



**2017-2018**

**Elementary Information  
Handbook**



## ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES, TARDIES, & MORE!

Absenteeism unavoidably affects the quality of a student's work, interferes with normal instructional procedures in the classroom, and places additional demands on the teacher to provide remedial assistance. It also negatively impacts the child who is absent as well as other students in the classroom.

### **Texas Compulsory Attendance Law**

Parents are required by Texas Compulsory Attendance Law to ensure their child(ren) are in school the full day of instruction (7:40 a.m. – 3:05 p.m.) every day of the school year.

***It is the parent's duty to monitor and require their child to attend school (TEC 25.095). A student must be in attendance at least 90% of the days school is in session in order to be promoted to the next grade. The law further states that a student absent ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same year or on three or more days or parts of days within a four week period may be considered excessive. "Parts of days" is defined as a continued pattern of arriving late and leaving early. An attendance committee may approve promotion for a student in violation of the required days of attendance based on guidelines for extenuating circumstances as outlined in CISD Policy FEC. (TEC Chapter 25) This means there is no difference between excused and unexcused absences for the purpose of grade promotion.***

**What Is Truancy?** *Truancy is when a student is absent from school on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year.*

### **Three (3) Unexcused Absences within a four week period**

- The campus will send a warning notice to the parent (1) notifying the parent of the absence and inform the parent it is the parent's duty to monitor the student's school attendance and require the student to attend school (2) that the student is subject to truancy prevention measures and (3) request a conference between a school official and the parent to address absences. Ed Code 25.095(b).
- Initiate a CISD Truancy Intervention Plan (TIP). The Administrator may meet with the student and parent(s)/guardian or telephone conference to discuss attendance, identify and address conduct, and to outline specific behavior required for the student to correct the attendance issues.

**Ten+ (10+) Unexcused Absences within a six (6) month period** will result in the District Truancy Officer (DTO) [dlove@coppellisd.com](mailto:dlove@coppellisd.com) reviewing student's attendance and initiate the process of a Truancy Intervention II meeting with Administrator, Juvenile Case Manager from Coppell Municipal Court, student and parent(s)/guardian at the campus to address attendance.

**NOTE:** If it is found that a student failed to attend school without an excuse, the District may file a complaint against the student or the student's parents or both in a county justice, or municipal court for the offense under Education Code 25.093 or 25.094, as appropriate.

**When Is A Parent/Guardian Required to Provide a Note?** In order to prevent any misunderstandings pertaining to attendance, parents should call their child's school when the child must be absent, and provide written documentation pertaining to the absence. **Daily absences will be unexcused unless as parent's or doctor's note is submitted to the school office.**

The note to the school explaining the reason for the absence upon the child's return to school must include:

- The date the note is written
- The name of the child
- The date of the absence or tardy

- The specific reason for the absence or tardy
- The parent's signature

**NOTE: Emails are NOT an acceptable form of documentation.**

### **Excused Absences**

An absence may be excused when there is acceptable cause such as personal illness, death in the family, family emergency or religious holy days. **For all excused absences, a note within 3 days following the absence from school should be supplied to the school or it will result in an unexcused absence.**

### **Personal Illness**

When a student's absence for personal illness exceeds five consecutive days, a statement from a physician or health clinic verifying the illness or other condition should be provided.

### **Planned Absences**

Parents are asked to inform campus administration, in writing, of any advance plans to have a child absent from school. The parent should include specific dates and the reason for the absence. Campus administration will communicate with the teacher regarding absence and the provision for making-up any assignment(s).

**NOTE:** If the campus administrator is unable to locate a child by the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive day of their absence, that child will be withdrawn from the campus. Parents should also be aware that in schools where a grade level is "full," their child's seat may be taken by a new student enrolling in the district prior to their return from an extended, planned absence. Further, the child will have to attend a different CISD school once they return to the district and re-enroll. After a learner has missed 10 cumulative days during the year, a doctor's note is required for any further absences.

### **Leaving School**

If a student needs to leave during school hours, parents should send a note or call in advance to notify campus administration. **Parents must come into the building to retrieve their child and sign the appropriate record.** It is imperative that once a student is at school, s/he not leave the school grounds without permission from the office personnel.

### **Make-Up Assignments**

Make-up assignments or tests shall be made available to students after any absence. The student shall be responsible for obtaining and completing the make-up assignments in a satisfactory manner within the allotted amount of time. Requests for make-up work for unplanned absences should be made as early as possible in the school day and assignments will be provided as soon as is reasonable.

### **Regarding Official School Start Time**

While students may be dismissed to class before the official starting time of the school day and the beginning of activities in the classroom, students will NOT be considered tardy until after the official school start time of 7:40 a.m.

**NOTE: Parents will need to come into the school to sign-in their child if the child will not be in their classroom by 7:40 a.m.**

### **Regarding Official School Dismissal Time**

Students must be picked-up promptly at the end of the school day. Campus personnel remain on duty following official dismissal for fifteen minutes. After this time, parents must come to the main office to retrieve students. Repeated violation of pick-up procedures may necessitate an official reporting of the parent's failure to provide appropriate supervision.

### **Tardy Policy**

A child is tardy if s/he arrives in the classroom after 7:40 a.m. (12:05 p.m. for afternoon Pre-K).

Excessive tardies to school are considered a violation of the CISD Student Code of Conduct. Excessive tardiness means more than 3 tardies during the grading period. Possible consequences could include such things as: loss of a recess, exclusion from student/parent/administrator conference, withdrawal of other privileges, etc.

***If parents/guardians have any questions regarding their child's tardy or absentee circumstances, they may contact their child's teacher or the school office. Coppell ISD appreciates parents who make every effort to ensure their child gets the most from his/her education by being in school all day every day.***

### **CRISIS PROCEDURES**

Schools are some of the safest places that students may be during most crisis situations. It is impossible to foresee all possible emergencies, but the District has researched the most effective ways to use our resources and respond immediately to those emergencies that cannot be avoided. District and Campus Emergency Procedures are in place on every campus. Please contact your individual campus if you wish to review those procedures.

### **DRESS AND GROOMING**

The District's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, instill discipline, prevent disruption, avoid safety hazards, and teach respect for authority. Student grooming and appearance must be acceptable and appropriate for the school setting and is an important part of the high expectations we have for our students. Any form of dress or hairstyle which draws undue attention to the student or significantly interferes with the purpose or conduct of the school will not be permitted. Campus administration is responsible for making this determination.

The following guidelines are provided to help parents in selecting appropriate clothing for their children. Good grooming is a cooperative effort, and parental support will assist the District in helping ensure every child succeeds in school.

- Shorts should be the walking-type, with fingertips meeting the bottom of the hem.
- Sweatsuits are allowed only if they are neat and in good condition.
- Pants must be cinched at the waist and hemmed.
- Non-permitted clothing includes but is not limited to: cutoffs, short shorts, bicycle pants, tube tops, halter tops, or half-shirts. Also prohibited are any pieces of clothing with symbols, signs, items or emblems depicting: anything considered satanic or demonic, anything regarding death, anything including gang-related activities or colors, anything lewd, offensive, vulgar or obscene, and anything advertising or depicting tobacco, alcohol, drugs or other prohibited substances. Students are not permitted to wear hats inside the building other than on special days designated as appropriate by school administration (i.e. "crazy hat" day.)

### **NUTRITION POLICY**

Coppell ISD participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs and must follow the strict nutritional regulations set by the USDA for all foods sold in the cafeteria. The entire policy may be accessed through the internet on the TDA website <http://squaremeals.org/Programs/NationalSchoolLunchProgram.aspx>

Any a la carte food or beverage sold to elementary students during the school day must adhere to the Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards. This policy limits sodium, sugar, fat and calories in food items sold to students. This includes in-school fundraisers and vending machines accessible to students.

Foods may be run through the “Smart Snacks Product Calculator” online to determine their eligibility to be sold. <https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator/>

### **What items may be sold as fundraisers during the school day?**

- Any food or beverage that meets Smart Snacks guidelines.
- Any food item that is not intended to be consumed at school such as ready-to-eat cookie dough or ready-to-heat-pizza.

**NOTE:** Fundraisers that include ready-to-eat food items that do not meet the Smart Snacks guidelines must be sold outside of the school day.

### **Birthday Celebrations and Other Snacks**

- Birthdays may be celebrated during the school day at a time determined by the classroom teacher. Parents may bring or send nutritious snacks to share with the class.
- Food items being **given away for free** at such celebrations are **not required** to meet Smart Snacks guidelines.

**This policy does not restrict what parents may provide for their own child’s lunch or snacks.** Parents **may** continue to bring lunch of any type to their child at school during the school day, but **may not** share or give any restricted food items to other students.

## **SCHOOL HEALTH POLICY**

A student may be removed from the classroom for the following conditions: temperature 100°F or above, vomiting, diarrhea, rash with fever, suspected ringworm/impetigo/conjunctivitis, head lice, or other possibly contagious diseases or conditions. A student must be free of vomiting, diarrhea and fever for 24 hours without the aid of medication. CISD follows the exclusion criteria for communicable disease of the Texas Department of State Health Services.

### **MEDICINE AT SCHOOL**

In order for a child to receive prescription or non-prescription medication at school, the medication must be in its original container, clearly labeled, and accompanied with a *Student Medication Request* form. The medication will be kept in the school clinic and administered by properly trained district staff employees. Exceptions may apply only to the student’s self-administration of prescription medication for the management of asthma, anaphylaxis, and diabetes if administered in accordance to district policy and guidelines. Contact the campus school nurse/clinic aide for information on procedures that must be followed when medication is needed at school. Medication administration forms and other information can be found on the CISD website/Health Services.

### **HEALTH CONCERNS AT SCHOOL**

Keeping your child’s school informed of chronic health concerns is crucial for assuring a safe and positive school experience. CISD licensed school nurses will coordinate with families and develop a plan of care for the school setting. Please contact your student’s school nurse to discuss necessary information and health forms or refer to the CISD website/Health Services.

## **RACIAL/ SEXUAL/VERBAL HARASSMENT AND/OR ASSAULT**

The Coppell Independent School District does not tolerate discriminatory behavior by its employees or students. This includes any type of racial slur, racial or sexual harassment, or any type of verbal harassment and/or assault which may arise in any program or activity operated by the district. Any employee or student who violates this policy will be subject to a full range of possible disciplinary actions, based on the severity of the violation and its overall effect on the welfare of other employees or students.

The District's campus-level counselor may provide counseling for its employees or students who are either victims or offenders in incidents involving any type of harassment or verbal assault.

## **STUDENT ASSISTANCE**

### **Aiding Students With Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education of Section 504 Services**

For those learners who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, the school must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of the school to meet the needs of all struggling learners.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individual(s) listed below to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links learners to a variety of support options, including making a referral for special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine if the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

**Special Education Referrals:** If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to a Campus Administrator or the Director of Special Education, the district must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district must give the parent a prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the learner, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If the district agrees to evaluate the learner, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

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

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

Upon completing the evaluation, the district must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

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

**Section 504 Referrals:** The district has standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of learners in the district's Section 504 program. The district must also implement a system of procedural

safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

### **Contact Person for Section 504 or Special Education Referrals**

The designated person to contact regarding options for a learner experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 or special education services is:

**Contact Person:** Elementary Assistant Principal

**Phone Number:** 214-496- (4 digit campus extension)

Austin Elementary 7300

Cottonwood Elementary 8300

Denton Creek Elementary 8100

Lakeside Elementary 7600

Lee Elementary 7900

Mockingbird Elementary 8200

Pinkerton Elementary 6800

Town Center Elementary 7800

Valley Ranch Elementary 8500

Wilson Elementary 7500

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

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

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

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

Parents of a minor or a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and/or school officials with legitimate educational interest are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interest" include any employees, agents, trustees of the district, cooperatives of which the school district is a member, or facilities with which the district contracts for the placement of handicapped students, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are:

- Working with the student
- Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or a handicapped student's Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Compiling statistical data
- Investigating or evaluating programs

Certain other officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. The district forwards a student's records on request to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Written parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to the release of their own records.

## NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS OF TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

As a parent of a student in CISD, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child, and Federal law requires the school district to provide you this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to request the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances.
- The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

*To receive any of this information, please contact your child's school.*

## VISITORS

In Coppell ISD, we are proud of our schools and welcome visitors. For the safety of those within the school setting, all visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Thank you in advance for helping us create a positive and respectful learning environment.

### **General Information**

- Upon entering the campus, present your state issued I.D. to be scanned.
- Once cleared, you will be issued a visitor's badge, which must be worn at all times.
- Please remain in the designated areas.
- CISD staff will deliver messages or items to the learners without disturbing the class.
- No person, other than the student's parent/guardian will be allowed to see the student without the parent/guardian's written permission or the parent/guardian being present. (Including but not limited to: ministers, rabbis, imams, priests and the like)
- Visitors must comply with the district's **Electronic and Printed Materials Guidelines** (posted on CISD's website at [www.coppellisd.com/Communications/Resources](http://www.coppellisd.com/Communications/Resources)) for dissemination of information.
- Visitors may **not** recruit for fundraising activities, religious groups, youth groups or political causes when visiting school campuses unless allowed by Texas Law.
- Playground access is limited to staff members and students during school hours.
- Media representatives shall arrange visits to school campuses with the District's Communications Department at the Vonita White Administration Building.
- Volunteers must complete a criminal background check every year they serve CISD. (**Please allow 2 weeks for processing.**)

### **Classroom Observations**

- Please schedule 24 hours in advance with principal/designee approval.
- The duration and/or frequency must not interfere with the delivery of instruction.
- Please do not bring younger siblings or children to classroom observations.
- Observers should not disrupt the learning environment by engaging students or the teacher in conversation.

### **Lunchroom Guidelines**

- Parents/guardians and non-school-aged siblings are welcome during the lunch period.
- Relatives and non-family members are welcome when accompanied by the parent/guardian or with written parent permission.

- Visitors must adhere to all campus lunchroom guidelines.
- The **Texas Nutrition Policy** does not permit the sharing of food with other students.

**NOTE:** Only the superintendent of Coppell ISD or their designee shall grant exceptions to these guidelines. Any visitor who fails to comply with these guidelines and/or district policies may be prohibited from visiting the school and/or other district facilities. (Complete **Visitor Guidelines and Procedures** are posted on the CISD website at [www.coppellisd.com/Departments/Communications/CommunicationsResources](http://www.coppellisd.com/Departments/Communications/CommunicationsResources).)