



Coppel Independent School District

2015-2016

Elementary Information Handbook



ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES, AND TARDIES

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 class.

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 (7:50 a.m.-3:05 p.m.) every day of the school year.

It is the parents' 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 continual 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.

Providing a Note

In order to prevent any misunderstandings pertaining to attendance, please call your child's school when they must be absent, and provide written documentation pertaining to the absence.

Daily absences will be unexcused unless a 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 of the note
- The name of the child
- The date of the absence or tardy
- The specific reason for the absence or tardy
- The parent's signature
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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. **Vacations are not an acceptable cause for an excused absence from school. Failure to provide any note within 2 days of returning to school 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. If students are to be exempted from PE for more than three (3) days, a doctor's note is required.

Planned Absences

Please 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 make-up assignments. If the absence is a duration of more than 10 days, your child will be automatically withdrawn from the school. Be aware that in schools that are full in a grade level, your child's seat may be taken by a new student enrolling in the district prior to your return from an extended planned absence. In that case, you will have to attend a different CISD school should you return to the district and re-enroll.

Leaving School

If a student needs to leave during school hours, parents should send a note or call in advance to notify the administration. ***Parents must come in 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 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 makeup 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.

Tardy Policy

A child is tardy if s/he arrives in the classroom after 7:50 a.m. (12:00 for PM 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 school year.

Possible consequences could include such things as: exclusion from extra-curricular activities, in-school suspension, loss of academic credit, student/parent/administrator conference, and withdrawal of privileges.

Regarding official start time:

Students may be dismissed to class before the official starting time of the school day and activities may begin in the classroom, but students will not be considered tardy until after the official school start time of 7:50.

Parents will need to come into the school to sign-in their child, if the child is not in the classroom by 7:50 a.m.

Regarding official 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.

Please see below for a summary of state law regarding attendance. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your child’s teacher or the school office. We thank you for making every effort to ensure your child gets the most from his/her education by being in school all day every day.

Attendance Committee

It is our desire to work with families to address any attendance concerns at the campus level. A Campus Attendance Committee will review student attendance concerns. Ongoing attendance issues will be referred by the attendance committee to the Coppell ISD Attendance Coordinator who will determine if judicial action is appropriate. Judicial action for a Class C misdemeanor offense is considered appropriate if there has been violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law. A violation has occurred if a student has the following unexcused absences:

- 3 full or partial (late arrivals/early pick-ups) day absences in a four-week period,
or

10 full or partial (late arrivals/early pick-ups) day absences in 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 failure to provide appropriate supervision.

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- 3 full or partial (late arrivals/early pick-ups) day absences in a four-week period,
or
- 10 full or partial (late arrivals/early pick-ups) day absences in a six-month period

If it is found that a student failed to attend school without 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 offence under Education Code 25.093 or 25.094, as appropriate.

Furthermore, a student not in compliance with attendance laws is subject to denial of course/credit or grade promotion. The Campus Attendance Committee will hear petitions for class credit from students attending fewer than the required 90% of the days school is in session. The committee shall review the student's entire attendance record and the reasons for absences, and shall determine whether to award credit. The attendance committee may require before or after school attendance to provide a student with an opportunity to make up instructional time missed. This will be arranged and organized by the campus committee.

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES WHEN A STUDENT IS ILL

When a communicable disease or infection is suspected, Coppell ISD follows the Texas Department of State Health Services' guidelines for attendance, exclusion, and readmission to school. Students should be removed from the classroom and remain at home for the following conditions:

- temperature of 100.0°F (38°C) or greater and until fever-free for 24 hours without the aid of fever reducing medication;
- vomiting or diarrhea until symptom-free for 24 hours without the aid of medication; and
- for rash with fever, infection of the skin or eyes, draining wounds, and other suspected communicable disease until readmission criteria is met.

For more on student illness and attendance guidelines, visit [coppellisd.com>departments>Health Services](http://coppellisd.com/departments/Health%20Services) or visit with your school nurse or clinic aide. Also visit coppellisd.com for our guidelines and for information concerning head lice.

TEXAS EDUCATION CODE (TEC)

Sec. 25.085. COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

- (a) A child who is required to attend school under this section shall attend school each school day for the entire period the program of instruction is provided.
- (b) Unless specifically exempted by Section 25.086, a child who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reach the child's 18th birthday shall attend school.
- (c) On enrollment in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten, a child shall attend school.

Sec. 25.086. EXEMPTIONS

- (a) A child is exempt from the requirements of compulsory school attendance if the child has a physical or mental condition of a temporary and remediable nature that makes the child's attendance infeasible and holds a certificate from a qualified physician, specifying the temporary condition, indicating the treatment prescribed to remedy the temporary condition, and covering the anticipated period of the child's absence from school for the purpose of receiving and recuperating from the remedial treatment...

Sec. 25.087. EXCUSED ABSENCES

- (a) A child required to attend school may be excused for temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the teacher, principal, or superintendent of the school in which the child is enrolled.

Sec. 25.093. PARENT CONTRIBUTING TO NON-ATTENDANCE

- (a) If a warning is issued as required by Sec. 25.095(a), the parent with criminal negligence fails to require the child to attend school as required by law, and the child has absences for the amount of time specified under Section 25.094, the parent commits an offense.
- (b) The attendance officer or other appropriate school official shall file a complaint against the parent in a justice court ...
- (c) An offense under Subsection (a) is a class C misdemeanor (up to \$500.00 per offense)...

Sec. 25.094. FAILURE TO ATTEND SCHOOL

- (a) An individual commits an offense if the individual:
1. Is required to attend school under Section 25.085; and
 2. Fails to attend school on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year or on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period.
- (b) An offense under this section may be prosecuted in a justice court...
- (c) Pursuant to an order of the justice or municipal court based on an affidavit showing probable cause to believe that an individual has committed an offense under this section, a peace officer may take the individual into custody...
- (d) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor...(up to \$500 fine per offense)

Sec. 25.095 WARNING NOTICES

- (a) A school district shall notify a student's parent if the student has been absent from School, without excuse under Sec. 25.087, on three days or parts of days within a four-week period.
- The notice must: inform the parent that;
- It is the parent's duty to monitor the student's school attendance and require the student to attend school; and
 - The parent is subject to prosecution under Section 25.093; and
 - Request a conference between school officials and the parent to discuss the absences.
- (b) The fact that a parent did not receive a notice...does not create a defense to prosecution.

BULLYING

Bullying is NOT tolerated. All incidents of bullying should be reported to the child's teacher. Bullying is defined as ***"Engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the district and that: 1) has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or 2) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student."***

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 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 help your child succeed 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.)

- Straps must be two fingers wide.

HOMEWORK

Educators may give homework that reinforces concepts taught in the classroom. Homework may also be exploratory or data gathering with such things as finding how many cans of vegetables are in the pantry, nutrition information from a cereal box, etc. These activities should support learning in the classroom. In addition, learners may watch a video as part of a flipped or blended learning opportunity that they educator will follow-up on in the classroom the following day.

Teams will assign homework for the purposes of practice or review, preparation, extension, and skill integration. Homework should be relevant to the learning in the classroom and should never be something the learner does not understand.

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 by a note from the parent and/or guardian stating dosage, time, and dates to be administered. Most pharmacists cooperate in giving duplicate bottles. The medication will be kept in the school clinic. No child should be in possession of medication while at school, except for the new provision under House Bill 1688. This bill allows a student to self-administer asthma prescription medication under certain guidelines. Please check the CISD website for further information. Students may bring cough drops to school if accompanied with a note from the parent/guardian giving permission and directions to dispense. The child’s teacher may keep the cough drops in the classroom.

NUTRITION POLICY

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) has a specific policy limiting the types of foods and drinks available to public school students to promote a healthier environment in schools. The entire policy may be accessed through the Internet at the TDA website.

<http://www.squaremeals.org/Programs/NationalSchoolLunchProgram/NSLPPolicy&ARM.aspx#competitive>

No competitive food items may be sold on campus by any person or entity except for the school food service department during the school day. Foods sold at all grade levels must meet the nutrition requirements.

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

- Food items that meet competitive food nutrition standards such as pumpkin bread with whole grain-rich flour, air-popped popcorn, and trail mixes.

- Food items that are not intended to be consumed at school such as ready-to-bake cookie dough or ready-to-heat pizza.

Fundraisers that include food items that do not meet the competitive food nutritional standards, and are intended to be consumed at a school, must be sold outside the school day.

Classrooms may allow a nutritious snack at no cost to the student. The snack may not include any FMNV, candy or dessert type items (cookies, cakes, cupcakes, pudding, ice cream or frozen desserts, etc.) The snack may not be at the same time as the regular meal period for that class. For nutritious snack ideas, see TDA's listing of "Suggestions for Nutritious Snacks," available on request and at www.squaremeals.org.

Birthday Celebrations and Other Snacks

- Birthdays may be celebrated during the school day at a time determined by the classroom teacher and foods such as cupcakes may be served.
- Parents may bring or send nutritious snacks to share with the class.

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.

RACIAL/ SEXUAL/VERBAL HARASSMENT AND/OR ASSAULT

The Coppel 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.

RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The research around retention does not support retaining students. It is the philosophy of Coppel ISD to use intervention strategies in the classroom to close the gap in the delay of the academic performance of students. Coppel ISD uses a Response to Intervention process to identify at-risk students and to provide appropriate interventions. While there are rare circumstances that warrant a student having an extra year at a grade, it is our belief that through parents, students,

and teachers working as a team, every student can be successful. For more information on the research in regards to retaining students, please see campus administration.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

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 support services that are available to all 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 an evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date that the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent.

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

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

Contact Person: Elementary Assistant Principal

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

Austin Elementary 7300	Mockingbird Elementary 8200
Cottonwood Elementary 8300	Pinkerton Elementary 6800
Denton Creek Elementary 8100	Town Center Elementary 7800
Lakeside Elementary 7600	Valley Ranch Elementary 8500
Wilson Elementary 7500	Lee Elementary 7900

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.

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VISITORS

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit CISD schools. All visitors must sign in at the main office on the Lobby Guard system. You must have your driver's license or state ID to sign in. Visits to your child's classroom during instructional time shall be permitted only with prior approval of the administrators, and such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment. Classroom visits/observations are not appropriate times for parent conferences. If parents have concern, an appointment should be scheduled with the teacher at a time other than class time. CISD students are not permitted to have school-aged friends or visitors attend classes with them during the school day. A visit to a classroom other than your child's classroom to gather information regarding the classroom or special program, shall be permitted only with prior approval of the administrator, and such a visit shall not be permitted during instructional time. The purpose of the classroom visit needs to be clearly stated and again approved by the campus principal. Classroom observations may be denied in order to protect confidential information for all students. This is in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and laws governing confidentiality of all students and **34 C.F.R. §300.622 governing confidentiality of personally identifiable information of students with disabilities.**

All visitors in the building must check in at the front office and wear a visitor badge at all times.