep it as a reference during this school year. If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact the principal at 292-4444.

Also, please complete and return to your child’s campus the following required forms provided in the forms packet accompanying this handbook. These forms refer to data in this handbook:

1. Parental Acknowledgment Form;
2. Student Directory Information and Release of Student Information Form;
3. Release of Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education Form; and

[See **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights** on page 4 and **Directory Information** on page 11 for more information.]

Please note that references to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. A copy of the district's policy manual is available for review in the school office or online at www.comstockisd.net.

SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Working Together

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements of the graduation programs with your child, if your child is entering ninth grade.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** on page 23 and **Academic Programs** on page 15.]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office at 432-292-4444 for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 47.]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policies at GKG and contact the principal.
- Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include the Comstock PTO.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB, and contact the principal.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction. [See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and information in this handbook at **School Health Advisory Council** on page 39.]

- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies at BE and BED for more information.]

PARENTAL RIGHTS

Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights

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

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

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

“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities

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

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

Inspecting Surveys

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

Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff

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

Reviewing Instructional Materials

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

[Also see **Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 6 for additional information.]

Displaying a Student's Artwork and Projects

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

Accessing Student Records

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

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,
- Teacher and counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns, and
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.

[See **Student Records** on page 9.]

Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student

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

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

Granting Permission to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction

As a parent, if your child is under the age of 14, you must grant permission for your child to receive instruction in the district's parenting and paternity awareness program or your child will not be allowed to participate in the instruction. This program, developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE), is incorporated into the district's health education classes.

Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom

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

Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction

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

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

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

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

Comstock ISD follows the guidelines of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for human sexuality instruction. Related concepts include knowledge of growth patterns in males and females, influences of the endocrine system, physical and emotional development during adolescence, and physiological and emotional changes during pregnancy. Risk factors of sexual transmitted diseases are discussed. Abstinence from sexual activity is emphasized as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age. It is also emphasized that abstinence is the only 100 percent effective measure for preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity.

Students in eighth grade study the Parenting and Paternity Awareness curriculum which includes lessons on responsible parenting, paternity and child support laws, skills for healthy relationships, financial implications of becoming a parent, impact of father involvement, benefits of stable family relationships on children, and relationship violence prevention. While the P.A.P.A. curriculum is not specifically a sex education curriculum, some issues will possibly involve discussion of a sexual nature.

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

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

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows. [See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** on page 7 and policy EC(LEGAL).]

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

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

Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct

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

School Safety Transfers

As a parent, you have a right:

- To request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the board or its designee to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the superintendent for information. [See policy FDB.]

[See **Bullying** on page 18, and policy FFI(LOCAL).]

- To request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See policy FDE(LOCAL).]
- To request the transfer of your child to a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. [See policy FDE.]

Requesting Classroom Assignment for Multiple Birth Siblings

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

Parents of Students with Disabilities

Parents of students with learning difficulties or who may need special education services may request an evaluation for special education at any time. For more information, see **Special Programs** on page 51 and contact the director of special education at 432-292-4444.

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

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

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If 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 his or her rights if the parent disagrees 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 the Director of Special Education at 432-292-4444.

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that any other student residing in the household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus. [See policy FDB(LOCAL).]

Accommodations for Children of Military Families

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

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

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent related to leave or deployment activities may be excused by the district. The district will permit no more than 5 excused absences per year for this purpose.

Additional information may be found at <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/mil/>.

Student Records

Both federal and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights of privacy. Before disclosing any personally identifiable information from a student's records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older OR who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

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

- The parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student's education records.

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

- District school officials who have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records. School officials would include trustees and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, counselors, diagnosticians,

and support staff; a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or volunteer); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties.

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

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

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

The superintendent is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students and of the records of all students who have graduated or transferred to another school. Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

A parent or eligible student who provides a written request and pays copying costs of ten cents per page may obtain copies. If circumstances prevent inspection during regular school hours and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records. The address of the superintendent’s office is at 101 Sanderson Street, Comstock, Texas.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student’s records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights. A request to correct a student’s record should be submitted to the principal. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student’s record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student’s grade in a course is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district’s grading policy. [See FINALITY OF GRADES at FNG(LEGAL), **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 47, and **Complaints and Concerns** on page 21 for an overview of the process.]

The district’s policy regarding student records found at FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL) is available from the principal’s or superintendent’s office www.comstockisd.net.

The parent’s or eligible student’s right of access to and copies of student records do not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records—such as a teacher’s personal

notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher—do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

Please note:

Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with federal law regarding student records. The complaint may be mailed to:

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

Directory Information

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

However, release of a student’s directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of your child’s first day of instruction for this school year. [See the “Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information” included in the forms packet.

Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes

The district often needs to use student information for the following school-sponsored purposes: all district announcements and publications.

For these specific school-sponsored purposes, the district would like to use your child’s name, and photograph, date of birth, honors, awards, dates of attendance, grade level, enrollment status, schools previously attended, participation in extracurricular activities and sports and weight and height for athletic teams. This information will not be used for other purposes without the consent of the parent or eligible student, except as described above at **Directory Information**.

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

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

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

SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Topics in this section of the handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact the principal at 432-292-4444.

ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE

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

Compulsory Attendance

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

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year and is subject to compulsory attendance laws, if the student is under 21 years old. In addition, if a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester the district may revoke the student’s enrollment. The student’s presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. [See FEA.]

Students enrolled in prekindergarten or kindergarten are required to attend school.

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

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

Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance

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

- Religious holy days;

- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Service as an election clerk; and
- Documented health-care appointments, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders.

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

Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance

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

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

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

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

Attendance for Credit

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

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

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

- All absences will be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed above at **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance** will be considered days of attendance for this purpose.

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

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

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

Parent's Note after an Absence

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

Doctor's Note after an Absence for Illness

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than five 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.

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.

[See policy FEC(LOCAL).]

Driver License Attendance Verification

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

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism is the use of another person's original ideas or writing as one's own without giving credit to the true author. Plagiarism will be considered cheating and the student will be subject to academic disciplinary action that may include loss of credit for the work in question. A very

common example of plagiarism is copying and pasting work off the Internet and using it as original work. Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary penalties as well as academic penalties.

Academic dishonesty, cheating or plagiarism is not acceptable. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, the copying of another student's work, homework, class work, test answers, communicating with others during testing, etc. Plagiarism is the use of another person's original ideas or writing without giving the credit to the true author. A student found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be subject to loss of credit for the work in question.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The school counselor provides students and parents information regarding academic programs to prepare for higher education and career choices. [For more information, see **Academic Counseling** on page 23 of this handbook and policies at EIF.]

ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

In order to respond to drug and alcohol use in the schools and to maintain a safe school environment, conducive to education, the District has adopted a drug and alcohol policy. In addition to searches by school personnel, the District may use specially-trained dogs to search for concealed contraband, drugs or alcohol on any properties under the jurisdiction of Comstock ISD. No student shall possess, use, transmit or attempt to possess, use, or transmit, or be under the influence of (legal intoxication not required) any of the following substances on school premises (property) during any school term or off school premises at a school-sponsored activity, function or event or in transit to or from a school or school-sponsored activity, function, or event:

- Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate, or any controlled substance paraphernalia, including but not limited to hypodermic needles, syringes and heroin pipes.
- Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage.
- Any mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drug or substance, such as glue, aerosol paint, etc.

The transmittal, gift, sale or attempted transmittal, gift or sale of what is represented to be any of the above-listed substances or paraphernalia is also prohibited.

Additionally, all students that participate in any extra-curricular activity or that drive to and from school in their personal vehicle will be required to submit to random drug-testing in accordance with the school board drug testing policy.

ASSEMBLIES

All students are to attend assemblies and activities held during school hours. Students are not allowed to stay in classrooms to work on assignments. A student's conduct during assemblies must meet the same standard as in the classroom. Students must sit in their assigned areas, by grade. A student who is tardy to an assembly or does not follow District rules during an assembly will be subject to disciplinary action.

ATHLETICS

The athletics program should assume its rightful place in the total school program and make its vital contributions to the development of the students. Participation in athletics means more than competition between two individuals or two teams. Athletics teaches discipline, fair play, sportsmanship, understanding, communication, hard work and sacrifice. In addition, athletics teaches an appreciation of team play. Athletes learn that quitting means failure and that hard work promotes success. The product of the athletic program is an athlete who has an understanding of sacrifices, team cooperation and hard work. Comstock ISD is proud of its athletic teams and has enjoyed much success in the past. All students in grade 7-12 are invited to participate in athletics.

Students are not obligated to take part in athletics, nor are they required to enroll in the athletics period as a requirement for graduation. Student athletes are held to a higher standard of conduct than is required by the Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Being in athletics is a **privilege**, not a right. Guidelines and expectations for athletic participation are explained in the Athletic and Extracurricular Handbook. Parents and students will be asked to read and sign an acknowledgement of receipt of the Athletic and Extracurricular handbook before participating in athletics.

In late June of 2002, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that it was not a violation of an individual's constitutional rights and/or illegal to test for drugs in students participating in extra curricular/co-curricular activities. The Comstock ISD School Board has approved the implementation of a drug testing policy during the school year. All students involved in extra curricular/co-curricular activities or who use school parking in grades 7 through 12 will be tested. Students who have not or refuse to be tested will not be eligible to participate in extra curricular/co-curricular activities.

A baseline drug test will be performed on students who want to participate in extra curricular/co-curricular activities during the school year. Random drug testing will occur throughout the school year. As many as 20% of students can be randomly tested at any given time.

AWARDS AND HONORS

Honor Roll – The Comstock Exemplary Student Award will be awarded to students at the end of each six weeks. To earn this award, a student must maintain an average of 90 or higher in each class. This includes classes listed under “Advanced” or “Regular.” To earn a Recognized Student Award, a student must maintain an average of 80 or higher in each class. Recognition will be given at the end of the school year to those who have maintained Honor Roll status all year.

National Honor Society and National Junior Honor Society – The El Cenizo Chapter of the National Honor Society was founded for the Comstock High School in 1971. Membership is open to all qualified sophomore, junior, and senior students of Comstock High School. The El Cenizo Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society was founded for the Comstock Junior High School in 2004. Membership is open to all qualified sixth, seventh, eighth and freshmen students of Comstock High School. Students who are scholastically eligible will be notified and given a Student Activity Information Form to complete. In order to be considered for selection, this form must be completed by the student and returned to the advisor prior to the faculty council

meeting. A majority vote for acceptance by this council is required for initiation into the El Cenizo Chapter. The faculty council is instructed to consider the qualities of leadership, service and character of the nominees when voting. The following suggestions are provided to the faculty council for consideration:

Leadership – Demonstrates leadership in the classroom or organizational work; demonstrates leadership in promoting school activities; is thoroughly dependable in any responsibility he/she accepts; successfully holds school offices or positions of responsibility without the prodding of teachers; exemplifies the qualities and attitudes which are a silent influence on others for good.

Service – Willingness to render any service to the school and community when called upon; willingness to do committee or staff work; readiness to show courtesy by assisting visitors, teachers and students.

Character – Promptly meets pledges and responsibilities to school and teachers; demonstrates highest standards of honesty and reliability, constantly exemplifies desirable qualities of personality (cheerfulness, friendliness, neatness, poise, stability); cooperates by complying with school regulations; upholds principles of morality and ethics.

Nomination of a student for membership to the El Cenizo Chapter of the National Honor Society and the National Junior Honor Society does not mean automatic acceptance. Nominations are made twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. An induction ceremony for new members will be held during the spring Awards Night if needed.

Top Academic Athlete – Comstock P.T.O. Award

In order to be eligible for this award a high school student (boy or girl) must be a senior. Students must have a 4-year average of at least an 85. If a student participated in two sports, they are eligible if they did so for three years. If they participate in only one sport they must have participated for four years. The student must have attended Comstock High school for a minimum of three years.

Yearly Perfect Attendance – will be awarded at the end of school to students receiving perfect attendance award for being in attendance 180 days of the school year. Students must have been in attendance every class period of everyday, in order to receive a perfect attendance award and/or benefit. Attending a school-sponsored function constitutes being in class for perfect attendance considerations.

BACKPACKS

Students may use backpacks to bring books to and take books home from school. *All backpacks must be small enough to fit inside the lockers.* Upon arrival at school students *must* place their backpacks inside their lockers and keep them there until the end of the final period of the day. Any backpacks carried around the campus after the beginning of the first period will be confiscated and returned to the parent at his/her request.

BICYCLES

Students who ride bicycles to Comstock ISD should enter school property through the south gate (by the gym), in order to avoid traffic, and park them in the bicycle racks located on campus. Students are to walk their bicycles to and from the south gate. Students are not to ride their

bicycles on campus. Bicycles are to be removed from the racks only upon leaving school in the afternoon. The school is not responsible for any lost or damaged bicycles. All bicycles should be locked with padlocks when they are parked in the racks.

BULLYING

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students directs written or verbal expressions or physical conduct against another student and the behavior results in harm to the student or the student's property, places a student in fear of physical harm or of damage to the student's property, or is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit bullying and to respond to reports of bullying. [See **School Safety Transfers** on page 7 and policy FFI(LOCAL).]

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) PROGRAMS

The district offers career and technology programs in Office Education in the Tech-Prep Program. Admission to these programs is based on state requirements.

Comstock ISD will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs. [Also see **Nondiscrimination Statement** on page 44 for additional information regarding the district's efforts regarding participation in these programs.]

Please view the Acceptable Use Policy for the use of technology programs that appears in the appendix section of this handbook.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, which may be accessed at the principal's office. As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Possible physical warning signs of sexual abuse could be difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches. Behavioral indicators may include verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior. Emotional warning signs to be aware of include withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

A child who has experienced sexual abuse should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that disclosures of sexual abuse may be more indirect than disclosures of physical abuse, and it is important to be calm and comforting if your child, or

another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse, the campus counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reports may be made to:

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

CLASS RANK / TOP TEN PERCENT / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT

Salutatory honors shall be afforded the student who attains the second highest numeric average with a graduating class, provided the student has been enrolled at Comstock High School full-time and attendance records show enrollment for 2/3 of each semester for junior and senior years with the senior year being completed at Comstock High School and shall have completed the requirements to graduate under the Distinguished or Recommended High School Program.

Valedictory honors shall be afforded the student who attains the highest numeric average with a graduating class, provided the student has been enrolled at Comstock High School full-time and attendance records show enrollment for 2/3 of each semester for junior and senior years with the senior year being completed at Comstock High School and shall have completed the requirements to graduate under the Distinguished or Recommended High School Program.

Class Rank Class ranks shall be determined by the numeric average of grades during high school, as well as the type of program in which the student is graduating. Students graduating under the Distinguished program will be ranked first, then those on the Recommended program, and finally, those under the minimum program. Rankings will be determined at the end of the fifth six-weeks of the senior year.

For two school years following his or her graduation, a district student who graduates in the top ten percent of his or her class is eligible for automatic admission into four-year public universities and colleges in Texas if the student:

- Completes the Recommended or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program; or
- Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT.

The University of Texas at Austin may limit the number of students automatically admitted to 75 percent of the University's enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshmen. For students who are eligible to enroll in the University of Texas at Austin during the summer or fall 2011 term, the University will be admitting the top eight percent of the high school's graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through an independent review process.

Students and parents should contact the counselor or for further information about automatic admissions, the application process, and deadlines.

[For further information, see policies at EIC.]

CLASS SCHEDULES

7:30 A.M. Campus is open to students

7:35 Breakfast is served

7:50 First Bell Rings

7:55 Tardy Bell and Morning Announcements

10:35 – 11:05 K-2nd Lunch

11:10 - 11:40 6th - 7th Lunch

11:27 – 12:00 8th - 12th Lunch

12:20 – 12:50 3rd – 5th Lunch

3:15 School dismissed

COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES

Students in grades 9–12 have opportunities to earn college credit through the following methods:

- Enrollment in an AP or dual credit course through the Texas Virtual School Network;
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with Western Texas College in Snyder, Texas. These classes are dual-credit classes for which the student may simultaneously receive course credit towards the student's high school academic requirements and course credit as a student of the junior college.

These will be tuition courses and books will also need to be purchased by the student/parents.

NOTE: Students must purchase textbooks and other required materials of each course that they take. These **MUST** be purchased prior to taking the course.

Students must have an average of 80 or higher to continue college credit courses. These courses can only be taken through Western Texas College.

In order to enroll in one of these courses, the student must be a junior or a senior, must have passed the TAKS test in English/Language Arts and/or Mathematics as established by the Texas State Board of Education and must have passed the Accuplacer (college entrance exam) prior to enrolling in the college credit courses. The test is administered at SWTJC in Del Rio. For further information, call SWTJC at 830-703-1550 or contact the counselor at 432-292-4444

All of these methods have eligibility requirements and must be approved prior to enrollment in the course. Please see the counselor for more information.

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

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

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

COMPUTER RESOURCES

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

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

CONDUCT

Applicability of School Rules

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

Corporal Punishment

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

Disruptions

As identified by law, disruptions include the following:

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

Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess telecommunications devices, including mobile telephones; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing. The use of mobile telephones in locker rooms or restroom areas at any time while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event is strictly prohibited.

A student who uses a telecommunications device during the school day will have the device confiscated. On the first offense the student may pick up the phone at the superintendent’s office. Subsequent offences, the parent] may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal’s office for a fee of \$15.

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

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

Other Electronic Devices

Teachers may allow students to use MP3 players in their classroom at their discretion; however, these devices should not be used in the hallways during class changes. Video games, video

recorders and cameras are strictly prohibited unless they are being used under the guidance and direction of a teacher for approved school projects. Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the principal's office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

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

Inappropriate Use of Technology

Students are prohibited from sending or posting electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition applies to conduct off school property if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct and may, in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement.

Social Events

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

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

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS

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

The nurse aide or the principal's office can provide information from the Department of State Health Services regarding these diseases.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

The district permits high school students to take correspondence courses—by mail or via the Internet—for credit toward high school graduation.

[For further information, see policies at EEJC.]

COUNSELING

Academic Counseling

Students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn more about course offerings, graduation requirements, and early graduation procedures. Each spring, students in grade 8 will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next school year and other information that will help them make the most of academic and CTE opportunities.

To plan for the future, each student should work closely with the counselor in order to enroll in the high school courses that best prepare him or her for attendance at a college, university, or training school, or for pursuit of some other type of advanced education. The counselor can also provide information about entrance exams and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission to state colleges and universities, financial aid, housing, and scholarships.

Personal Counseling

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

Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment

The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent. Parental consent is not necessary when a psychological examination, test, or treatment is required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

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

CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Taken the Course

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

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

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

A student may not use this exam, however, to regain eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities.

[For further information, see the counselor and policy EEJA(LOCAL).]

CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course

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

Dates Scheduled:

August 30, 2010

October 25, 2010

December 6, 2010

March 7, 2011

June 6, 2011

August 12, 2011

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

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

DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION

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

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

Dating Violence

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

Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to, physical or sexual assaults, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the student or the student's family members or members of the student's household, destroying property belonging to the student, threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship, attempts to isolate the student from friends and family, stalking, or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

Discrimination

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

Harassment

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

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

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student is prohibited.

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

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

Retaliation

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

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

Reporting Procedures

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

Investigation of Report

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law.

Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated. The district will notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district.

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

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

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

DISCRIMINATION

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 25.]

DISTANCE LEARNING

Distance learning includes courses that encompass the state-required essential knowledge and skills but are taught through multiple technologies and alternative methodologies such as satellite, Internet, video-conferencing, and instructional television.

The Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) has been established as one method of distance learning. A student has the option, with certain limitations, to enroll in a course offered through the TxVSN to earn course credit for graduation. Depending on the course in which a student enrolls, the course may be subject to the "no pass, no play" rules. [Also see **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations** on page 30.]

NovaNet will be used for credit recovery and remediation only.

DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS

School Materials

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

Yearbooks are available to students.

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

[See **Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes** on page 11.]

Nonschool Materials...from students

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

The principal has designated the bulletin board in the cafeteria as the location for approved nonschool materials to be placed for voluntary viewing by students. [See policies at FNAA.]

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

Nonschool Materials...from others

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by policy GKDA. To be considered for distribution, any nonschool material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the principal for prior review. The principal will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies at DGBA, FNG, or GF.]

Prior review will not be required for:

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

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

DRESS AND GROOMING

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

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

Comstock ISD's standards of dress and grooming are designed to create a positive learning climate for teachers and students. A student's personal appearance is important and cooperation from parents on matters of dress contributes to overall campus discipline.

Comstock ISD recognizes that parents should accept responsibility for developing appropriate standards of dress and grooming for their children. School administrators and teachers, however, share this responsibility, as a student's behavior and therefore, his/her achievement in

school, may be influenced by the dress and grooming habits of himself/herself and his/her fellow students.

It is acknowledged that schools have responsibility for developing dress and grooming habits that will contribute to a student's success when he/she leaves school. With due consideration to the above, the students and parents may determine the personal dress and grooming standards, provided that the students dress and grooming:

- Shall not lead school officials to reasonably believe that such dress or grooming will disrupt, interfere with, disturb or detract from school activities.
- Shall not create a health or other hazard to the student's safety or to the safety of others.

Student dress and grooming will be considered acceptable, if in the opinion of the school administration, it does not violate any of the following principles:

- Hair should be clean, neatly groomed and out of the eyes. Extreme styles, as determined by the school administration that might tend to disrupt normal school procedures will not be allowed. Boys' hair shall be a length that permits at least the bottom of the ear to be visible and does not extend below the bottom of a standard collar. The length will be determined with the hair style in the position it is normally worn by the student. Ponytails, rat-tails, mohawks, or corn-rows are not permitted. No student may have geometric or unusual patterns shaved or cut in hair, including eyebrows, and hair color must be any natural hair color.
- The student's body and clothing should be clean.
- Students are required to wear appropriate footwear at all times. Steel-toed shoes, heeled shoes or shoes with wheels, and athletic shoes with cleats are not allowed. Flip-flops or sandals shall be allowed and must remain on the student's feet at all times. All sandals/flip flops have to be made of leather. A student may have this privilege revoked if they remove the shoes during a class.
- All students are required to wear appropriate shirt/blouse and pants/shorts or skirt. Students are not allowed to wear pajama pants to school, unless they are worn as part of a school "theme" day.
- Clothing exhibiting risqué, obscene, vulgar and/or suggestive slogans, language or designs will not be permitted.
- Print and/or graphics pertaining to violence, drugs, alcohol or tobacco products will not be permitted on apparel, jewelry, accessories, or paraphernalia.
- Clothing with promotes cults, gangs, death, or violence will not be permitted. "Colors" or other attire which serves as identification of groups or organizations not affiliated with or approved by the school are not permitted. Prohibited items may include, but are not limited to, bandanas, headbands, neckbands, arm or leg bands and clothing with particular logos. Specific prohibited items may be announced by the superintendent or principal as the need arises.
- Extreme styles, as determined by school administration, will be prohibited.
- Garments are to be worn only as originally designed by the manufacturer. Examples include, but are not limited to, purposely slashed, torn or frayed attire, pants not worn in a traditional manner, and improperly fastened, zipped or unbuttoned attire.

- All skirts, dresses, and shorts will be at the top of the kneecap when clothing is fastened at a traditional point, with or without leggings.
- Clothing that exposes the midriff, in front or the back, cannot be worn. The midriff must not be exposed when a student goes through the normal activities of a school day (sitting, bending, stretching, reaching, etc.).
- No apparel will be worn to school that advocates any substance prohibited by the School Board Policy or which exhibits inappropriate or offensive messages.
- Muscle shirts, tank tops, loose fitting and/or low cut shirts, see-through blouses and dresses must have a t-shirt worn underneath. Straps of garments must be at least three fingers in width when measured.
- Pierced earrings for girls are permissible. Male students are prohibited from wearing earrings of any type including studs or cuffs. All other pierced jewelry such as for tongues, noses, navel, etc. for males or females, is prohibited.
- Hats, caps and any other head wear, to include scarves, bandanas, or toboggans, whether gang-related or not, are not to be worn nor openly carried in school buildings during school hours.
- Beards, mustaches/facial hair is not allowed. Sideburns cannot exceed beyond the ear lobe.
- Tattoos of any kind, including temporary tattoos, are discouraged and must be covered at all times.
- Appropriate undergarments must be worn at all times and must not be visible.
- Colored/tinted glasses, including sunglasses, are not to be worn in school buildings unless prescribed by a doctor for inside wear.
- Students may not wear “sagging” pants. Pants must be worn around the waistline to be acceptable. Shirt tails that are not cut square or deemed of excessive length by the administration will be tucked in at all times.
- Any appearance or dress deemed distracting to the education process as determined by the principal or superintendent shall not be permitted.

Students in violation of the Dress and Grooming Policy will be asked to change into appropriate attire. If appropriate attire is not available or the student refuses, the student will be sent home and receive an unexcused absence for the day. Parents of students in violation of the Dress and Grooming Policy will be required to pick up their child. If a parent cannot pick up their child, the student will be placed in an isolated place until their parent arrives. If the parent fails to pick up their child, the child may not return to classes the next day unless the parent brings the child to school the next day for a meeting with the Principal.

All staff members are responsible for identifying students who are not dressed appropriately.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

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

Eligibility for initial and continuing participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association overseeing interdistrict competition. If a student is involved in an academic, athletic, or music activity governed by UIL, the student and parent are expected to know and follow all rules of the UIL organization. [See <http://www.uil.utexas.edu> for additional information.]

The following requirements apply to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than an Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate course; or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or language other than English—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to 22 absences for extracurricular activities. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.
- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.

Standards of Behavior

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

[For further information, see policies at FM and FO. For student-organized, student-led groups, see **Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups** on page 50.]

Drug Testing

A baseline drug test will be performed on students who want to participate in extra curricular/co-curricular activities during the school year. Random drug testing will occur throughout the school year. As many as 20% could be randomly tested at any given time.

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

Offices and Elections

Certain clubs, organizations, and performing groups will hold elections for student officers.

FEES

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

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school. [See **Buses and Other School Vehicles** on page 54.]
- A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit because of absences and whose parent chooses the program in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the principal. [For further information, see policies at FP.]

FUND-RAISING

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the principal at least 5 days before the event. [For further information, see policies at FJ and GE.]

GANG-FREE ZONES

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

GRADE CLASSIFICATION

After the ninth grade, students are classified according to the number of credits earned toward graduation.

Credits Earned	Classification
5	Grade 10 (Sophomore)
10	Grade 11 (Junior)
15	Grade 12 (Senior)

GRADING GUIDELINES

All grades given in a course must accurately reflect the student's mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for the assignment. Teachers must not award extra credit points for activities that are not related to the specific content and skills associated with an assignment because grades are an indicator to a student, parent and teacher that a student needs extra instruction to master the skill or concept.

In order for a student to receive credit for a course, he/she must meet the established criteria outlined in this policy. The criteria for earning course credit shall include the following factors:

- A minimum of 70% mastery of the essential element curriculum objectives as measured by teacher-made tests, observations, criterion-referenced tests and other appropriate performance measures.
- Attendance rate of 90 percent of the days the class is offered
- Successful completion of daily work, homework and other special class assignments

All teachers will either choose either Option I or Option II as their grading policy:

Option I

Six-Week Average will consist of the following:

- Daily Grade Average – 70%
- Major Grade Average – 15%
- Six-Weeks Test – 15%
- Each six-weeks test shall consist entirely of state and local knowledge and skills objectives
- There will be no six-weeks test at the end of the third or sixth six weeks.

Option II

Six-Week Average will consist of the following:

- Daily Grade Average – 70%
- Major Grade Average – 30%
- There will be no six-weeks test

Apply to Both Option I and Option II

- There will be no exemptions from the fall semester exam.

- Possible exemptions (grades 9-12) for the spring semester exam will be based on school exemption policy.

Exemption Policy

Exemption from second semester final exams will be allowed if students meet the following criteria;

- Students eligible for exemptions are those in grades 9 – 12.
 - The student must have maintained in each class a grade average of 80 with no absences, a grade average of 85 with one absence, a grade average of 90 with two absences, or a grade average of 95 with three absences. Students with more than three absences must take final exams.
 - Students in grades 9 and 10 must take at least three final exams.
 - Students assigned to ISS or AEP at any time during the school year will not be eligible for exemptions.
 - Three tardies equals one day's absence in all classes.
- Semester averages are formulated by the three six-weeks in a semester, counting 80%, with the semester exam counting 20%.
 - Grades for GradeSpeed should be entered by the end of the day on Monday for the prior week.
 - Two daily grades are to be entered per week.
 - One test grade should be entered every two weeks.
 - Major grades/tests are at the teacher's discretion.

GRADUATION

Requirements for a Diploma

To receive a high school diploma from the district, a student must successfully:

- Complete the required number of credits;
- Complete any locally required courses in addition to the courses mandated by the state; and
- Pass a statewide exit-level exam.

The exit-level test, required for students in grade 11, covers English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies and requires knowledge of Algebra I and Geometry; Biology, Integrated Chemistry and Physics; English III; and early American and United States History, World History, and World Geography. A student who does not pass the exit-level assessment will have additional opportunities to take the test.

Graduation Programs

The district offers the graduation programs listed below. All students entering grade 9 are required to enroll in the Recommended Program or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement

Program. Permission to enroll in the Minimum Program will be granted only if a written agreement is reached among the student, the student’s parent or person standing in parental relation, and the counselor or appropriate administrator. In order for a student to take courses under the Minimum Program, the student must be at least 16 years of age; have completed at least two credits each in English language arts, math, science, and social studies courses that are required for graduation; or have failed grade 9 one or more times. [See policy EIF(LEGAL).]

All students must meet the following credit and course requirements for graduation under the programs listed:

Courses	Number of credits Minimum Program	Number of credits Recommended Program	Number of credits Advanced/ Distinguished Achievement Program
English/Language Arts	4	4	4
Mathematics	3	4	4
Science	2	4	4
Social Studies	2.5	3.5	3.5
Economics	0.5	0.5	0.5
Physical Education	1	1	1
Speech	0.5	0.5	0.5
Language other than English		2	3
Fine Arts	1 (effective for grade 9 in 2010–2011 school year and thereafter)	1	1
Locally required courses	0.5 credit in health 2 credits in technology	0.5 credit in health 2 credits in technology	0.5 credit in health 2 credits in technology
Electives	7.5 credits (prior to 2010–2011) 6.5 credits (2010–2011 and thereafter)	5.5 credits	4.5 credits
Miscellaneous			Completion of 4 Advanced Measures

Courses	Number of credits Minimum Program	Number of credits Recommended Program	Number of credits Advanced/ Distinguished Achievement Program
TOTAL	22 credits	26 credits	26 credits

Information regarding specific courses required or offered in each curriculum area, along with a description of advanced measures available to students in the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program, will be distributed to students each spring in order to enroll in courses for the upcoming school year.

Please be aware that not all courses are offered at every secondary campus in the district. A student who wants to take a course not offered at his or her regular campus should contact the counselor about a transfer or other alternatives. If the parents of at least 22 students request a transfer for those students to take a course in the required curriculum other than fine arts or CTE, the district will offer the course for the following year either by teleconference or at the school from which the transfers were requested.

Certificates of Coursework Completion

A certificate of coursework completion will not be issued to a senior student who successfully completes state and local credit requirements for graduation but fails to perform satisfactorily on the exit-level tests.

Students with Disabilities

Upon the recommendation of the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee, a student with disabilities may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her IEP.

A student who receives special education services and has completed four years of high school, but has not met the requirements of his or her IEP, may participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a certificate of attendance. Even if the student participates in graduation ceremonies to receive the certificate of attendance, he or she may remain enrolled to complete the IEP and earn his or her high school diploma; however, the student will only be allowed to participate in one graduation ceremony.

[See FMH(LEGAL).]

Please also be aware that if an ARD committee places a student with a disability on a modified curriculum in a subject area, the student will be automatically placed in the Minimum Program, in accordance with state rules.

Graduation Activities

Only students who have met all requirements for graduation will be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies. Students who are assigned to ISS or DAEP at the time of graduation will not be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies.

Graduation Speakers

Graduating students will be given an opportunity to provide opening and closing remarks during the graduation ceremony. Only those students who are student council members and officers, officers of the graduating class, or the graduates with the three highest academic rankings will be eligible to give these remarks; however, if the student was assigned to disciplinary placement at any time during the spring semester, he or she will not be eligible to speak at graduation.

Students eligible to give the opening and closing remarks will be notified by the principal and given an opportunity to volunteer. In the event there are more eligible students volunteering than there are speaking roles at the graduation ceremony, the names of all eligible students who volunteered will be randomly drawn. The student whose name is drawn first will give the opening remarks and the student whose name is drawn second will give the closing remarks.

In addition to the opening and closing remarks, the valedictorian and salutatorian will also have speaking roles at the graduation ceremony. Students who otherwise have a speaking part at graduation will not be allowed to make the opening and closing remarks.

[For student speakers at other school events, see **Student Speakers** on page 52.]

[See FNA(LOCAL).]

Graduation Expenses

Because students and parents will incur expenses in order to participate in the traditions of graduation—such as the purchase of invitations, senior ring, cap and gown, and senior picture—both student and parent should monitor progress toward completion of all requirements for graduation. The expenses often are incurred in the junior year or first semester of the senior year. [See **Fees** on page 31.]

State Scholarships and Grants

- Under the Texas Early High School Graduation Scholarship Program, students who complete the Recommended or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program may earn financial credits in varying amounts to apply toward college tuition. The amounts depend on the number of consecutive months in which the student completed graduation requirements and the number of early college credits earned and may be used at public or private higher education institutions within the state. The counselor can provide additional information about meeting the program's eligibility requirements.
- Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the Recommended Program or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program may be eligible under the T.E.X.A.S. Grant Program for tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions. [For further information, see the principal or counselor and policy EJ(LEGAL).]

GUM/FOOD/DRINKS

Students are not allowed to chew gum inside any school building or the gym. Additionally, students are not allowed to bring any food or drink inside the building without the permission of the principal or superintendent. Teachers are not allowed to give students permission to bring food or drinks inside their classroom without permission for the principal or superintendent. No energy drinks or open containers will be allowed during the hours of 7:30 am to 1:50 pm.

HALL REGULATIONS

The cafeteria is open to students at 7:30 A.M. The halls are to be clear after 8:00 A.M. unless a student has specific school business and permission from school personnel. Except between classes, students are required to have a hall pass in the hall. Only on extreme situations will students be allowed to leave the classroom.

Students who need to leave the classroom must request and receive, at the teacher's discretion, a hall pass before leaving the class. **Student in the hall without a pass during class time will be considered truant.**

HARASSMENT

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 25.]

HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS

Bacterial Meningitis

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

- What is meningitis?

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

- What are the symptoms?

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

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

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

- How serious is bacterial meningitis?

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

- How is bacterial meningitis spread?

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

people exchange saliva (such as by kissing, sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes).

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

- How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

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

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

- What should you do if you think you or a friend might have bacterial meningitis?

You should seek prompt medical attention.

- Where can you get more information?

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

Physical Activity for Students in Elementary and Middle School

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

Students in middle or junior high school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four.

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

School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)

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

[See **Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 6 for additional information.]

Other Health-Related Matters

Physical Fitness Assessment

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to the athletic director to obtain the results of his or her child’s physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

Tobacco Prohibited

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

Asbestos Management Plan

The district’s Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, is available in the superintendent’s office. If you have any questions, please contact the superintendent.

Pest Management Plan

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child’s school assignment area may contact the superintendent.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the principal.

HOMEWORK

The teacher shall be responsible for assigning effective, well-planned homework assignments that aid the student in the mastery of the course’s essential elements. Students shall be provided ample notice of impending homework assignments. Every effort shall be made to ensure that the students understand the work assignments to be done.

The student shall be responsible for completing assignments on time and scheduling after-school activities so that they do not interfere with the completion of assignments. The student will assume responsibility for making up work when absent from class.

Parents of Kindergarten through grade 12 students are responsible for ensuring that their child does the homework assigned each day. Regular monitoring of homework provides a good overview of how and what the student is doing in various subjects. Homework provides a regular channel of communication between the parent and the teacher. Homework policies within a grade level will be consistent and will be distributed at the beginning of the school year by each teacher

IMMUNIZATION

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official

forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco/affidavit.shtm>. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are: diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella (German measles), mumps, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis (polio), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, varicella (chicken pox), and meningococcal. The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the Department of State Health Services. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

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

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Questioning of Students

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

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

Students Taken Into Custody

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

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.

- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.

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

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

Notification of Law Violations

The district is required by state law to notify:

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

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

LOCKERS

Students are assigned a locker at the beginning of the school year. A locker is retained the entire year. The school is not responsible for items from either hall or P.E. Lockers. ***Lockers are the property of Comstock ISD and are subject to inspection at any time by the school administration.*** Students may bring a combination lock to use on his/her locker. However, the combination MUST be turned into the office. Routine checks will be made throughout the year and locks will be removed if combinations are not on file in the office. NO food or drinks are to be stored in the lockers at any time.

LOST AND FOUND

Students who lose any items should check the lost and found in the main office or the lost and found cabinet in the cafetorium. If a student finds something, it should be turned in to the office or placed in the cafetorium.

LUNCH

Students are to be in the cafeteria during the lunch period. When allowed to leave the cafeteria by personnel monitoring the cafeteria, students in grades 6-12 must stay on the lawn or basketball courts adjacent to the middle school/elementary building. Students in grades K-5

must stay in the elementary playground. During inclement weather, students will remain in the cafetorium. NO students are allowed in the gym during lunch without a faculty member or aide being present. Classrooms and locker rooms are off-limits to ALL students during lunch.

MAKEUP WORK

Makeup Work Because of Absence

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

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

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

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

DAEP Makeup Work

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

In-school Suspension (ISS) Makeup Work

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

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

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

- Only authorized employees, in accordance with policies at FFAC, may administer:
 - Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.

- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.
- Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.
- In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only:
 - In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district's medical advisor; and
 - When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district's form.

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may be permitted to possess and use prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her physician or health-care provider and to the school nurse's aide 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 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. [See policy FFAF(LEGAL).]

Psychotropic Drugs

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

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

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Comstock ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Title II

of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

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

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of gender: Athletic Director.
- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Director of Special Education
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent.
- NONTRADITIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

[See **Requirements for a Diploma** on page 34.]

Please refrain from telephoning students during the school day except for emergencies. All student cell phones are to be turned off during the school day. If you must get a message to your child, you may call the school at 432-292-4444 and a secretary will see that your child gets the message.

Any student who needs to use the phone during the day, should go to the principal's office to do so. The school telephone is used for the purpose of conducting school business and should be used sparingly. Except in emergencies, students will not be called out of class to answer telephone calls. Personal long distance calls must be collect, charged to a credit card or billed to a third party.

Students are not allowed to use the phones in the classrooms or coaches' office during the school day.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS

Per U.I.L rules, physical examinations are required of all student-athletes when they enter the 7th grade, 9th grade, and 11th grade. Health screenings will be done throughout the year.

PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. [See **Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags** on page 7.]

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

PRAYER

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not

encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

In grades 1-8, promotion is based on In grades 1–8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in all the following areas: language arts, reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Grade-level advancement for students in grades 9–12 shall be earned by course credits.

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

- In order to be promoted to grade 6, students enrolled in grade 5 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 5 assessment in English or Spanish.
- In order to be promoted to grade 9, students enrolled in grade 8 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 8 assessment in English.

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

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

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

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student in a middle school or beyond who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment or is determined by the

district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9. The PGP will be designed and implemented by a guidance counselor, teacher, or other staff member designated by the principal. The plan will, among other items, identify the student's educational goals, address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and outline an intensive instruction program for the student. [For additional information, see the principal and policy EIF(LEGAL).]

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

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

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

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

REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

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

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period parents will be given a written progress report if their child's performance in any course is near or below 70, or is below the expected level of performance. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. [See **Working Together** on page 3 for how to schedule a conference.]

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal pursuant to the board-adopted policy and are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See policy EIA(LOCAL) and **Grading Guidelines** on page 33.]

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

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

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school within 5 days.

RETALIATION

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 25.]

SAFETY

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

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

Accident Insurance

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

Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies

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

Fire Drill Bells

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

Tornado Drill Bells

1 continuous bell	move quietly but quickly to the designated locations
2 bells	return to the classroom

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

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

Emergency School-Closing Information

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that school is dismissed early because of severe weather or another emergency.

SAT, ACT, AND OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS

Many colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. Students are encouraged to talk with the counselor early during their junior year to determine the appropriate exam to take; these exams are usually taken at the end of the junior year. (Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test, such as the Texas Higher Education Assessment [THEA]).

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Use by Students Before and After School

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place.

The following areas are open to students before school, beginning at 7:30 a.m.

- Cafeteria
- Elementary playground for students in Grade K-5
- Area of the breezeway for students in grades 6-8
- High school hallway for students in grades 9-12

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

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

Conduct Before and After School

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

Use of Hallways During Class Time

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

Cafeteria Services

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

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

Library

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

Please note the following library information:

- If it is necessary to remove any material from the library, a record must be turned in to the librarian.
- Books must not be re-shelved except by the librarian or helper.
- Payment is required for lost or damaged books.
- Books may be checked out for a two-week period by students.
- A fine of five cents per day on all overdue books will be assessed.
- If, at the end of the school year, a student has not returned or paid for a book, they will not have access to check out books until the fine or cost of the book is paid.

Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups

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

A list of these groups is available in the principal's office.

SEARCHES

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

Students' Desks and Lockers

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

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

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

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

Vehicles on Campus

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

A student will be held responsible for prohibited objects or substances, such as alcohol, drugs or weapons that are found in his or her own vehicle and will be subject to disciplinary action by the District, as well as referred for criminal prosecution, if necessary.

The school reserved the right to search any vehicle if reasonable cause exists to do so. Searches of vehicles may be conducted any time there is reasonable cause to do so, with or without the presence of the student. Exterior searches by trained dogs may be conducted at any time.

Trained Dogs

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

Metal Detectors

[For further information, see policy FNF(LOCAL).]

Drug-Testing

[For further information, see policy FNF(LOCAL). Also see **Steroids** on page 51.]

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

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

STEROIDS

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

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

Students participating in UIL athletic competition may be subject to random steroid testing. More information on the UIL testing program may be found on the UIL Web site at http://www.uil.utexas.edu/athletics/health/steroid_information.html.

STUDENT PARKING REGULATIONS

Students must have a valid Driver's License to park on school property and must register the license in the office.

Students who drive to school must observe the following:

Students may park in the following locations only:

- Along the entire north side of the main parking lot.
- Overflow will park across the street from the gym, but not blocking residential entrances.

The parking area in the main parking lot is reserved for faculty.

Upon arriving at school, students will exit from their vehicles immediately. Loitering in vehicles and in the vicinity of the parking lot will not be permitted.

Students are not allowed to go to their vehicles, except to leave for lunch, during the school day without permission from the office.

Report all accidents occurring in the parking lot to the office.

See also the Student Code of Conduct.

STUDENT SPEAKERS

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce the following school events: pep rallies. Students are eligible to introduce these events if they are in the highest two grade levels of the school; volunteer to speak; and are not in a disciplinary placement or under suspension from any extracurricular activity at the time of the speaking event.

A student who is eligible and wishes to introduce one of the school events listed above should submit his or her name to the principal during the first week of the fall semester and/or spring semester. The names of all students who volunteered will be randomly drawn and matched to the event for which the student will give the introduction. If the selected student speaker declines or becomes ineligible, then no student introduction will be made at that event. The selection of students to introduce school events will occur at the beginning of each semester.

As determined by the principal, students who have been selected for special honors, such as captain of an athletic team, student council officers, leaders of school-sponsored organizations, homecoming king or queen, or prom king or queen may also address school audiences at designated events.

[See FNA(LOCAL).]

SUMMER SCHOOL

Students may attend summer school to make up failing grades, but must have the approval from the Comstock ISD administration. Courses taken in summer school will not be included for calculation of the GPA.

TAKS (TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS)

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state-mandated assessments (such as TAKS: the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–11
- Reading, annually in grades 3–9
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7
- English language arts in grades 10 and 11
- Social studies in grades 8, 10, and 11
- Science in grades 5, 8, 10, and 11
- Any other subject and grade required by federal law

[See policy EKB(LEGAL).]

TAKS-Accommodated, TAKS-Modified, and TAKS-Alternate for students receiving special education services are administered to eligible students.

Linguistically accommodated testing (LAT), as well as the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) for students identified as limited English proficient, are also administered to eligible students.

TARDINESS

A student who is tardy to class by more than five minutes will be assigned to detention hall. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe disciplinary action, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, AND TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT

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

TOYS

Students are not allowed to bring toys from home to school without permission from the principal. This includes any non-essential items, which could be disruptive.

TRANSFERS

Student transfers from another school district are accepted in the district; however, space is limited. Students who transfer into the district must agree to be active students who contribute a positive influence in Comstock ISD. Transfer status is reviewed at the end of the school year. A student has not fulfilled all areas of the Transfer Agreement may be subject to revocation of transfer.

[See **School Safety Transfers**, on page 7, and **Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education**, on page 8, for other transfer options.]

TRANSPORTATION

School-Sponsored Trips

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

Buses and Other School Vehicles

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted at the school.

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

See the Student Code of Conduct for provisions regarding transportation to the DAEP.

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

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the bus, van, or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus or van.

- Not possess or use any form of tobacco on school buses.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Keep the bus clean and remove all belongings and refuse when exiting the bus at the end of your trip.
- No food on the bus unless driver gives specific permission. Water will be allowed as long as it is in a resealable plastic container.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus or van and before crossing in front of the vehicle.

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

Conduct Resulting in the Loss of Bus Privileges

- Fighting, physical abuse or threat of physical abuse.
- Throwing objects within the bus out of the window
- Possession of any controlled substance
- Possession of or use of any object generally used to inflict bodily injury to person including but not limited to guns, knives, chains, explosives, lasers or fireworks. Anything that resembles a weapon shall be considered as a weapon.
- Extending body parts from the bus
- Boarding or leaving the bus through the emergency door unless there is an emergency.
- Vandalism of any part of the inside or outside of the bus. In addition to being charged for the damages, further bus privileges may be denied.
- Flagrant disrespect or disobedience to the driver.
- Possessing food or drink on the bus
- Repeated infractions of bus safety rules.

TRUANCY

A student who is absent from school or class for any portion of a period or day without proper permission will be considered truant. A student is truant if he/she:

- Is out of class without an appropriate pass
- Is in an unassigned area, including the parking lot
- Is absent without parent approval and verification
- Leaves class or campus without proper permission
- Has excessive unexcused absences

- Does not attend assigned tutorials

Truant students are subject to disciplinary and legal action. The parent of chronically truant students can be subject to legal action. Truancy court may count all tardies on a student's record as "missing all or part of a day".

TUTORIALS

Students that do not maintain an 80 or above in any class at the three-week progress report or six-weeks grading period or fail any of the previous years' TAKS tests will be assigned a mandatory tutorial during the school day.

VANDALISM

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

VIDEO CAMERAS

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

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

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

General Visitors

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

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and only so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

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

WEBSITE PHOTO PERMISSION

Students of CISD will be involved in projects during the school year that may include photographs and digital video. These photographs may be presented in a public performance as a presentation of a project or posting to a website. We would like to include pictures on our school website. In the event that your child is among those chosen, we will follow the following guidelines:

- Students will not have full names listed (John Doe would be posted as John D.).
- Group shots would be listed in alphabetical order instead of picture placement.

Permission for student photographs to be posted to the school's website is granted through the Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form, which must be signed by both the parent/guardian and the student and returned to the office. If you do not wish for your student's picture to be posted to the school's website, you must submit a signed letter which states that your child's picture is not allowed to be posted to the school's website and return it with the Acknowledgment Form.

WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL

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

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

A student who is 18 or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor may withdraw without parental signature.

Glossary

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

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

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

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

DAEP stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the Student Code of Conduct.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TAKS is the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, the state's standardized achievement test currently given to students in certain subjects in grades 3–11.

TAKS-Accommodated is a state mandated assessment based on the same grade-level academic achievement standards of TAKS available to certain students who receive special education services and who need specific accommodations, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

TAKS-Alternate is an alternate state mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

TAKS-Modified is an alternate state mandated assessment based on modified achievement standards and is administered to eligible students receiving special education services, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

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

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

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