



**HERITAGE**  
**A C A D E M Y <sup>TM</sup>**

**2024-2025 Heritage Academy**

# **PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**and Student Code of Conduct**

Dear Students and Parents,

On behalf of the Campus Principal, teachers, and other school staff, welcome! We wish this year to be an especially productive experience for each student. For this to happen, we all have to work together: students, parents, and staff. This Parent/Student Handbook ("Handbook") is designed to help us accomplish that goal.

This Handbook contains information that both students and parents need for reference during the school year. **Throughout this Handbook, you will notice symbols that indicate whether a policy applies only to students at certain grade levels. "[E]" applies to grades K-5, "[M]" applies to grades 6-8, and "[H]" applies to grades 9-12. If there is no symbol next to a statement, then it applies to ALL STUDENTS.**

We have attempted to make the language as straightforward as possible; however, a couple of words should be defined. Please be aware that the term "parent" is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume a school-related responsibility for a student. Also, the term "campus" is used to refer to school property as well as the geographic area within 300 feet of school property as measured from any point on the real property boundary line. Thus, to prohibit an activity on "campus" is to prohibit the activity on school property and within 300 feet of school property.

This Handbook is divided into six sections. The first section includes general information regarding school policy and procedures. The second section provides important health and safety information. The third section provides information about academics and grading. The fourth section is the Student Code of Conduct. Both students and parents need to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct, which is required by state law and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. In addition to its inclusion in this document, it is also posted on the school website. The fifth section is especially for parents, with information regarding parental rights. Finally, the sixth section contains important notices regarding student information, computer resources, electronic communication devices, and the school grievance policy.

Please be aware that this Handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy that affect Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, the school website, and other communications. **In case of conflict between Board Policy and any provision of this Handbook, the provision that was most recently adopted by the Board of Trustees will be followed.**

Please review this entire Handbook and keep it as reference during this school year. Please take the time to look over the information provided. If you have any questions about the material in this Handbook, please contact your Campus Principal. Understanding this information will assist you in the path to success.

Sincerely,

Robert Davison,  
Superintendent/CEO

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# **SECTION I: General Policies and Procedures**

## **General Attendance Policy**

Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-supervised activities, to build each day’s learning on that of the previous day, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in a serious disruption of a student’s mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences.

### **Compulsory Attendance**

The state compulsory attendance law requires that students at least 6 years of age, and those who have not yet reached their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday attend school and school-required tutorial sessions unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused. School staff must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent from school without permission from any class, from required special programs (such as basic skills for ninth graders), or from required tutorials will be considered “truant” and subject to disciplinary action. Note, Kindergarten students are required to attend school and are subject to compulsory attendance requirements as long as they remain enrolled.

Truancy may also result in assessment of penalties by a court of law for the parent. State law requires that the school apply truancy prevention measures if the student is absent, without excuse, on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period. If a student is absent, without excuse, on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, and those absences are verified by the campus as unexcused, students 12 years and older may be referred to truancy court. Further, state law permits the school to file a complaint against parents contributing to nonattendance regardless of their child’s age. Please refer to Texas Education Code (TEC) 25 and the Texas Family Code 65 for more details.

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 19<sup>th</sup> birthday is required to attend each school day. If a student 19 years of age or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the school may revoke the student’s enrollment, except that the school may not revoke the enrollment on a day on which the student is physically present at school. The student’s presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. Notice to Parents: Under TEC § 25.095(a), you are hereby notified that if a student is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, the student’s parent is subject to prosecution under TEC § 25.093; and the student is subject to referral to a truancy court for truant conduct under Texas Family Code § 65.003(a).

## **Attendance for Credit**

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. These days include both excused and unexcused absences. A student who attends fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may be referred to the Attendance Committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit.

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

1. All absences will be reviewed, with special consideration given for religious holy days, documented healthcare appointments for which routine make-up work has been completed, and other special circumstances as defined by the TEC.
2. For a student transferring into the school after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered. In reaching consensus about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that its decision is in the best interest of the student.
3. The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or parent could exercise control.
4. The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documentation expressing reasons for the student's absences.
5. 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.
6. The student, parent, or other representative will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to discuss ways to earn or regain credit.

If credit is lost because of excessive absences, the Attendance Committee will decide how the student may 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. The appeal notice must be postmarked to the following address within 30 days following the last day of instruction in the semester for which credit was denied:

Heritage Academy Notice of Appeal: Class Credit Attn: Superintendent

6013 Fountainwood Dr.

San Antonio, TX 78233

The appeal will then be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the student or parent of the date, time, and place of the meeting.

## **Excused and Unexcused Absences**

The following absences are considered excused absences:

1. personal illnesses that do not exceed three consecutive days (illnesses that extend beyond three days will require a doctor's note.);
2. family emergency;
3. an absence resulting from a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes the student's attendance infeasible, if the student or the student's parent provides certification from a physical licensed to practice medicine in Texas specifying the student's illness and the anticipated period of the student's absence relating to the illness and the anticipated period of the student's absence relating to the illness or related treatment.
4. an absence for a student who is 15 years of age or older to visit a driver's license office to obtain a driver's license or learner license, provided that more than one day of school may not be excused during the period the student is enrolled in high school for the purpose of (i) obtaining a driver's license, or (ii) obtaining a learner license, and the school verifies the student's visit to the driver's license office in accordance with school procedures.
5. observing religious holy days;
6. juvenile court proceeding documented by a probation officer;
7. appearing at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the student's application for United States citizenship;
8. taking part in student's United States naturalization oath ceremony;
9. documented healthcare appointment, if the student begins classes or returns to school on the same day as the appointment, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders
10. serving as an election clerk;
11. required screening, diagnosis, and treatment for Medicaid-eligible students;
12. documented college visit by a junior or senior student (see "College Days [H]," p. 52);
13. a student's visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments (up to five days);
14. for students in the conservatorship of the state who need to attend an activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not
15. practical to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside school hours; or
16. temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the Campus Principal.

For religious holy days, required court appearances, activities related to citizenship, and services as an election clerk, one day of travel to the site and one day travel from the site shall also be excused.

Any absence not listed above will be considered an unexcused absence. Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, class cuts, car trouble, oversleeping, personal business, vacation, etc.



### **Required Documentation of Absences**

When a student must be absent from school, it is the parent's responsibility to call the school office each day to explain the reason for the student's absence. Upon returning to school, the student must bring a note to the school office, signed by the parent, which describes the reason for the absence. In order to excuse the absence, the note must:

- a. be submitted to the school office within three school days of the student's return to school, and
- b. describe an acceptable reason for the absence (see "Excused and Unexcused Absences," p. 8).

In the case of absences, it is the responsibility of the parent to contact the teachers for any missed assignments, homework, etc., as well as the due dates for the missed work. Students failing to submit any missed work by the specified date could receive a failing grade for that assignment.

### **Notification to Parents**

The school will notify the parent by mail when the student is absent from school, without excuse, on three days or parts of days within a four-week period. The notice will inform the parent of, among other things, that their student is subject to truancy prevention measures, remind the parent of their responsibility to monitor their student's attendance, and to request a parent conference between the parent and the Attendance Officer/Campus Principal to discuss the absences.

### **Driver's License Attendance Verification**

To obtain or renew a driver's license, a student under 18 years of age must annually provide to the Texas Department of Public Safety a form obtained from the school verifying that the student has met the 90 percent attendance requirement for the semester preceding the date of application. Eligible students can obtain the required Verification of Enrollment (VOE) form from the school office.

The school will issue a VOE form for any transfer student that is transferring with no more than three absences for the previous six weeks.

### **Career and Technical Education**

(CTE) Programs

Heritage Academy offers a comprehensive program that is designed to prepare students to be successful whether they choose to pursue higher education, technical or trade school, or to enter the workforce after completing their high school education. Course offerings and content are continuously monitored to ensure that programs are current with today's technology and are relevant to the requirements of today's employer; Admission to these programs is based on interest and aptitude, age appropriateness, academic achievement, state and local policy, class space available, and any course prerequisites.

It is the policy of the School not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability in its vocational programs, services, or activities and to provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups as required

by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

It is the policy of the School not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended;

For additional information about your rights or grievance procedures, please contact the Human Resources Administrative Assistant at our home office by calling (210-659-0320), or contact the Title IX Coordinator or the Section 504 Coordinator, whose contact information is:

Derrick Armstead, Title IX and Title I Coordinator

Melissa Cortez, Director of Special Education and 504

6013 Fountainwood Dr.

San Antonio, TX 78233

(210)-659-0320

## **Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices**

Possession of cell phones, computers, and other devices capable of electronic communications at school is a privilege, not a right. Possession and use of such devices at school or school-related events or activities shall be subject to school approval and regulations. Any such devices may be confiscated, powered on, and searched by school officials if there is a reasonable cause to believe that the devices have been used in the transmission or reception of communications prohibited by law, policy, or regulation (see “Electronic Communication Device Commitment Policy,” p. 103.)

## **Change of Address or Telephone Number**

Parents are required to provide in writing, the parent’s address, phone number and email address upon a student’s enrollment. When the address, telephone number, or email address changes during the school year, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school office immediately. The parent must provide the new contact information no later than two weeks after the effective date of the change. Proof of residency at the new address may be required.

## **Check Acceptance Policy**

All personal checks written to the school must include the current address and phone number of the account holder. The account holder’s name should also be legible and printed on the check.

In the event that a check written to the school is returned unpaid by the bank, the account holder agrees that the school may collect a return check fee of \$30 plus applicable sales tax. The school may contract with a collection company in an effort to redeem returned checks. The use of a check for payment is the account holder’s acknowledgement and acceptance of this policy and its terms.

## **Closed Campus**

The school operates on the closed campus concept. Specifically, this means that students are not allowed to leave campus for any reason during the school day, including during meal periods, without first obtaining permission from the school office.

## **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.

All students are encouraged to participate and take an active part in student clubs and organizations.

### **Eligibility**

Eligibility for participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association overseeing inter-district competition or other organizations offering competitive opportunities for extracurricular activities. 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.

The following requirements apply to all extracurricular activities:

1. A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than an Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate course; or an honors or dual-credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or a language other than English—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks. Students enrolled in honors must have a grade of 70 or higher at the end of a grading period for eligibility purposes only. Weighted grades may be used for determination of meeting the passing grade requirement. For example, AP classes may be weighted differently. As such, a passing grade in an AP course may actually be slightly below 70 before the weighting is applied. This circumstance will be examined and approved by the Campus Principal for purposes of eligibility for school activities.
2. An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
3. A student regains eligibility after at least three weeks of ineligibility when the Campus Principal and teachers determine that the student has earned a passing grade (70 or above) in all classes, other than those that are exempted.
4. Only students enrolled full time at the school may participate in school-recognized clubs and organizations unless the student is enrolled at another Heritage Academy campus within the same charter and is approved for participation by the host Campus Principal. This provision is governed by the rules of participation of the various leagues or competitions and by the discretion of Campus Principals. Students at the host campus should not be displaced by students from other campuses.
5. Written parental permission and all other medical, insurance, release, and other forms deemed appropriate by Heritage Academy, the local campus, and governing organizations are required in order for a student to participate in any club or organization that is not required for a particular course or does not result in academic credit.

## **Code of Conduct**

Sponsors of student clubs and organizations 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 a student to be eligible to serve as a club or organization officer, he or she must be passing in all subjects. Unsatisfactory conduct while in office and/or failure to render satisfactory service shall be considered grounds for removal from said office. Removal from office shall be at the discretion of the staff sponsor of the club or organization with the approval of the Campus Principal.

## **New Clubs or Organizations**

Students desiring to form a new club or organization shall submit a written request to the Campus Principal at the school office, containing the following mandatory elements:

1. a statement of the club’s or organization’s purposes, goals, and activities;
2. signatures of a minimum of ten students who wish to participate in the club or organization;
3. if participation in the club or organization is not required for a particular course or does not result in academic credit, written parental permission of each student signatory to participate in the club or organization;
4. written agreement of a teacher who has agreed to serve as the staff sponsor for the club or organization;
5. a description of any funding or other assistance received from, or affiliation with, any non-student groups;
6. a schedule of its proposed meeting times.

## **Fundraising**

The Campus Principal and the Corporate Office must approve any plan or activity used by a club or organization for raising money on the appropriate district forms. Only activities that raise money through payment of admissions or where value is received for money paid may be conducted. No advertising will be sold without the approval of the Campus Principal. All funds raised are for student use. No student or staff member can sell personal items or items from other entities.

## **Meetings**

Only school-recognized student clubs and organizations are permitted to meet on school property during non- instructional time.

## **Yearbook**

Only school-recognized clubs and organizations will be featured in the yearbook.

## **Conferences With Teachers and Campus Principal**

Because the Campus Principal and teachers are busy serving students during the school day, they are unable to accommodate unscheduled telephone calls or in- person conferences. When parents feel it advisable to contact the Campus Principal or teachers personally, they are encouraged to leave their telephone numbers with the school office in

order that the Campus Principal or teacher may return the call later. Personal conferences are welcome if a telephone conversation does not prove adequate. To schedule an in-person conference with the Campus Principal or a teacher at a mutually convenient time, please call the school office for an appointment. Parents may also communicate with the Campus Principal and teachers via e-mail regarding school-related business.

## **Deliveries**

Packages such as flowers, balloons, etc., should not be delivered to the school for students. These will not be delivered to the classroom.

## **Distribution of Materials or Documents**

Only publications relating to school-sponsored activities or school-recognized clubs and organizations may be posted or distributed. The publication, as well as the time and location of its posting or distribution, must be submitted to the Campus Principal for review and approval.

## **Dress Code**

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

In order to maintain an orderly environment, all students shall be required to meet the minimum expectations of the school dress code. Dress and clothing that unduly attracts the attention of other students often precipitate comments and/or other reactions that are disruptive.

Safety, general health, and hygiene are factors that are also considered in the establishment of this dress code. The provisions of this dress code shall be enforced equally with regard to all students to whom the provisions apply.

The following criteria for a student's personal dress and grooming standards provide the minimum requirements.

### **School Uniforms**

The Board of Trustees has determined that school uniforms improve the learning environment at the school. As such, each school has been authorized to adopt rules that require students to wear school uniforms. If your campus requires school uniforms, you will receive additional information from the campus.

### ***Exemption***

Where students are required to wear school uniforms, parents may choose to exempt their student from the requirement to wear uniforms by providing a written request to the Campus Principal at the school office, stating a bona fide religious or philosophical objection to the requirement.

## **General Criteria**

A student's personal dress and grooming standards shall not:

1. lead school staff to reasonably believe that such dress or grooming will disrupt, interfere with, disturb, or detract from school activities; or
2. create a health or other hazard to the student's safety or to the safety of others.

## **Specific Criteria**

1. Clothing containing printed messages or designs, except for small logos on shirts and shirts that promote school clubs, activities, organizations, teams, or "school spirit" approved by the Campus Principal, is not allowed.
2. Clothing depicting drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, or violence is not allowed.
3. Startling, unusual, or immodest attire of any sort is not allowed. Fads in hairstyles, clothing, or anything designed to attract attention to the individual or to disrupt the orderly conduct of the classroom or campus is not allowed. Hair is to be clean and well-groomed. Hairstyles and hair colors that are distracting to the learning environment are not allowed.
4. Hair is to be clean and well-groomed. Hairstyles (that are not protective hairstyles commonly or historically associated with race, such as braids, locks, and twists) and hair colors that are distracting to the learning environment are not allowed.
5. Extremely baggy clothing is not allowed. Pants, shorts, etc., are not to be worn below the waistline and should be appropriately sized.
6. Shorts may be worn, but must reach at least fingertip length. Tight-fitting shorts or "short shorts" are not allowed.
7. Tongue rings and visible body piercings, other than earrings, are not allowed. Dangling earrings are not allowed.
8. Visible tattoos and body art are not allowed.
9. Cutoffs, boxer shorts, pajama bottoms, bike shorts, short leggings as outer garments, etc., are not allowed.
10. Hats, scarves, bandanas, hair coverings, sweatbands, or hooded shirts are not allowed except under circumstances designated by the Campus Principal.
11. Torn, ripped, or cut clothing is not allowed.
12. Trench coats and dusters are not allowed.
13. Grills or temporary decorations on teeth are not allowed.
14. Chains, handcuffs, jewelry, or accessories that suggest weaponry are not allowed.
15. Students are to wear appropriate shoes or sandals at all times. House shoes and shoes with wheels are not allowed.
16. Excessive makeup is not allowed.

## ***Boys: Additional Guidelines***

- a. Shirts are to have sleeves.
- b. Mustaches, beards, and other facial hair must be kept neat and trimmed.

### ***Girls: Additional Guidelines***

1. Apparel that is too tight or too short to prevent modesty is not allowed.
2. Low-cut apparel is not allowed.
3. Girls are to wear sufficient undergarments.
4. The following are unacceptable: straps less than three inches wide, bare midriffs, halters, or bare backs.

### **Enforcement Procedures**

If the student's dress or grooming is inappropriate or objectionable under these provisions, the Campus Principal or designee shall request the student to make appropriate corrections. If the student refuses, the Campus Principal or designee shall notify the student's parent and request that the parent make the necessary correction. If both the student and parent refuse, the Campus Principal shall take appropriate disciplinary action, including removal from school until the student is in compliance with the dress code. Decisions of the Campus Principal or designee regarding dress and grooming are considered final. Failure to comply with the dress code will result in disciplinary action.

### **Enrollment of New Students**

Admission and enrollment of students shall be open to any person who is eligible for admission based on lawful criteria identified in the school's charter, e.g., qualifying residency and disciplinary history. The total number of students enrolled in the school shall not exceed the number of students approved in the school's charter or subsequent amendments. Applications for admission shall be due by a reasonable deadline to be set each year by the school—i.e., the close of the "open-enrollment period."

### **Lottery**

If the number of eligible applicants does not exceed the number of vacancies, then all eligible applicants who have applied during the designated open-enrollment period will be offered admission. If there are more eligible applicants than available spaces in a class/ grade/school, then a lottery will be conducted at a time set by the school each year. A name (or number assigned to a name) will be drawn for each vacancy that exists, and each applicant whose name (or number) is drawn will be offered admission. The remaining names will then be drawn and placed on a waiting list in the order in which they were drawn.

Notification of admission will be made by telephone, e-mail, or U.S. Postal Service. Failure of a parent to respond within 48 hours of the date of the telephone call or email, or within three business days of a postmarked letter, will forfeit his or her position in the lottery. Parents should call or email the school immediately upon receipt of the notice in order to preserve their student's position in the lottery.

If a vacancy arises before the commencement of the school year, the individual on the waiting list for the current year with the lowest number assignment will be offered admission and then removed from the waiting list. If an application is received after the open-enrollment period has passed, the applicant's name will be added to the waiting list behind the names of the eligible applicants who timely applied.

### ***Exceptions***

Federal guidelines permit the school to exempt from the lottery process students who are already admitted under the charter, siblings of students already admitted under the charter, and children of the charter's founders, teachers, and staff, regardless of whether the children of the charter's founders, teachers, or staff reside in the geographic area served by the school.

### **Residency Information**

To be eligible for continued enrollment in the school, the parent must show proof of residency at the time of enrollment. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the immediate initiation of procedures to exclude students from enrollment.

Residency may be verified through observation, documentation, and other means, including, but not limited to:

1. a recently paid rent receipt,
2. a current lease agreement,
3. the most recent tax receipt indicating home ownership,
4. a current utility bill indicating the address and name of the residence occupiers, mailing addresses of the residence occupiers,
5. visual inspection of the residence,
6. interviews with persons with relevant information, or
7. building permits issued to a parent on or before September 1 of the school year in which admission is sought (permits will serve as evidence of residency for the school year in which admission is sought only).

Falsification of residence on an enrollment form is a criminal offense.

### **Disciplinary History**

As provided in the school's charter, the school may exclude a student from admission who has a documented history of a criminal offense, juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems under Subchapter A, Chapter 37, of the TEC. The school shall exclude a student from admission who has a documented history of an offense listed in Section 37.007(a) and (d) of the TEC. As such, if it is later discovered that the student failed to disclose a documented history of a criminal offense, juvenile court adjudication, or disqualifying discipline problems, the school will immediately initiate procedures to exclude the student from admission.

### **Student Information**

Any student admitted to the school must have records such as a report card and/or transcript from the previous school attended to verify his or her academic standing. Verification of residency and current immunization records are also required. Every student enrolling in the school for the first time must present documentation of immunizations as required



by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

No later than 30 days after enrolling in the school, the parent and school district in which the student was previously enrolled shall furnish records which verify the identity of the student. These records may include the student's birth certificate or a copy of the student's school records from the most recently attended school. The school forwards a student's records on request to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll without the necessity of the parent's consent.

### **Providing False Information**

A person who knowingly falsifies information on a form required for enrollment of a student in the school may be guilty of an offense under Section 37.10 of the Texas Penal Code.

### **Non-Discrimination**

It is the policy of the school to prohibit discrimination in student admission on the basis of sex, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic, artistic, or athletic ability, or the district the student would otherwise attend in accordance with the TEC.

### **Notice of Nondiscrimination**

The school, as an equal opportunity educational provider and employer, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law, in educational programs or activities, including vocational and career technology (CTE) programs, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Heritage Academy complies with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; 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 Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and any other legally-protected classification or status protected by law.

Heritage Academy does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, including in admission and employment inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator (see below), to the Office for Civil Rights or both. More information on the School's Title IX policy and the School's Title IX grievance procedure is available at ([HeritageAcademy.net](http://HeritageAcademy.net) or other location where Title IX information is posted). Information on reporting conduct that may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX and how to make a report of sex discrimination is included in Heritage's "Freedom from Sex Discrimination (Title IX)" policy as outlined in the Employee Handbook and Student Handbook.

Questions or concerns about compliance with these federal programs should be brought to the attention of the following persons designated as being responsible for coordinating compliance with these requirements:

For concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and gender-based harassment, contact the Title IX Coordinator Derrick Armstead, *6013 Fountainwood Dr., San Antonio, TX 78233, ph. 210-659-0329, darmstead@heritiageacademy.com*. Derrick Armstead retains ultimate oversight over the School's compliance with Title IX. Reports can be made at any time and by any person, including during non-school hours, by mail, phone, or e-mail. During school business hours, reports may also be made in person. Upon receiving notice or an allegation of sex-based harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly respond in accordance with district policy.

For concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability, contact Melissa Cortez, Director of Special Education, Dyslexia, & Section 504 Services, at *6013 Fountainwood Dr., San Antonio, TX 78233, ph. 210-659-0329, mcortez@heritiageacademy.com*

For all other concerns regarding discrimination, contact [sgarcia@heritageacademy.net](mailto:sgarcia@heritageacademy.net)

## **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, pens, erasers, notebooks, calculators, headsets, etc., and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including payment of:

1. a fee for materials for a class project that the student will keep, if the fee does not exceed the cost of materials;
2. membership dues in voluntary student clubs or organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities;
3. a security deposit for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment;
4. a fee for personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel, although a student may provide the student's own equipment or apparel if it meets reasonable requirements and standards relating to health and safety;
5. a fee for voluntarily purchased items, such as student publications, class rings, pictures, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.;
6. a fee for voluntary student health and accident benefit plan; a reasonable fee, not to exceed the actual annual maintenance cost, for the use of musical instruments and uniforms owned or rented by the school;
7. a fee for items of personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that become the property of the student;
8. a parking fee;
9. a fee for a student identification card;
10. a fee for a driver training course, not to exceed the actual cost per student in the program for the current school year;
11. a fee for an optional course offered for credit that requires the use of facilities not available on campus or the employment of an educator who is not part of the school's regular staff;
12. a fee for summer school courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year;
13. a reasonable fee for transportation of a student who lives within two miles of the campus;

14. a reasonable fee, not to exceed \$50, for costs associated with an educational program offered outside of regular school hours through which a student who was absent from class received
15. instruction voluntarily for the purpose of making up the missed instruction and meeting the level of attendance required for class credit, so long as the fee would not create a financial hardship or discourage the student from attending the program;
16. a fee for lost, damaged, or overdue textbooks, library books, technological equipment, and academic curriculum materials; or
17. a fee specifically permitted by any other statute.

## **Leaving Campus During the School Day**

A student who will need to leave campus during the day must submit a note to the school office from his or her parent that provides the following information:

1. student's name,
2. reason for student's need to leave campus, time student will need to be gone from campus,
3. phone number where parent may be reached to confirm parent's permission,
4. parent's name, and
5. parent's signature.

No student will be permitted to leave campus before the school office confirms the student's need to leave campus with the student's parents by phone.

Students who fail to check in/out before leaving and/ or returning to campus will be considered truant from any instructional hours missed.

Students will not be allowed to leave in the custody of any person not named on the Student Registration Card. Photo identification is required.

Doctor's appointments should be scheduled, if possible, at times when the student will not miss instructional time.

## **Lockers**

If provided, lockers remain under the jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student. The school reserves the right to inspect all lockers. A student has full responsibility for the security of the locker and is responsible for making certain that it is locked and that the combination is not available to others. Locker searches may be conducted at any time, whether or not the student is present. The decision to assign lockers rests with the Campus Principal.

## **Lost and Stolen Items**

All articles, including books, found on campus should be taken to the school office. All articles not claimed at the end of the school year will be disposed of through proper channels. Students are not to bring electronic entertainment devices and

other personal items to school. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

## **Meals**

The school serves breakfast or breakfast and lunch through participation in the National Breakfast and School Lunch Program. Texas Department of Agriculture (“TDA”) and United States Department of Agriculture (“USDA”) guidelines are followed to meet the nutritional needs for all students.

### **Menus**

Menus may be obtained at the school office.

### **State-Mandated Nutrition Guidelines**

TDA policy places strict limits on any food or drink provided or sold to students, other than through the school’s Food and Nutrition Services. Elementary school students may not have access to candy or any other food of minimal nutritional value during the school day. Middle school and high school students also have restrictions during meal periods. The specific policy may be obtained at the school office or online at <https://texasagriculture.gov/>.

### **Free and Reduced-Cost Meals**

The school sends applications for free or reduced cost meals to the student’s home at the beginning of each school year and throughout the remainder of the year. Applications must be complete, listing all members of the household and family income. Should the family income status change, assistance may be requested at any time during the school year. Only one application for each household is required. Completed applications should be returned to the school office.

### **Complaints regarding the Free and Reduced Price Meal program**

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, the school is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, political beliefs, age, disability, national origin, or limited English proficiency. (Not all bases apply to all programs.) Reprisal is prohibited based on prior civil rights activity.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which is available online at the following website: <http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint.filing.cust.html> or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442, or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339, or (800) 845-6131 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### **Meal Charge Policy**

All students will pay for meals at the district's published standard rate each day. A student will be allowed to charge a maximum of three meals to their account after the balance reaches zero. Once a student has charged those three meals, he/she will not be allowed to charge a lunch meal. However, he/she will be offered a designated lunch alternative. Any negative balance will be carried over to the next school year.

### **Refunds**

Submit a written/email request to obtain a refund for withdrawn and/or graduating students.

### **Messages for Students**

It is not possible to receive and deliver telephone messages and/or supplies to students without interrupting classes and interfering with the learning environment that the school staff works so hard to maintain. In the case of an emergency, the school office should be contacted for assistance.

### **Parking Regulations [H]**

Being able to bring a vehicle on campus is a privilege. The school is not responsible for damage to a vehicle that occurs while it is on campus. A student has full responsibility for the security of his or her vehicle and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. Permission is required for any student who finds it necessary to go to his or her vehicle during the school day.

Vehicles parked on campus 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 presence of the student. A copy of the student's driver's license and insurance must be on file in the school office.

### **Parking Fee**

Students who drive to campus must park in designated student parking areas. Students may be required to purchase a parking sticker from the school office each year. If required, the failure to purchase a parking sticker will be considered a parking infraction and will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Operation of Motor Vehicles on Campus**

Any law or ordinance regulating traffic on a public highway or street also applies to the operation of a vehicle on campus. In addition to potential city citations for violation of motor vehicle traffic laws or ordinances, students will receive a warning and referral to the Campus Principal's office for the following violations:

1. parking in a fire lane,
2. failure to park in a designated student parking area, jumping (driving over) a curb,
3. double parking,
4. parking in a handicapped space or walkway,
5. parking in a crosswalk or ramp,
6. ignoring instructions from school staff monitoring the parking lot, or
7. parking on a water sprinkler.

A student who has had parking privileges revoked may have his or her car towed at the student's expense. All students wishing to exercise their right to drive/park a motor vehicle on campus will be required to submit a vehicle identification form each school year, which will remain on file in the campus office.

## **Pledge of Allegiance/Minute of Silence**

As required by state law, 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 Campus Principal at the school office to excuse their student from reciting a pledge.

One minute of silence will follow recitation of the pledges. During the one-minute period, each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that is not likely to interfere with or distract others. State law does not allow students to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence.

In addition, state law requires that the school provides for the observance of one minute of silence at the beginning of the first-class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001.

## **Religious Expression**

### **Student Expression of Religious Viewpoints**

The school shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the school treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

### **Religious Expression in Class Assignments**

Students may express the students' beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious content of the students' submission. Homework and classroom work shall be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance and against other legitimate pedagogical concerns identified by the school. Students may not be penalized or rewarded on account of religious content. If a teacher's

assignment involves writing a poem, the work of a student who submits a poem in the form of a prayer (for example, a psalm) should be judged on the basis of academic standards, including literary quality, and not penalized or rewarded on account of its religious content.

### **Freedom to Organize Religious Groups and Activities**

Students may organize prayer groups, religious clubs, “see you at the pole” gatherings, and other religious gatherings before, during, and after school to the same extent that students are permitted to organize other non-curricular student activities and groups. Religious groups must be given the same access to school facilities for assembling as is given to other non-curricular groups, without discrimination based on the religious content of the group’s expression. If student groups that meet for nonreligious activities are permitted to advertise or announce the groups’ meetings, for example, by advertising in a student newspaper, putting up posters, making announcements on a student activities bulletin board or public address system, or handing out leaflets, school authorities may not discriminate against groups that meet for prayer or other religious speech. School authorities may disclaim sponsorship of non-curricular groups and events, provided they administer the disclaimer in a manner that does not favor or disfavor groups that meet to engage in prayer or other religious speech.

### **Prayer**

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

### **Respect for All**

The school has a diverse student population and strives to maintain an environment of respect and acceptance. Students must not engage in harassing behaviors motivated by ethnicity, gender, color, religion, national origin, or disability directed toward another student.

Students are expected to treat other students and school staff with courtesy and respect, to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive, and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop.

### **School Calendar**

The school operates according to the annually Board- adopted school calendar. Campus Principals will disseminate information for procedures relating to the announcement of school closings in the event of bad weather. Holidays may be used as school make-up days for days lost due to bad weather. The latest changes to the calendar will be available on the school website.

## **School Facilities Use**

Certain areas of the campus 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. Unless the school staff member overseeing the activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the campus. Unless involved in an activity under the supervision of school staff, students must leave campus once school is dismissed.

## **School Functions**

Students are held responsible for their conduct while in attendance at any school function. A student who is on campus or in attendance at any school function at any place, night or day, is subject to all regulations of the school and will be governed accordingly. Student identification cards may be required to attend some school functions.

## **School-Sponsored Trips**

Many school-sponsored trips are made each year for the various activities in which students participate. The following regulations govern trips sponsored by the school:

1. Students missing school when on a school- sponsored trip are not counted absent, but are required to make up the work missed.

Arrangements should be made with each teacher for make-up work before the trip is made.

2. Students must take the responsibility of observing all safety rules.
3. Students making a school-sponsored trip are under the supervision of a sponsor and are expected to follow the school Student Code of Conduct and dress code.
4. Students may not miss any class more than ten times within the school year, unless they are participating in competition beyond the district level.

## **Skateboards**

Students are not permitted to use their skateboards, scooters, and/or roller blades on campus at any time. If a student is using any of the above instruments as a means of transportation to or from school, he or she must walk and carry the skateboard, scooter, and/or roller blades while on campus. Skateboards, scooters, or roller blades should be kept in a locker or other designated place approved by a teacher or the Campus Principal until the end of the school day.

## **Student Speakers at School Events**

### **Student Speakers at Non-Graduation Events**

The school hereby creates a limited public forum for student speakers at all school events at which a student is to publicly speak. For each speaker, the school shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion. Student speakers shall introduce:



1. athletic events designated by the school;
2. opening announcements and greetings for the school day; and/or
3. any additional events designated by the school, which may include, without limitation, assemblies, and pep rallies.

The forum shall be limited in the manner provided by this section.

Only those students in the highest two grade levels of the school and who hold one of the following positions of honor based on neutral criteria are eligible to use the limited public forum: student council officers, class officers of the highest grade level in the school, captains of the school's sports teams, and other students holding positions of honor as the school may designate.

An eligible student shall be notified of the student's eligibility, and a student who wishes to participate as an introducing speaker shall submit the student's name to the school office during an announced period of not less than three days. The announced period may be at the beginning of the school year, at the end of the preceding school year so student speakers are in place for the new year, or, if the selection process will be repeated each semester, at the beginning of each semester, or at the end of the preceding semester, so speakers are in place for the next semester. The names of the volunteering student speakers shall be randomly drawn until all names have been selected, and the names shall be listed in the order drawn. Each selected student will be matched chronologically to the event for which the student will be giving the introduction. Each student may speak for one week at a time for all introductions of events that week, rotate after each speaking event, or otherwise as determined by the school. The list of student speakers shall be chronologically repeated as needed, in the same order. The school may repeat the selection process each semester rather than once a year.

The subject of the student introductions must be related to the purpose of the event and to the purpose of marking the opening of the event, honoring the occasion, the participants, and those in attendance, bringing the audience to order, and focusing the audience on the purpose of the event. The subject must be designated, a student must stay on the subject, and the student may not engage in obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent speech.

For as long as there is a need to dispel confusion over the non-sponsorship of the student's speech at each event in which a student will deliver an introduction, a disclaimer shall be stated in written or oral form, or both, such as,

The student giving the introduction for this event is a volunteering student selected on neutral criteria to introduce the event. The content of the introduction is the private expression of the student and does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression of the school.

Certain students who have attained special positions of honor in the school have traditionally addressed school audiences from time to time as a tangential component of their achieved positions of honor, such as the captains of various sports teams, student council officers, class officers, homecoming kings and queens, prom kings and queens, and the like, and have attained their positions based on neutral criteria. Nothing in this policy eliminates the continuation of the practice of having these students, irrespective of grade level, address school audiences in the normal course of their respective positions. The school shall create a limited public forum for the speakers and shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the school treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the

student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

### **Student Speakers at Graduation**

The school hereby creates a limited public forum consisting of an opportunity for a student to speak to begin graduation ceremonies and another student to speak to end graduation ceremonies. For each speaker, the school shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion.

The forum shall be limited in the manner provided by this section.

Only students who are graduating and who hold one of the following neutral criteria positions of honor shall be eligible to use the limited public forum: student council officers, class officers of the graduating class, the top three academically ranked graduates, or a shorter or longer list of student leaders as the school may designate. A student who will otherwise have a speaking role in the graduation ceremonies is ineligible to give the opening and closing remarks. The names of the eligible volunteering students will be randomly drawn. The first name drawn will give the opening and the second name drawn will give the closing.

The topic of the opening and closing remarks must be related to the purpose of the graduation ceremony and to the purpose of marking the opening and closing of the event, honoring the occasion, the participants, and those in attendance, bringing the audience to order, and focusing the audience on the purpose of the event.

In addition to the students giving the opening and closing remarks, certain other students who have attained special positions of honor based on neutral criteria, including, without limitation, the valedictorian, will have speaking roles at graduation ceremonies. For each speaker, the school shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion and to the position held by the speaker. For this purpose, the school creates a limited public forum for these students to deliver the addresses. The subject of the addresses must be related to the purpose of the graduation ceremony, marking and honoring the occasion, honoring the participants and those in attendance, and the student's perspective on purpose, achievement, life, school, graduation, and looking forward to the future.

The subject must be designated for each student speaker, the student must stay on the subject, and the student may not engage in obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent speech. The school shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the school treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

A written disclaimer shall be printed in the graduation program that states:

The students who will be speaking at the graduation ceremony were selected based on neutral criteria to deliver messages of the students' own choices. The content of each student speaker's message is the private expression of the individual student and does not reflect any position or expression of the school; the school's employees, administration, or board of trustees; or the views of any other graduate. The contents of these messages were prepared by the student volunteers, and the school refrained from any interaction with student speakers regarding the student speakers' viewpoints on permissible subjects.

## **Tardiness**

Students who are late to class are designated tardy and will be assigned disciplinary consequences if they are tardy, without an acceptable excuse, on four or more days within a period of 45 rolling school days. Egregious tardiness—e.g., arriving at school after attendance has been taken—will be classified as an absence for the purpose of compulsory attendance enforcement if unexcused.

Students arriving late must report to the office to get an excuse to enter their classroom. To get an excused tardy slip, the student's parent must report to the school office the emergency which caused the delay.

## **Telephone**

Because of the tremendous amount of essential business that must be transacted over the school office telephones, students are requested not to ask for use of the telephone except in emergencies. The school office staff will deliver messages in cases of emergency. No toll calls from office telephones are to be made by students.

## **Transfers Within the Heritage Academy Community of Schools**

Parents of students under 18 years of age and students 18 years of age and older may request a transfer to another Heritage Academy community school operated under the same charter by submitting a "Student Transfer Request Form" to the Campus Principal at the school office. A "Student Transfer Request Form" may be obtained at the school office.

### **Transfer Window**

Transfer requests are accepted annually in the school office and must be received during the transfer window for consideration. The transfer window coincides with the established open-enrollment period for each year.

In general, transfer requests will not be considered outside the transfer window except for new Heritage Academy employees within their first month of employment and those who move during the course of the school year. The Campus Principal reserves the right to make exceptions in extenuating situations.

Notification of the decision for a transfer request will be communicated in writing by March 1. The school may delay a decision when the school determines a delay is necessary to properly consider relevant information and operational needs.

### **Considerations of Transfer Request**

Upon receipt of the "Student Transfer Request Form," the Campus Principal of the sending and receiving schools will consider the following factors when approving transfers:

1. overcrowding at the sending and receiving schools;
2. size of the sending and receiving schools;
3. length of time for which the transfer is requested (The student must intend to remain for the full year.);
4. student attendance history;

5. student discipline history;
6. student academic performance; (i.e., Students must be passing all subjects/courses.)
7. whether the student is a child of a Heritage Academy employee; and
8. the existence and extent of a waiting list at the receiving school; and
9. extenuating circumstances as determined on a case-by-case basis.

If approved, a transfer student may receive priority status.

### **Length of Approved Transfers**

Once a transfer is granted, the student will transfer as a full-time student to the requested school. The parent may elect a one-time option to request a transfer returning to the student's sending school at the end of the semester (Grades 9–12) or the end of the year (Grades 1–8). **Reasons for Transfer Revocation**

Transfers may be revoked by the receiving Campus Principal for any of the following reasons:

1. changes in the facility and/or instructional capacity at the receiving school;
2. falsification of residence, transfer, or enrollment documents; or
3. other relevant factors as determined by the Campus Principal.

Once a transfer is revoked, the student must return to his or her sending school. Except when deemed necessary by the Campus Principal, no further transfer request will be granted for this student.

### **Appeals**

Decisions regarding student transfers may be appealed in accordance with the school grievance procedure (see "Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns," p. 99).

### **Transportation**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips may be required to ride a school vehicle (i.e., a vehicle driven for school-related business or owned, leased, or rented by the school). The Campus Principal, however, may make an exception if the parent personally requests that the student be permitted to ride with the parent, or if the parent presents—prior to the day of the scheduled trip—a written request that the student be permitted to ride with an adult designated by the parent. Riding a school vehicle is a privilege. School vehicle drivers have the authority to maintain discipline and require seating charts. When riding a school vehicle, students are held to behavioral standards established in this Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

1. follow the driver's directions at all times;
2. enter and leave the vehicle in an orderly manner;
3. keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle;
4. not deface the vehicle or its equipment;

5. not put head, hands, arms, legs, or any object out of any window; and
6. wait for the driver's signal in order to leave or cross in front of the vehicle.

Only designated students are allowed to ride in the vehicle. Students may neither ride the vehicle to a different location nor have friends ride the vehicle to participate in after-school activities.

If a special needs student is receiving bus transportation as a result of an Individual Education Plan (IEP), the Admission Review and Dismissal (ARD) Committee will have the discretion in determining appropriate disciplinary consequences.

## **Use of Student's Image/Information**

Photographs of students (including video images) along with student names, activities, honors, and achievements will be allowed for use in official school projects and events unless a parent specifically requests in writing that such usage be denied. Individual student photos for official campus identification cards may be taken as required.

## **Displaying a Student's Artwork, Projects, Photos, and Other Original Work**

Teachers may display student work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement. However, the school will seek parental consent before displaying student artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, and other original works on the school website, on any campus or classroom website, in printed materials, by video, or by any other method of mass communication. The school will also seek consent before displaying or publishing an original video or voice recording in this manner.

## **Visitors**

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit the campus. No visitors will be allowed in any part of the building without first obtaining approval from the school office. The school will take the following actions when there is a visitor at the school:

1. The visitor must first report to the school office, and will be required to furnish a U.S. federal or state-issued photo ID.
2. The visitor's information will be stored in an electronic database to document visitors to the school. Information stored in the electronic database may be used only for the purpose of school security, and may not be sold or otherwise disseminated to a third party for any purpose.
3. The school will verify whether the visitor is a sex offender registered with the computerized central database maintained by the Department of Public Safety or any other database accessible by the school. Visitors identified as sex offenders shall be escorted by school staff at all times during a school visit.
4. A visitor badge will be issued to the visitor and displayed conspicuously during the visit.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the Campus Principal and

teacher, and such visits are not permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment.

## **Volunteers**

Heritage Academy encourages parents, guardians, grandparents, or other relatives of students to volunteer with the school. Anyone who is interested in participating as a volunteer must submit an application and register as a volunteer with the Campus Principal. While the school encourages volunteerism, the safety of each student is vital. In accordance with state law and to ensure the safety of students, annual criminal history background checks for volunteers are required.

“Volunteer” means any person who regularly provides services for or on behalf of the school, and includes a person volunteering for a single field-trip or event, on school premises or at a school- sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property, who does not receive compensation in excess of reimbursement for expenses. All volunteers must clear the background check before they can begin volunteer work and must provide an official form of identification. Volunteers must adhere to any and all volunteer guidelines and directions given by the school.

## **Withdrawals**

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. Less than three days’ notice may result in forms being mailed. A withdrawal form may be obtained from the school office.

A student who is 18 years of age or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor, may withdraw without parental signature. In all cases, withdrawal forms must be appropriately completed and signed before withdrawal is complete. The school may initiate withdrawal of a student for non-attendance if:

1. the student has been absent ten consecutive school days and repeated efforts by the school to locate the student have been unsuccessful, or
2. the student is 18 years of age or older has more than five unexcused absences in one semester.

## **School-Sponsored Field Trips**

The school periodically takes students on field trips for education purposes. A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip. A minimum of two (2) adult chaperones will accompany students on any school-sponsored trip or field trip. The school may (as allowed by law) require a fee for student participation in a field trip to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and meals. Students will not be denied participation in a field trip because of financial need. The school may ask a parent to provide information about a student’s medical provider and insurance coverage and may also ask a parent to sign a waiver allowing for emergency medical treatment in the case of a student accident or illness during the field trip.

**Field Trip Chaperones**

Parents chaperoning students are also responsible for the behavior of the students in their care. No inappropriate conversation, words, or inappropriate behavior should be allowed. Chaperones are expected to help teachers maintain respectful student behavior for the duration of the field trip. Chaperones responsible for looking after students should never leave them unattended. If the students have been instructed by the teacher to be a certain place at a certain time, it is the responsibility of the chaperone to see that they are there.

## SECTION II: Health and Safety

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

1. avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk;
2. follow the behavioral standards in this Handbook, including the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the Campus Principal, teachers, or school staff;
3. remain alert to and promptly report to school staff safety hazards, such as intruders on campus and threats made by any person toward a student or school staff;
4. know emergency evacuation routes and signals;
5. immediately follow the instructions of school staff who are overseeing the welfare of students; and
6. make anonymous reports about school safety concerns by contacting the Vice President of Operations at the Corporate Office..

### **Asbestos Management Plan**

The school has every facility inspected for asbestos before use by a licensed Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) inspector. An Asbestos Management Plan is created for the school in accordance with federal regulations by AHERA. Parents may view the Asbestos Management Plan by contacting the school office.

### **Bacterial Meningitis**

#### **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.

Students 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 students 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 and 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?**

Using good health practices such as covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing and washing your hands with soap and water can help stop the spread of the bacteria. Students should not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Students should limit the number of persons they kiss. There are vaccines available to offer protection from some of the bacteria that can cause bacterial meningitis. The vaccines are safe and effective (85–90%) and 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.

The Texas Department of State Health Services requires at least one meningococcal vaccine (MCV4) in Grade 7. One dose of quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine is required on or after the student's 11<sup>th</sup> birthday. If a student received the vaccine at ten years of age, this will satisfy the state's requirement.

**What should students do if they think they or a friend might have bacterial meningitis?**

Students should seek prompt medical attention.

**Where can students get more information?**

A family doctor and the staff at the local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. Parents and students may also call the local health department or Regional Texas Department of Health office to ask about the meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the following websites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov) and the Texas Department of State Health Services [dshs.state.tx.us](http://dshs.state.tx.us).

**Child Abuse and Other Maltreatment Reporting and Investigations****Reporting Procedures**

A person who suspects that a child is neglected, being abused, or is a victim of sex trafficking has a legal responsibility under state law to report such suspected abuse to Child Protective Services at 1 (800) 252-5400 or the local police department at 911.

Students who believe they are the subjects of sexual abuse or other maltreatment should report the incident immediately to a teacher or the Campus Principal.

If a parent has cause to believe that a student has been or may be abused or neglected at school, the parent shall immediately notify the Campus Principal at the school and make an oral report to Child Protective Services at 1 (800) 252-5400 or the local police department at 911.

### **Counseling Services**

Counseling services will be made available for students affected by sexual abuse or other maltreatment.

### **Additional Information**

Additional information regarding sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, including prevention techniques and knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a child may be a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment, may be found at the following Educational Service Center Region 14 website

[https://www.esc14.net/page/t4si\\_parent\\_abusepreventionresources](https://www.esc14.net/page/t4si_parent_abusepreventionresources)

### **Staff Training**

All members of the school staff are trained annually in child abuse awareness, child sexual abuse, trafficking, neglect, and other maltreatment of children, including maltreatment of children with significant cognitive disabilities and reporting procedures.

### **Student Interviews at School**

The school cooperates with official child abuse investigators as required by law. The school may not interfere with an investigation of a report of child abuse or neglect conducted by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). The school shall permit the investigator to conduct the required interview with the student at any reasonable time at the school. The school may not require the investigator to permit school staff to be present at a student interview conducted at school.

### **Notification of Parents**

Investigations at school may be conducted by authorized law enforcement or state agencies without prior notification or consent of the student's parents if necessary.

### **Children of Military Families**

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

1. immunization requirements;
2. grade level, course, or educational program placement;
3. eligibility requirements for participating in extracurricular activities; and
4. graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parents, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment of at least four months will be excused by the school. The school will permit no more than five excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60<sup>th</sup> day before deployment or no later than the

30<sup>th</sup> day after the parent's return from deployment.

### **Cold/Heat/Ozone Guidelines**

Weather conditions can pose a risk to the health of students. The following guidelines are intended to assist when making decisions regarding outside activities during periods of high heat or heat index, when there is an ozone warning or when other atmospheric conditions pose a health risk to students. Activity results in the loss of body fluids. Excessive heat and/or humidity increase the amount of fluid loss. The body needs a cool-down period to readjust itself to the cooler temperatures within the building. Efforts will be made to make sure that students consistently drink fluids so they do not dehydrate. If a student becomes thirsty, he or she is already under-hydrated. Fluids are especially important before any physical activity or before leaving an air-conditioned environment. Many medications prescribed for therapeutic purposes can potentially affect heat tolerance. Some students on medication have an impaired ability to dissipate heat from the body due to their medical conditions.

**Parents should notify the school in writing if they do not want their children to go outside on days other than those mentioned above for recess or any other outside activity.**

### **Hot Temperatures**

When the temperature or heat index rises to 95 degrees or the ozone alert is orange, outdoor recess or activities should be limited to ten minutes.

When the temperature or heat index rises to 100 or the ozone alert is red or purple, no outside recess or activities should be allowed, except for normal dismissal procedures, but caution will be used during dismissal time to keep exposure to heat at a minimum.

Parents are encouraged to dress children in cotton material, loose fitting, lightweight, and light colored clothes. Parents are encouraged to provide a balanced diet including four to five servings of fruits and vegetables daily. These foods are not only natural sources of vitamins and electrolytes, but provide additional water to the body. To the extent possible schedules will be rearranged so that outside activities can occur in the mornings, when the temperature is cooler. Discretion will be used to decrease outside activities when seasonal temperatures and humidity exceed those normal for this area. Vigilance in hydrating students before, during, and after outside activities will be used.

Efforts will be made to ensure that all staff members are aware of the signs, symptoms, and treatment procedures for heat-related illnesses. A cool-down period once the students return to the building from outside activities will be encouraged.

Efforts will be made to ensure that students are aware that metal parts, including swing chains, metal slides, metal wheels, screws, and bolts will be hot and to avoid them as much as possible during this time.

During these times of heat, it is advised that students are to be kept inside the building while waiting for a bus, daycare van, or parent pick-up.

## **Cold Temperatures**

During times of excessive cold weather, the following precautions should be taken: When the temperature or wind chill is at or below 25 degrees, no outdoor recess or activities should be allowed. Parents are encouraged to dress children in appropriate cold weather clothing, including dressing in layers during the cold weather months.

**If students do not have appropriate outerwear, they will be kept indoors.**

Efforts will be made to ensure that all staff members are aware of the signs, symptoms, and treatment procedures for cold-related illnesses. During these times of cold, it is advised that students are to be kept inside the building while waiting for a bus, daycare van, or parent pick-up.

## **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 school staff suspects that a student may have a contagious disease based on signs or symptoms the student has, staff will exclude the student from attendance until all suspicious symptoms are gone or until the child's physician documents that the student may return to school. Parents of a student with a communicable or contagious disease should keep their child home and phone the school office so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

The district is required to report certain contagious (communicable) diseases or illnesses to the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) or to our local/regional health authority. A list of notifiable conditions can be found on the DSHS website. The school office can also provide information from DSHS on the notifiable conditions.

Heritage Academy will follow the county, state, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance regarding epidemics and pandemics such as COVID-19, including the guidelines from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). See the Heritage Academy website for additional information and updates regarding how a current epidemic or pandemic like COVID-19 impacts school operations.

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

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than three consecutive days because of 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. Otherwise, the student's absence may be considered unexcused and if so, would be in violation of compulsory attendance laws.

## **Emergency Medical Treatment**

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity and the parent cannot be reached, school staff will seek emergency medical treatment unless the parent has previously provided a written statement denying this authorization. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an "Emergency Care Consent Form," which includes information about their student's allergies to medications, *etc.* Parents should keep emergency care information current (*e.g.*, name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, *etc.*). An updated "Student Health Form" will be required at the beginning of each school year. Please inform the school office of any changes that occur during the school year. The parent and/or guardian is responsible for all incurred costs related to the student's emergency medical treatment.

## **Fire, Lock-Down, and Disaster Drills**

### **Fire drills are conducted for two purposes:**

1. to train students to leave the building orderly and quickly in case of an emergency alarm, and
2. to teach self-control in times of emergency.

When the fire alarm is sounded, all students should immediately walk out of the room and proceed to the designated exit. They should walk in an orderly manner, with no talking or pushing. When the students reach the safety zone designated by the teacher, they should face the building but remain in line.

In addition to fire drills, lock-down or disaster drills will also be conducted.

### **Food Allergies**

Immediate notification should be made when students have been diagnosed with an allergy that could result in dangerous or possible life-threatening reactions either by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact with a particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic to, as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school office if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy. The parent of each student enrolled in the school must complete the school's "Food Allergy Form." The school may also require information from a child's physician if the child has food allergies.

Food allergy information forms will be maintained in the child's student records and shall remain confidential. Information provided on food allergy information forms may be disclosed to teachers, school counselors, school nurses, and other appropriate school personnel only to the extent consistent with Board policy and as permissible under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, based on the Texas Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) "Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis."

The complete text of the "Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis" can be found on the [DSHS website](https://dshs.texas.gov/schoolhealth/allergiesandanaphylaxis/) at <https://dshs.texas.gov/schoolhealth/allergiesandanaphylaxis/>.

### **Head Lice**

Students should not be excluded from school due to the presence of head lice. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Texas Department of Health and Human Services have noted that there is little evidence that exclusion from school reduces the transmission of head lice. The goal of lice prevention and control in the school is to limit the spread of lice from one student to another through accurate diagnosis and meaningful and consistent communication and education. Notifications will be sent to the parent and direct classroom parents with guidelines and treatment recommendations. The parent of the child with Lice has the option of picking them up early or leaving them in class. More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website.

## **Healthcare Appointments**

A student may be excused for a temporary absence resulting from a visit to healthcare professionals if that student begins classes or returns to school on the same day of the appointment. A note from the healthcare professional must be provided to the school office upon return of the student to school. Students whose absences are excused for these reasons may not be penalized for that absence and will be counted as if the student attended school for attendance purposes. The student will be allowed a reasonable time to make up the missed school work.

## **Health Screenings**

Students in mandated grades are required under state law to be screened for vision and hearing deficiencies, spinal curvature, and Type 2 diabetes. For information on spinal screening by an outside professional, please contact campus level health services staff.

### **Exemption**

A student is exempt from screening if the screening conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the individual is an adherent or member. To qualify for the exemption, the student's parent must submit to the school office on or before the day of the screening procedure an affidavit stating the objections to screening.

## **Homeless Students**

Please inform the district if you or your child are experiencing homelessness. District staff can share resources with you that may be able to assist you and your family.

Children experiencing homelessness will be provided flexibility with respect to the following:

1. proof of residency requirements;
2. immunization requirements;
3. education program placement in some instances, such as inability to provide previous academic records;
4. award of partial credit;
5. eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities; and
6. review of graduation requirements.

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Vice-President of Operations.

## **Illness During School Hours**

A student who becomes ill during school hours is to report to the teacher, who will then send him or her to the school office. No student is allowed to go home without the parent being notified. Students are not to call parents from school phones or cell phones asking to go home; such calls are to be made from the school office by school staff. A parent/guardian will not be called for each clinic visit. A parent/guardian will be notified by phone call or clinic information form of the following types of injuries or illnesses:

1. head injury – potential for delayed repercussions/possible concussions
2. vomiting, diarrhea, and/or fever greater than 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit – potential for a contagious condition/illness

3. ineffective medication regimen – such as, but not limited to, asthma inhaler, diabetes management, ADHD
4. life-threatening occurrences
5. orthopedic injuries that are not relieved with rest and ice
6. any injury/illness deemed necessary by the nurse

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she won't be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools are required to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods of time as identified in state rules. Students should stay home from school due to illness if any of the following are present:

1. fever of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher in the past 24 hours;
2. vomiting and/or diarrhea in the past 24 hours;
3. itchy, red eyes with discharge;
4. unknown rash;
5. ringworm (until treatment has been started);
6. live head lice; or
7. jaundice.

An updated list of conditions for which the school must exclude students for health reasons can be provided by the school office. To protect students at school, students assessed with any of the signs and symptoms listed above will be sent home.

### **Immunizations**

Texas Law requires that a student 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 reason of conscience, Heritage Academy can honor only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Immunization Branch. This form may be obtained by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, TX 78714-93447, or online at <https://corequest.dshs.texas.gov>.

The form must be notarized and submitted to the school office 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. These forms expire after two years.

Each student shall be fully immunized against diphtheria, tetanus; rubeola (measles), mumps, rubella, and poliomyelitis (polio). Students in kindergarten through 12th grade shall have the following additional vaccines according to the immunization schedules set forth in DSHS regulations: pertussis; hepatitis A; hepatitis B; and varicella (chickenpox). Students enrolling in 7th through 12th Grade are required to have one dose of meningococcal (MCV4) vaccine on or after

the student’s 11th birthday and a TDAP Booster. In accordance with state law and regulations, additional vaccines may be required by DSHS and/or local health authorities in specific situations pursuant to a control order containing control measures.

**Provisional Enrollment**

At the time of enrollment, a student’s immunization record or exemption paperwork must be submitted to the school. The law requires that students be fully vaccinated against the specified diseases. A student may be enrolled provisionally if the student has an immunization record that indicates the student has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate vaccine required by this rule.

A student must not be overdue to the next dose in a series to be considered provisional. To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible and provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school.

A school health staffer or administrator shall review the immunization status of provisionally enrolled student every 30 days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of a vaccination.

If, at the end of the 30- day period, a student has not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, the student is not in compliance and the school shall exclude the student from school attendance until the required dose is administered or appropriate waiver documentation is received.

A student may also provisionally enroll for not more than 30 days from the first day of attendance:

1. if the student is transferring from a Texas school to a Texas school and is awaiting the transfer of the immunization record; or
2. if the student is a dependent of a parent or guardian who is Active Duty Military with a valid ID card and is awaiting the transfer of the immunization record; or
3. if the student is homeless as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

**Immunization Records Reporting**

Since many types of personal immunization records are in use, any document will be acceptable provided a physician or public health personnel has validated it. Validation includes a signature, initials, or stamp. An immunization record generated from an electronic health record must include clinic contact information and the provider’s signature stamp, along with the vaccine name and vaccination date. An official record generated from a health authority is acceptable. An official record received from school officials, including a record from another state is acceptable.

The school’s record of a student’s immunization history, while private in most instances, may be inspected by the Texas Education Agency, local health departments, and the Texas Department of State Health Services and transferred to other schools associated with the transfer of the student to those schools.



## **Injuries/Accident Insurance**

The school is not responsible for medical costs associated with a student's injury nor is the school responsible for medical costs associated with injuries to parents, visitors, or volunteers. At the beginning of each school year, the school does make available, however, an optional, low-cost student accident insurance program to assist parents in meeting medical expenses. A parent who desires coverage for his or her student will be responsible for paying insurance premiums and submitting claims.

## **Investigations and Searches**

Students shall not place, keep, or maintain any article or material prohibited by school policy or that would lead school officials to reasonably believe that it would cause a substantial disruption at school or at a school-sponsored or school-related function. Campus Principals and teachers have the right to question students regarding their conduct or the conduct of others.

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

Administrators, teachers, and other professional personnel may question a student regarding the student's own conduct or the conduct of other students. In the context of school discipline, students have no claim to the right not to incriminate themselves.

School staff may conduct searches of a student's outer clothing, pockets, personal property/belongings (backpack, etc.), and vehicles on school property and property under school control in accordance with law and Board policy. Searches will be conducted based on

[1] reasonable suspicion or (2) securing the student's voluntary consent. Consent obtained through the threat of contacting parents or the police authorities is not considered to be voluntarily given. Unless an emergency or urgent circumstances exist, searches shall be conducted by the Campus Principal or Assistant Campus Principal, or his or her designee, and with another staff member present for the search.

If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the school will contact the student's parents. If the parents also refuse to permit the vehicle to be searched, the school may contact law enforcement officials. The school may contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.

Lockers, desks/offices, school provided technology, and other school property is subject to search or inspection at any time without notice, and with or without the presence of the student. Students should have no expectation of privacy in school property. Students are responsible for any item found in school property that has been provided to the student that is prohibited by law, school policy, or the Code of Conduct. Students are responsible for prohibited items found in their possession, including items in their personal belongings or vehicle. The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's possession.

## **Random Drug Searches [M] [H]**

In order to ensure a drug-free learning environment, the school conducts random drug searches of the school facilities. The school may use or contract for specially trained dogs to alert school officials to the presence of

prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. Canine visits may be unannounced. The dogs shall not be asked to alert students. At any time, trained dogs may be used around lockers and the areas around vehicles parked on campus. 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.

## **Law Enforcement Agencies**

### **Procedures for Law Enforcement Interviews**

The following procedures shall be followed when law enforcement officers and other lawful authorities want to question or interview a student at the school:

1. The school shall verify and record the identity of the official and request an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.
2. The school shall make reasonable efforts to notify the student's parents.
3. Unless prohibited by law or when the student has been arrested or taken into police custody, a school staff member shall be present during the questioning or interview.

When the investigation involves allegations of child abuse, special rules apply (see "Child Abuse and Other Maltreatment Reporting and Investigations," p. 33).

### **Procedures for Assuming Custody of Student**

The school shall permit a student to be taken into custody: pursuant to an order of the juvenile court;

1. pursuant to the laws of arrest;
2. by a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in conduct that violates a penal law, delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision, or conduct that violates a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court;
3. by a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court;
4. pursuant to a properly issued directive to apprehend; or
5. by an authorized representative of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in Section 262.104 of the Texas Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.

## **Medication Policies**

### **All Medication**

#### ***Medicine At School – No Tolerance Policy***

Heritage Academy has a "no tolerance" policy for students in possession of medication of any kind, **including herbal supplements, vitamins, and all over-the-counter medications, including cough drops/ lozenges**. All medications must be delivered and picked up by a parent or guardian. Students are not allowed to drop off or take home their

medication(s) from the school clinic. All medications are to be stored in the first aid office with the exception of prescribed medications for the treatment of asthma, anaphylaxis, and diabetes. Please see the designated health person on your campus if your child has one of these conditions.

Students with asthma or anaphylaxis may carry prescribed inhalers or medications, provided written authorization from the parent or guardian is given to the campus, **as well as a written statement from the student's physician or licensed healthcare provider stating that the student has asthma or anaphylaxis and is capable of self-administering the prescribed medication.** The campus may provide you with a form if one is needed. The physician must also provide written information of the name and purpose of the medication and the prescribed dosage. All medications *must* be examined and approved by the designated health person and *must* also have the prescription label on the medication.

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.

All other medications must be stored in the campus clinic in the original container clearly labeled with the student's name. Failure to store medication in the campus clinic or follow the above mentioned procedure may result in serious disciplinary action.

#### **Medication Guidelines:**

1. All medication must be stored in the clinic except in special circumstances for a student with asthma, diabetes, or a life-threatening allergy.
2. All prescription medication **MUST** be in the original container with the pharmacy prescription label. No more than **one month's supply** of medication in a prescription labeled bottle shall be brought to the clinic at one time. ALL prescription medication will be counted and documented upon arrival to the campus.
3. Over-the-counter medication **MUST** be in the original container with the student's name on the container. Due to limited storage, no more than a **30-count container** shall be stored in the clinic. Over-the-counter medications may be left in the clinic during the entire school year with a parent's signature. We are unable to store any medication at the school during the summer and will dispose of all medication left in the clinic after the last day of school.
4. Over-the-counter medications will be given according to the label on the package unless otherwise directed by a physician.
5. Over-the-counter medications will not be given for more than five consecutive school days without a physician's signature. Medication Administration Form must be complete with the parent's signature.
6. Medications are to be brought to the clinic by the parent or guardian. Only an adult may pick up medications from the clinic.
7. All prescription medication given over ten days will **require** a physician's signature.
8. No medication container may contain more than one type of medication.
9. Medications prescribed or requested to be given three times per day or less are not to be given at school unless it is determined that a special need exists.
10. A student **MAY NOT** share medication with another student. **Siblings MAY NOT share medication.**

11. Campus personnel do not administer dietary or herbal supplements unless required by the student's IEP or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

### **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.

### **Prescription Medication**

Prescription medication administered during school hours must be prescribed by a physician or advanced nurse practitioner (ANP) and filled by a pharmacist licensed in the state of Texas.

Prescription medication labels must include the student's name and instructions, and be clearly legible, and not expired:

Written instructions from a physician or ANP are required and must include the following information:

1. name of the student, name of the medication,
2. reason the medication is being given,
3. specific amount to be given,
4. time the medication is to be given, and
5. the method used to administer the medication.

No more than one month's supply of medication in a prescription labeled bottle shall be brought to the clinic at one time. ALL prescription medication will be counted and documented upon arrival to the campus.

Changes to daily medications require written instruction from the physician or ANP and written permission from the parent. Parents are responsible for advising the school office that a medication has been discontinued. Parents cannot change dosage or medication without a medical provider order.

### **Asthma and Anaphylaxis Medication**

Asthma and anaphylaxis are life-threatening conditions, and students with those conditions may be allowed to possess and self-administer prescription medications for those conditions during the school day or at school-related events. Student possession and self-administration of asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school require the student to demonstrate his or her ability to self-administer the medication for the physician or licensed healthcare provider and the Campus Principal. Requirements also include written authorization from the student's parent and physician or other licensed healthcare provider on file in the school office indicating the student is capable of independently administering his or her own asthma or emergency anaphylaxis medication. With these safeguards in place, the student may possess and self-administer his or her prescribed medication at his or her discretion during school hours or at school-related events.

Written authorizations to self-administer asthma or anaphylaxis medication should be updated annually unless otherwise indicated by the physician.

Medication in a student's possession must be in an original container with a prescription label. Please note that most pharmacies will place a label on the inhaler device upon request.

### **Diabetes Management**

Students with diabetes may possess equipment and medication used in the treatment of diabetes during the school day and at school-related events given certain conditions. According to Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 168, a diabetes management and treatment plan must be developed and implemented by the student's parents and the physician responsible for the student's diabetes treatment. This plan must evaluate the student's ability to manage diabetes and his or her level of understanding of diabetes and must be signed by the parent and physician responsible for the student's diabetes treatment. An individual health plan must be implemented by the school and must incorporate components of the student's diabetes management and treatment plan. In accordance with the student's individualized health plan, which incorporates the diabetes management and treatment plan signed by the parent and physician that indicates the student's ability to manage diabetes and his or her level of understanding of diabetes, a school shall permit a student to attend to the management and care of his or her diabetes, which may include:

1. performing blood glucose level checks;
2. administering insulin;
3. treating hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia;
4. possessing necessary monitoring and treatment equipment designed for diabetes care; and
5. attending to the management of his or her diabetes in the classroom, in any area of the school grounds, or at any school-related activity.

### **Opioid Antagonist Medication**

A Heritage Academy Nurse or other properly trained and designated individual shall be authorized to administer opioid antagonist medication, such as Naloxone, to assist a person who is reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid-related overdose. These authorized persons may administer this medication in accordance with a standing order and/or procedures provided and/or approved by a physician licensed to practice medicine in the State of Texas. The employee shall promptly seek additional medical assistance for the person to whom the medication is administered.

### **On Campus**

Employed authorized personnel identified in the preceding paragraph may administer the opioid antagonist medication on a school campus or at a school sponsored event in accordance with this policy and applicable administrative regulations.

### **Maintenance, Availability, and Training**

Before any RN, LVN, or other designated and trained employee may have custody of or administer an opioid antagonist medication under this policy, the employee must successfully complete an annual training program provided by Heritage Academy, which includes recognizing opioid-related overdoses, administering opioid antagonist medication, and promptly seeking medical attention for suspected drug overdoses. A list of employees who successfully complete such training shall be maintained, updated, and kept in the district administrative office.

Heritage Academy shall provide RNs, LVNs, and other relevant school personnel with the opportunity to complete such training during their regular work schedule.

Opioid antagonist medication shall be stored with the automated external defibrillator (AED) in each school's emergency box, accessible by designated and trained employees, and in accordance with the drug manufacturer's instructions. Opioid antagonist medication shall be made readily available to designated employees who have completed the required training to administer in the event of suspected drug overdose. All designated and properly trained employees shall be made aware of the exact location of the opioid antagonist medication.

The school nurse, or designee shall regularly inventory and verify opioid antagonist medication supply, and maintain records thereof, in accordance with the established internal procedures and manufacturer recommendations. Expired, damaged, or used opioid antagonist medication shall be disposed of in accordance with established medical waste disposal procedures.

### **Course and Scope of Employment**

Heritage Academy will consider the administration of opioid antagonist medication by a properly trained employee under this Policy to be acting in the course and scope of his or her employment, and therefore entitled to defense by the District, if the following conditions are met:

The designated and trained employee did not act with the intent to harm or with reckless indifference to a substantial risk or harm in administering opioid antagonist medication to that individual.

1. The designated and trained employee successfully completed the training contemplated by this Policy.
2. The designated and trained employee administering the opioid antagonist medication promptly sought additional medical assistance.
3. The designated and trained employee is administering opioid antagonist medication pursuant to this policy.

### **Notice to Parents**

Heritage Academy shall provide notice to parents regarding the opioid antagonist medication program, including notice of any change to or discontinuation of this program.

### **Unassigned Epinephrine Auto-Injectors**

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, ResponsiveEd has adopted a policy to allow authorized school personnel who have been adequately trained to administer an unassigned epinephrine auto-injector to a person who is reasonably believed to be experiencing a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). An “unassigned epinephrine auto-injector” is an epinephrine auto-injector prescribed by an authorized health-care provider in the name of the school issued with a non-patient-specific standing delegation order for the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector. Authorized and trained individuals may administer an epinephrine auto-injector at any time to a person experiencing anaphylaxis on a school campus.

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow a school nurse to administer an unassigned prescription asthma medication on a school campus to a student with diagnosed asthma if the nurse, in his or her professional judgment, reasonably believes the student is experiencing symptoms of asthma that warrant administration of the medication and the district has obtained prior written consent from the student’s parent or guardian.

The school nurse may only administer unassigned prescription asthma medication to a student on a school campus. Please be aware that a school nurse will not always be available at a campus to administer this medication. “Unassigned asthma medication” means a fast-acting bronchodilator delivered by metered dose inhaler with single use spacer or by nebulizer as a rescue medication, prescribed by an authorized health-care provider in the name of the district with a non-patient-specific standing delegation order for the administration of an asthma medication, and issued by an authorized health-care provider.

### **Mental Health Services**

The district is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its students. If you are concerned about your child, please access the following websites or contact the school for more information related to mental health services and to find mental health services available in your area:

- <https://texassuicideprevention.org>
- <https://dshs.state.tx.us/mhservices-search>

If a student has been hospitalized or placed in residential treatment for a mental health condition or substance abuse, Heritage Academy has procedures to support the student’s return to school. Please contact the campus Principal or Counselor.

### **Tobacco**

Smoking and using smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, electronic vapor devices, or tobacco products are not permitted in school buildings, vehicles, or on school property, 300 feet from school property, or at school related or school-sanctioned events off school property. Any such items as mentioned above shall be confiscated and may be subject to destruction. Students who act in violation of this prohibition shall be subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Pest Control Information**

The school periodically applies pesticides inside school buildings and on school grounds. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 24 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to a pesticide application may contact the Campus Principal or school office.

## **Physical Restraint**

School staff may, within the scope of their duties, use and apply physical restraint to a student that they reasonably believe is necessary in order to:

1. protect a person, including the person using physical restraint, from physical injury;
2. obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object;
3. protect property from serious damage;
4. remove from a specific location a student refusing a lawful command of school staff, including a classroom or other school property, in order to restore order or impose disciplinary measures;
5. restrain an irrational student; or
6. prevent the student from fleeing when fleeing would put other students or others in danger.

## **Private Service Providers on Campus**

Private service providers are not permitted to provide services to students on school campuses during the school day. A private service provider is a provider that is not providing services as part of a student IEP or IAP, but rather has been employed or contracted by a parent, at a parent's option and expense, to provide services to a student. The provider may be an agency representative or individual providing services on behalf of parents or an agency for a child or adult student. Such providers may include, but are not limited to, tutors, psychologists, counselors, occupational therapists, educational therapists, physical therapists, nurses, and speech therapists.

Any request or inquiry for providers to be permitted to be on campus during the school day, or if a student is frequently removed during the school day for private provider services, should be submitted in writing and sent to the Executive Director of Special Education, Dyslexia, & Section 504 Services for review by the ARD/IEP or 504 Committee if the request is for a student with disabilities. For general education students, requests should be sent to the Regional Director for review.

If a parent or guardian removes a student during the school day, or authorizes an agency to remove a student during the day for private provider services, time away from school must be minimized and should be, to the extent possible, provided before and after school so the student does not miss instructional time.



## Seizures

To address the care of a student with a seizure disorder while at school or participating in a school activity, a parent may submit a seizure management plan and treatment plan to the school before the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment of the student, or as soon as practicable following a diagnosis of a seizure disorder for the student.

The plan must be developed with the assistance of a physician and must identify the healthcare services the student may receive at school or while at a school activity; evaluate the student's ability to manage and level of understanding of the seizures; and be signed by the parent and the student's physician.

## Service Animals

Service animals are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. The work or task a service animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support may not qualify as service animals. A parent of a student who uses a service/assistance animal because of the student's disability must submit a request in writing to the Campus Director at least ten business days before bringing the service animal on campus. The written request should contain the following information:

1. the name of the student handler;
2. the type of service animal (dog or other);
3. the name of the service animal;
4. a brief description of why the animal is required because of a disability; and
5. a brief description of the work or task the animal has been trained to perform

### Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention

If you are worried that your child may be using or is in danger of experimenting, using, or abusing illegal drugs or other prohibited substances, please contact the school office. The school office can provide a list of community resources that may be of assistance to you. The Texas Department of State Health Services maintains information regarding children's mental health and substance abuse intervention services on its Mental Health and Substance Abuse website: <https://dshs.texas.gov/transition/mhsa.aspx>.

## Surveillance Cameras

### Video Recordings

For safety purposes, including the maintenance of order and discipline, surveillance cameras may be used to monitor student behavior in classrooms, on school vehicles, and school common areas. Video recordings may be reviewed routinely to document student misconduct and used by school staff when investigating an incident. Tapes and other video recordings will not be available for parent viewing due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

**Threat Assessment and Safe and Supportive School Team**

The Campus Principal will work closely with the campus threat assessment safe and supportive school team to implement the district's threat assessment policy and procedures, as required by law, and shall take appropriate disciplinary action under the Code of Conduct.

## SECTION III: Academics and Grading

### Class Rank/Top Ten Percent [H]

Final class rank will be determined at the end of the spring semester (before graduation) each school year. Students who are in the top ten percent of their graduating class, or the valedictorian of the student's high school graduating class in one of the two school years preceding the academic year for which the student is seeking admission, are eligible for automatic admission to most public universities in Texas under admissions policies.

To be eligible for automatic admission, a student must:

1. graduate in the top ten percent of his or her class;
2. graduate on the Recommended, Distinguished Achievement Plan, or the Foundation High School Program (HSP) with Distinguished Level of Achievement;
3. enroll in college no more than two years after graduating from high school; and
4. submit an application to a Texas public university for admission before the institution's application deadline (check with the university regarding specific deadlines).

Students admitted through this route may still be required to provide American College Test (ACT) or Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores. Students may also have to take the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA 2.0) unless exempted from the test requirement. Check with the admissions office regarding the TSIA 2.0, SAT, and ACT requirements.

After a student is admitted, the university may review the student's high school records to determine if the student is prepared for college-level work. A student who needs additional preparation may be required to take a developmental course or intervention to prepare the student for success in college-level courses. Admission to a university does not guarantee acceptance into a particular college of study or department.

**Remember that students may not be admitted, even if they are eligible, if they do not meet the admission deadline.**

#### Grade Level Classification [H]

Grade level classification of students is composed of two requirements:

- units of credit for each grade
- sequence of courses for each grade and prerequisites for each course as described:

Class of 2018 and thereafter (incoming freshmen of 2014–2015) are classified based on these units of credit:

- Sophomore      7 units of credit
- Junior            13 units of credit
- Senior:           19 units of credit

#### Grade 9 (Freshman)

- ✓ English I
- ✓ Algebra I

- ✓ Biology *or* IPC
- ✓ World Geography
- ✓ Language Other Than English (LOTE) 1 *or* LOTE 2
- ✓ Physical Education (PE) (0.5 credit)
- ✓ Electives (1.5 credit)

#### **Grade 10 (Sophomore) 7+ Credits**

- ✓ English II
- ✓ Geometry *or* Math Models *or* Algebra II
- ✓ Biology *or* IPC *or* Chemistry
- ✓ World History
- ✓ LOTE 2 (*must be in the same language as LOTE 1*)
- ✓ Communications Applications—Speech (0.5 credit)
- ✓ PE (0.5 credit)
- ✓ Electives (1.5 or 2 credits)

#### **Grade 11 (Junior) 13+ Credits**

- ✓ English III
- ✓ Geometry *or* Math Models *or* Algebra II
- ✓ Chemistry *or* Physics *or* Astronomy *or* Aquatic Science *or* Environmental Systems
- ✓ U.S. History Since 1877
- ✓ Fine Arts (1 credit)
- ✓ College and Career Transitions Course (0.5 credit)
- ✓ Electives (1.5 credits)

#### **Grade 12 (Senior) 19+ Credits**

- ✓ English IV
- ✓ Algebra II *or* Pre-Calculus
- ✓ Physics *or* Astronomy *or* Aquatic Science *or* Environmental Systems
- ✓ Government (0.5 credit)
- ✓ Economics (0.5 credit)
- ✓ College and Career Transitions Course (0.5 credit)
- ✓ Electives (0.5 credit)
- ✓ CPR requirements (CPR, Peace Officer Interaction, FAFSA application requirements and any additional local credits)

Total of 26 credits.

**Students cannot be enrolled in two courses in the same content area simultaneously without approval from the Superintendent.**

**Various Dual Credit programs may offer additional courses and have more stringent graduation requirements than those listed above.**

### **College Days [H]**

High school students who meet the following criteria will be allowed to have two excused days of absence for a college or Armed Forces visit during their junior year and two excused days of absence for a college or Armed Forces visit during their senior year:

1. The student must have passed the required parts of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®)/End-of- Course (EOC) tests for the previous year.
2. The student must be on track to graduate on time.
3. The student must be classified as a junior or senior based upon credits earned.
4. The student must be passing all course work.
5. The student must have no truancy or other attendance problems.

Students must submit a written request to the school office at least two days prior to the day requested for a college visit so that eligibility criteria for an excused day of absence can be verified and approval granted prior to the student participating in a college visit. Approval will not be granted for a college visit on a day when major exams are scheduled, and no partial days will be approved.

The student will be required to make up any work missed, but will not be charged with an absence if official documentation of the visit is received by the school office within one week. Official documentation will be:

1. a letter on the college official letterhead giving the student's name, date, and reason for visit; and
2. an official visitation form from the college dated with the student's name and signed by a college official.

If the college visit cannot be made on the date specified on the approved written request, a new request must be submitted for consideration.

### **College Requirements [H]**

Most colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. Students are encouraged to talk with school staff during their junior year to determine the appropriate exam to take, as entrance exams are usually taken at the end of the junior year. Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students may need to take an assessment test, such as the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA 2.0).

### **The ACT**

The ACT is a three-hour, multiple-choice test measuring achievement in four areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. The writing test, which is optional, measures skill in planning and writing an essay. Each sub-test yields a score of 1–36. Averaging the four sub-tests produces a composite score that also is reported on a scale of 1–36.

## The SAT

The SAT (Reasoning Test) is a three-hour and forty-five minute test of critical reading, writing, and mathematical abilities administered by the College Board. Students will receive a combined score in the range of 400–1600. As of June 2021, the College Board will no longer offer the SAT subject test or optional essay.

## The TSIA 2.0

The TSIA 2.0 is designed to measure college readiness skills in the areas of reading, writing, and math. Students planning to enroll in college level coursework may need to take the TSIA 2.0, which will be available in the majority of district high schools. Texas high school students planning to enroll in college courses that count for both high school and college credit under their school's dual-credit or concurrent enrollment program are required to meet the program's requirements. These requirements may include passing the TSIA 2.0. Consult your Campus Principal for the district's concurrent enrollment policies and with your college advisors for their admissions policies. Even students who wish to take dual-credit courses or to concurrently enroll in high school and college may need to have TSIA 2.0 scores prior to enrolling in college courses. TSIA 2.0 is not an admissions test. It will not limit students' access to college, but may determine that remedial coursework must be taken in college. Students may be exempt from the TSIA 2.0 if they score sufficiently high on the ACT, SAT, or EOC tests. Students must score at or above the following to be exempt from the TSIA 2.0:

- **ACT** – composite score of 23 with a minimum of 19 on both the English and math tests; or
- **SAT** – minimum math score of 530 and minimum EBRW (Evidence Based Reading and Writing) score of 480; or
- **STAAR®/EOC** – Check with the college admissions office.

**Students who complete courses and earn credits through dual-credit programs will have to take the appropriate state assessments.**

### **Non-citizen, In-state Tuition at Public Post- Secondary Institutions in Texas**

Effective since fall 2001, Texas Law HB 1403 enables immigrant students, including undocumented, to qualify as Texas residents and pay in-state tuition. This tuition is much lower than the tuition paid by international students. In August 2005, the state Congress approved a new law SB 1528 that expands the benefits of HB 1403. To qualify under SB 1528, students must meet the following four provisions:

- graduate from a public or private high school, or receive a GED, in Texas;
- reside in Texas for at least the three years leading up to high school graduation or receiving a GED;
- reside in Texas for the 12 consecutive months right before the semester he/she is enrolling in college; and
- provide the institution an affidavit stating that he/she will file an application to become a U.S. permanent resident as soon as he/she is eligible to do so.

Other restrictions may apply. Check with the counselor at your high school. The student must be eligible for state aid. Contact your Campus Principal for questions or more information or visit <https://collegeforalltexas.com>.

### **Credit Recovery**

A student who had previously taken a course—but did not receive credit for it—may be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course. Prior instruction may include, for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, a non-accredited public or private school, correspondence courses, or independent study supervised by a teacher. The Campus Principal must approve the student's eligibility to take an exam. If approval is granted, the student must score at least 70 on the exam to receive credit for the course. Testing may be administered at any time throughout the school year and no district application is required.

### **Credit by Examination [H]**

#### **Without Prior Instruction (if a student has not taken the course)**

A student may be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course for which the student has had no prior instruction. A student will earn credit with a passing score of at least 80 on the exam. A student may not attempt to earn credit by examination for a specific high school course more than two times. If the student failed to earn the credit, the student must be enrolled in the class to complete the course. Additionally, students are limited to two credits by this process per academic year.

### **Graduation Expenses [H]**

Because students and parents will incur graduation expenses—such as the purchase of invitations, senior ring, cap and gown, senior pictures, *etc.*—both students and parents should monitor progress toward completion of all requirements for graduation.

### **Graduation Programs [H]**

A more flexible graduation program that allows students to pursue their interests is in place for students who entered high school beginning in the 2014–2015 school year and thereafter. **[SEE ADDENDUM FOR SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION PLAN]**

The Foundation Graduation Program includes four parts:

1. A 22 credit Foundation program which is the core of the Texas high school diploma
2. Five endorsement options that allow students to focus on a related series of courses
3. A higher performance category called Distinguished Level of Achievement
4. Performance Acknowledgments that note outstanding achievement

All incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders will be enrolled under the Distinguished Level of Achievement graduation plan and must select an Endorsement. Endorsements consist of a related series of courses that are grouped together by interest or skill set. They provide students with in-depth knowledge of a subject area. Students can choose from five endorsement areas: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM); Business and Industry; Public Service; Arts

and Humanities; or Multidisciplinary Studies.

The availability of endorsements will vary by Heritage Academy school location.

**A student may be permitted to take the basic Foundation Graduation Program without Endorsements and/or Distinguished Levels of Achievement only after:**

1. The student has completed their sophomore year;
2. The student and student's parent(s) have been advised of the specific benefits of graduating with an endorsement, including but not restricting acknowledgement that graduating without an endorsement may not satisfy the admission requirements of many four-year universities or colleges; and
3. The student and student's parent(s) have submitted written acknowledgement to the Campus Principal, signed by all parties, that the student should be permitted to take the basic Foundation Graduation Program.

After having satisfied the above criteria to move to the Foundation Graduation Program, a student has the right—and is encouraged—to pursue at any time course requirements necessary to satisfy an Endorsement and/or Distinguished Level of Achievement.

### **Foundation Graduation Program**

The Foundation Graduation Program Distinguished Level of Achievement allows students to best prepare for the transition to post-high school education or quality workforce training. Students must choose a plan and courses that will prepare them for college access and success. Therefore, students entering Grade 9 during the 2014–2015 school year and thereafter shall be enrolled in the Foundation Distinguished Level of Achievement graduation program in order to be best prepared for college or work force success. It requires 26 credits to include the completion of the requirements for the base Foundation High School Program, a total of four credits in math, including Algebra II; a total of four credits in science; 2 additional elective credits; and successful completion of an endorsement in an area of interest.

Furthermore, it will also allow students to compete for the Top 10% automatic admissions eligibility at most Texas public universities.

Graduating under the Foundation Graduation Program will also provide opportunities to earn “performance acknowledgments” that will be acknowledged on a student’s transcript. Performance acknowledgments are awarded for outstanding performance in a dual-credit course; on an AP or IB exam; on the PSAT, ACT-Inspire, SAT, or ACT exam, which are national exams; or for earning a state, nationally or internationally recognized license or certificate. A personal graduation plan will be completed for each high school student to assist with endorsement choices towards a successful graduation.

The criteria for earning these performance acknowledgments are prescribed by state rules, and the schools can provide more information about these acknowledgments.



## **Students with Disabilities**

Upon the recommendation of the Admission Review and Dismissal Committee (ARDC), a student with a disability who receives special education services may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her IEP and in accordance with state rules.

## **Participation in Graduation Ceremony**

A student may participate in graduation ceremonies and activities only when he/she has satisfactorily completed all required coursework/credit and all additional statutory requirements (FAFSA, CPR, POI) must be met before a diploma will be issued. Students must be “course complete” three days prior to the last day of school as reflected on the school calendar or the graduation ceremony date, whichever comes first.

If a student lacks completion of the EOC testing requirement, they may return during the summer school session to complete this testing requirement.

If the student wishes to take additional courses in order to obtain a higher graduation plan, they may do so during the summer school session; however this work must be completed during the current summer school session. Coursework must be completed to either a half or full credit by the end of that current summer session, otherwise the work will not carry over to the upcoming year.

Participation in the graduation ceremony does not constitute “graduation” and the receipt of a diploma. All coursework and EOC requirements, and additional statutory requirements (FAFSA, CPR, POI) must be met before a diploma will be issued.

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.

## **Assessment Graduation Requirements**

A student who has failed the End-of-Course (EOC) assessment graduation requirements for no more than two courses may receive a Texas high school diploma if the student has qualified to graduate by means of an Individual Graduation Committee (IGC). A student may not graduate under an IGC if the student did not take each required EOC assessment or a commissioner-approved substitute assessment for each course for which there is an EOC assessment.

Students must pass five end-of-course (EOC) assessments to meet the testing requirements for graduation. Those assessments cover Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology, and U.S. History. A student in 11th or 12th grade who did not perform satisfactorily on the STAAR EOC assessment in no more than two courses may be permitted to graduate if an individual graduation committee determines the student is qualified. Tex. Educ. Code §§ 28.0258, 39.023(c); 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 101.3022.

## **Awarding of Credit [H]**

A student must earn a minimum average grade that is the equivalent of 70 on a scale of 100 to pass a course and be awarded credit. Campuses that utilize the Precision Based Mastery Learning System require students to pass all Unit tests at 90% or higher for course credit.

The district typically awards credit for a full-credit high school course on a semester-by-semester basis. If a student passes one semester but fails the other semester, credit shall be awarded for the semester passed. However, the district reserves the right to average the two semesters of a full-year course and award credit for the entire course, with a passing grade, if and when deemed appropriate.

## **College and Career Transitions**

### **Course [H]**

The district has made a commitment to all potential high school graduates and is working to ensure that each graduating student has the capacity and confirmation that future opportunity is available through higher education. To further the end of postsecondary readiness, all graduating juniors (Grade 11) and seniors (Grade 12) will be required to complete one-half credit of the College and Career Transitions course ("CLTRGN") or some approved alternative equivalent as part of their elective requirements prior to being considered eligible for graduation.

### **100% College Acceptance [H]**

Heritage Academy seeks greater opportunities for students as they transition to adulthood. The ability to go beyond a high school diploma and onto college admission is an important consideration for any graduate. Each graduating student must have the capacity and confirmation that future opportunity is available through higher education. Therefore, each graduating student from a Heritage Academy campus will apply to an institution of higher learning. The institute will be an authentic and established entity designed to award credits and offer courses of a scholarly nature, *i.e.*, two-year or four-year colleges.

The campus administration will provide resources and assistance to students during this process. No student is required to attend an institution of higher learning upon graduation from high school. However, all students must have on file in the school office a letter or official document of record that confirms the student has been invited and has met all criteria to attend the institution. The documented proof of admission must originate from the college or university official admission or administration department. This documentation will be verified by the campus administration before final approval of eligibility for diploma. <https://applytexas.org> or <https://commonapp.org>

## **Physical and Health Education**

### **All students in grades Pre-Requirements K–8 [E] [M]**

K–5 must engage in at least 135 minutes of physical activity each week as part of the physical education curriculum. Students in grades 6–8 must engage in at least 225 minutes of physical activity every 2 weeks for at least four semesters during those grade levels-as part of the school's physical education. All students K-8 must engage in instruction that

focuses on obesity, nutrition, mental health/suicide, physical wellness, bullying, drug awareness and first aid as outlined by House Bill 18, Texas Legislature. Instruction may be administered by the PE, health, homeroom or classroom teacher.

### **Requirements 9–12 [H]**

Students are required to complete one (1) credit in physical education (PE)

#### **Physical Education Exemption**

Short-term exemption from physical education is possible for students who have physical handicaps, illnesses, or other incapacities that a physician deems severe enough to warrant exemption or severe enough to warrant modified activity in such classes. Each case is handled on an individual basis as follows: Each request for exemption or for modified activity must be accompanied by a physician's certificate. Such certificates are honored, but must be renewed each year.

1. When the certificate will allow modified activities in class, the student should remain in physical education class. The teachers adjust the activities of the student to the disability.
2. An exempted student may be admitted to regular physical education activities only upon presentation of a written statement from the same physician who signed the original exemption.
3. The Foundation HSP allows a physically exempt student to substitute an academic elective in ELA, Math, Science, or Social Studies. The decision for this substitution is made by the student's ARD committee, 504 committee, or a district approved group if none of the above groups are applicable.

#### **Physical Education Substitutions [M] [H]**

Students who receive prior approval can earn a maximum of four state credits for physical education through substitution of appropriate private or commercially-sponsored physical activity, provided the program meets school criteria and is approved by the Campus Principal. Questions regarding the process of yearly approval should be addressed to the Campus Principal.

#### **Physical Fitness Assessment**

Except for students for whom, as a result of disability or other conditions identified in law, assessment is inappropriate, the school will assess the physical fitness of students annually.

#### **Promotion Requirements [E] [M]**

To be promoted from one grade level to the next, students shall obtain an overall average of 70 or above in all four core subjects (Math, ELA, Science and History). It is recommended that students score at the Approaches Grade Level on the STAAR assessment. If both of these criteria are not met, a committee led by the Campus Principal will determine if summer school and/or retention is required. Decisions of the committee are final.

## **Requirements for Middle School, Grades 6–8**

### **Requirements for Grade Advancement:**

The following criteria will be used to determine if a student may be considered for grade advancement. MAP and state assessment scores, demonstrates academic proficiency in all core subjects, as well as social readiness and student maturity will be factors used for consideration. Some type of credit for each core course must be earned by the student with either mastery of tests and/or completion of Knowledge Units. Other assessments may be required but will be determined on an individual basis. The final decision for a student to bypass a grade will be made by a committee consisting of the parent, teachers, and school administration.

### **Diagnostic Reading Assessment:**

A student in Grade 7 who does not have a score for the statewide reading assessment from Grade 6, or received a failing grade on the Grade 6 state reading assessment will be administered a reading diagnostic exam during the first six weeks of school. Additional reading instruction and intervention will be given to each student in Grade 7 who did not meet the passing standard on the Grade 6 state assessment in reading. This intervention may take place before, after, or during the school day.

### **Criteria for Pre-AP or Honor Level Courses**

For schools offering an accelerated course track in math and/or reading, the following criteria for placement will be used for students completing Grade 6. A committee led by the Campus Principal will use previous MAP scores (High/High Average), teacher recommendations, and STAAR® results (Master) to recommend students for advanced courses. Students must meet some or all of the criteria in order to be reviewed by the committee. Specific criteria may vary by school brand. Parents will be contacted with committee recommendations.

### **Report Cards**

Parents must be kept informed about their student's grades, overall performance, and absences. Therefore, report cards will be sent or made available electronically to parents at intervals corresponding with the grading period length used at any given school, typically ranging from six-week to nine-week intervals. Parents are requested to schedule a conference with their student's teacher if he or she is not making adequate progress. Grades issued by a classroom teacher are final and may not be changed unless the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or not consistent with the school policy applicable to the grade, as determined by the Board of Trustees.

### **Bilingual/ESL Services**

Heritage Academy offers an English as a Second Language (ESL) program to students who meet the qualifications in accordance with the Texas Education Agency statute. Students enrolling in a Texas Public school for the first time, with an initial home language survey indicating a language other than English for either the student and/or home

language, are administered the LAS Links assessment or the Pre-LAS for grades Pre-K through First to determine eligibility for Bil/ESL services.

Students transferring from a Texas public school, who were previously identified as English learners, received ESL services, and were not reclassified by a previous LPAC committee, will be placed in the ESL program by the LPAC Committee. Students transferring from a Texas public school who were reclassified by a previous LPAC committee will be monitored but will not receive ESL services. All decisions about ESL services for students will be made by the LPAC Committee.

Parents have the right to accept or deny ESL Services. In the State of Texas, any student identified as an English Learner is required to take the state language assessments included in TELPAS. Students, whose parents deny ESL services, are required to take the TELPAS assessments.

Parents have a right to accept or deny Bilingual/ESL services, but may not deny the ELL identification. The purpose of both the Bilingual and ESL program is to address the affective, linguistic, and cognitive needs of English Language Learners. The goal of bilingual education programs is to enable English Language learners to become competent in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the English language through the development of literacy and academic skills in the primary language and English.

The goal of ESL programs shall be to enable English Language Learners to become competent in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the English language through the integrated use of second language acquisition methods. The ESL program shall emphasize the mastery of English language skills, as well as mathematics, science, and social studies, as integral parts of the academic goals for all students to enable English Language Learners to participate equitably in school.

### **Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services**

For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts and open enrollment charter schools must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on a Multi-Tiered System. The implementation of MTSS has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts and charter schools to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parents 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 students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a 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 the director of special education services or an administrative employee of the school district or open enrollment charter school, the district or charter school must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district or charter school must give the parent a prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards. If the school district or charter school agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

Please note that a request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Districts and charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.

If the district or charter school decides to evaluate the student, it must complete the student'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 student. However, if the student 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 student is absent.

There is an exception to the 45-school-day timeline. If a district or charter school 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 student is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30 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 or charter school must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

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

## **Contact Person for Special Education Referrals**

Contact your Campus Principal regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services.

## **Section 504 Referrals**

The Section 504 Process consists of four steps: (1) Referral; (2) Evaluation; (3) Eligibility Determination; and (4) the Section 504 Plan. For eligible scholars with a plan, District/Charter School must also provide regular reviews of the plan,

reviews to support changes in program and/or transitions across grade levels, disciplinary changes of placement, and conduct re-evaluations.

The referral for evaluation due to a suspected disability under Section 504 can be made by a parent, staff member, or the adult scholar. District/Charter School must respond to the request for evaluation in a timely manner to determine the scholar's eligibility under Section 504. From the date a signed consent for evaluation for Section 504 is received by the campus administrator, Director of Section 504, or Coordinator of Section 504, District/Charter School will complete the evaluation within forty-five (45) school days. A Section 504 committee will convene to consider the results of the evaluation and determine whether the scholar is eligible for Section 504 services. If the scholar is identified under Section 504, the Section 504 committee will consider the development of a Section 504 plan. The Section 504 committee includes persons knowledgeable of the scholar, the evaluation findings, and the meaning of the data.

### **Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals**

Contact your Campus Principal regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services.

### **Dyslexia and Related Disorders**

The district/charter school follows the State's Dyslexia Handbook regarding the screening, identification, and treatment of students with dyslexia and other related disorders. Evaluation for dyslexia and other related disorders may be requested by parents or school staff. Contact the campus administrator for more information.

### **Additional Information**

The following websites provide information and resources for students with disabilities and their families.

- Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process

<https://fw.esc18.net/>

- Partners Resource Network

<https://prntexas.org/>

- Special Education Information Center

<https://www.spedtex.org/>

- Texas Project First

<https://texasprojectfirst.org/>

- Texas Dyslexia Handbook

<https://tea.texas.gov/academics/dyslexia/>

- Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) Talking Book Program, which provides audiobooks free of charge to qualifying Texans with visual, physical, or reading disabilities <https://tsl.texas.gov/tbp/>

## **Services for Title I Participants**

The Parent Involvement Coordinator who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs is the Campus Principal and may be contacted at the school.

## **Student Support Team**

The Student Support Team is a campus-level committee composed of the Principal and other key personnel on each campus. Committee members evaluate student academic progress based on various diagnostic data. Recommendations for individual accommodations and/ or to initiate the Multi-Tiered System of support (MTSS) process are then made. All campus requests for special education screening/testing begin with this committee. The support services and intervention program options to address the students' difficulties should be made in collaboration with parents. Implementation of any intervention program cannot serve to delay or deny referral, evaluation, and eligibility under the IDEA when students are suspected of having a disability and a need for special education services.

## **State Assessments (STAAR®)**

### **Grades 3–8 [E] [M]**

Students in grades 3 through 8 will take state-mandated assessments as well as routine testing and other measures of achievement:

1. Mathematics, annually in Grades 3–8 ;
2. Reading Language Arts annually in Grades 3–8;
3. Social Studies in Grade 8;
4. Science in Grades 5 and 8

**Certain eligible students—some with disabilities and some with Limited English Proficiency—may be eligible for designated support during the STAAR® test.**

### **High School Courses [H]**

#### **EOC®**

Students must pass five end-of-course (EOC) assessments to meet the testing requirements for graduation. Those assessments cover Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology, and U.S. History. A student in 11th or 12th grade who did not perform satisfactorily on the STAAR EOC assessment in no more than two courses may be permitted to graduate if an individual graduation committee determines the student is qualified. Tex. Educ. Code §§ 28.0258, 39.023(c); 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 101.3022.

### **Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)**



The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) fulfills federal requirements for assessing the English Language proficiency of Emergent Bilinguals (EB) in Kindergarten through grade 12 in four language domains: Listening, speaking, reading, and writing. TELPAS reports student performance in terms of four English language proficiency levels: beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high.

### **Dual-Credit Program**

Students may earn dual credit, *i.e.*, credit toward high school and college simultaneously, through either partnerships with neighboring colleges or through virtual courses. Students who earn credit through these options via a district approved college partner will still have to take the appropriate STAAR®/EOC test.

### **Transcripts [H]**

The high school transcript is an official and permanent record of a student's academic performance during high school and, in some cases, of high school courses completed prior to high school (TEC § 28.025(e)).the school maintains as complete a set of records as possible to assist in student guidance. The academic achievement record (transcript) for each student enrolled lists complete personal student data and gives complete scholastic grades.

Every student who graduates is entitled to two free transcripts. For additional transcripts, please contact the Campus Administrative Assistant.

### **Tutorials**

Students are encouraged and may be required to see teachers for tutoring schedules, including mandatory tutoring after school or on Saturday.

Private tutoring is the responsibility of the parent. Teachers are not permitted to tutor their students privately for pay.

## **Mandatory Tutorials**

Each campus will implement the assigned and prescribed tutorial program. Students identified for mandatory tutoring, either during the school week or on Saturdays, must attend. Failure to participate appropriately in the tutoring system may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the school.

## **Honor Graduate Certificate [H]**

The Texas Education Agency allows each public and accredited non-public high school in Texas one “Honor Graduate Certificate.” This certificate shall be presented to the highest-ranking graduate in the senior class. Under no circumstances should a student ranked lower than “highest” be awarded this honor. The highest- ranking graduate should receive a certificate and a declaration document authorizing the president of any state-supported college or university to provide a waiver for tuition as specified in the law (TEC § 54.301). Some non-state-supported colleges and universities may also recognize this award and provide the tuition waiver. Students should present the declaration document to the college or university upon admission and retain the certificate for personal use.

The recipient of this honor must:

1. be enrolled in a minimum of three consecutive calendar semesters prior to graduation and meet state and school attendance requirements and grades;
2. be graduating under the Recommended, the Distinguished Achievement Plan, or the Foundation HSP, Distinguished Level of Achievement;
3. be the highest-ranking graduate with the highest grade point average (GPA) of all students meeting the aforementioned criteria (In determining grade point average, under no condition will the GPA be rounded up.); and
4. have taken and passed all state End- of-Course (EOC) assessments.

All calculations for this honor will be conducted at the end of the spring semester (before graduation) each school calendar year. An eligible student must have attended at least one of the calendar semesters during the school year that the honor is granted.

## **Valedictorian/Salutatorian [H]**

The following is the selection method to determine the valedictorian and salutatorian for the school:

1. The student who is selected as the highest- ranking graduate eligible to receive the Honor Graduate Certificate will serve as valedictorian, with the second highest- ranking graduate serving as salutatorian.
2. Both the valedictorian and salutatorian must have been enrolled at Heritage Academy for no less than three consecutive calendar semesters with no breaks in enrollment or all semesters the school has been opened, if fewer than three consecutive calendar semesters. In addition, an administrative committee will review, on a case by case basis, situations that may arise relating to the criteria. All committee decisions will be final.

3. By the date of graduation, both the valedictorian and salutatorian must have met all Texas State Graduation requirements, including the passing of all state assessment requirements. A student qualified to graduate via an Individualized Graduation Committee (IGC) shall not be eligible for valedictorian/salutatorian honors. In addition, students seeking to be considered for this honor cannot utilize the LOTE substitution unless deemed necessary by the student's 504 or ARD committee.
4. The student with the highest cumulative grade point average (GPA) graduating under the Recommended, Distinguished Achievement Plan, or the Foundation HSP, Distinguished Level of Achievement will be selected as valedictorian, with the second-ranking student serving as salutatorian. Under no circumstance will a student with a higher GPA who is graduating under the Minimum Graduation Program or the Foundation HSP with no endorsement rank higher than a student graduating under the Recommended, Distinguished Achievement Plan, or the Foundation HSP Distinguished Level of Achievement.
5. In the case where no students are graduating under the Recommended, Distinguished Achievement Plan, or the Foundation HSP with Endorsement, Distinguished Level of Achievement, the student with the highest cumulative GPA out of all graduating seniors will be selected valedictorian, and the student with the next highest GPA will serve as salutatorian. If no qualifying student has a 3.0 or higher GPA, no honor graduate will be awarded. Valedictorians and salutatorians graduating outside of these plans will not receive an honor graduate certificate.
6. Any student wanting to be considered for this honor must have completed all within one week of the graduation ceremony.

All calculations for this honor will be conducted at the end of the spring semester (before graduation) each school year. Any student wanting to be considered for this honor must have completed all coursework two weeks prior to graduation or the last day of required class as reflected on the school calendar, whichever comes first. An eligible student must have attended at least one of the calendar semesters during the school year that the honor is granted. Grade point average will be calculated in accordance with the existing policy adopted by the Board of Trustees.

### **Accelerated Instruction**

Any student who does not perform satisfactorily on a STAAR@ assessment will be provided accelerated instruction in the applicable subject. Each time a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument the school shall provide the student with accelerated instruction in the applicable subject. A student failing to perform satisfactorily on an end-of-course assessment must be provided the appropriate accelerated instruction before the next administration of the applicable assessment.

## ADDENDUM

### Students Entering High School in 2014–2015 and Thereafter Foundation Graduation Program, Endorsements, and Distinguished Level of Achievement

Curriculum Areas	Foundation Graduation Program	Foundation Graduation Program Endorsement(s) <sup>1</sup>	Foundation Graduation with Distinguished Level of Achievement <sup>2</sup>
English/Language Arts	4	4	4
Mathematics	3	4	4
Science	3	4	4
Social Studies, including Economics	3	4	4
Physical Education <sup>3</sup>	1	1	1
Speech	0.5 or Demonstrated proficiency	0.5 or Demonstrated proficiency	0.5 or Demonstrated proficiency
College Transitions	0.5	0.5	0.5
Languages other than English (LOTE) <sup>4</sup>	2	2	2
Fine Arts	1	1	1
Electives	4	5	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>

A student must specify upon entering Grade 9 the endorsement he or she wishes to pursue.

**1. Available Endorsements:**

- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)
- Business and Industry
- Public Services
- Arts and Humanities

**Multidisciplinary Studies**

**2.** In order to obtain the Distinguished Level of Achievement under the Foundation Graduation Program, which will be denoted on a student's transcript and is a requirement to be considered for automatic admission purposes to a Texas four-year college or university, a student must complete an endorsement and take Algebra II as one of the four mathematics credits.

**3.** A student who is unable to participate in physical activity due to a disability or illness may be able to substitute a course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, or another locally determined credit-bearing course for the required credit of physical education. This determination will be made by the student's ARD committee, Section 504 committee, or other campus committee, as applicable.

**4.** Students are required to earn two credits in the same language other than English to graduate. A student may use computer programming languages for this requirement. In limited circumstances, a student may be able to substitute this requirement with other courses as determined by a district committee, authorized by law, to make these decisions for the student. Students who successfully complete Level I of a foreign language in Grade 8 will be awarded one state graduation credit that may be counted toward the required foreign language courses. This graduation credit will count toward the total credits needed for graduation.

**Additional Graduation Requirements:**

- CPR Instruction
- Peace Officer Interaction Instruction (POI)
- Students enrolled in the 12<sup>th</sup> Grade must do one of the following in order to graduate:
  - Complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
  - Complete and submit a Free Application for State Financial Aid (TAFSA)
  - Submit a signed opt-out form

## SECTION IV: Student Code of Conduct

However, no school or school system can discharge these responsibilities if it permits students to act in an objectionable manner or to disregard rules and regulations adopted for the benefit of all persons. The school has both the responsibility and authority to enforce the Student Code of Conduct, question students, counsel them, and assign discipline when deemed appropriate.

Students live and function, as do adults, in the general community. As citizens, students are entitled to our society's benefits; but as citizens, they are also subject to its national, state, and local laws and rules governing various aspects of their conduct. Not all laws are easy to follow, nor need one necessarily agree with each and every law or rule. Often a law or a rule seems unjust or inappropriate, but the law or rule must be obeyed.

In much the same manner, students live and function in a second community as well—namely, the school community. Education confers its own benefits, but it too, requires acceptance of individual responsibilities. It must at the same time have an orderly and manageable framework within which to operate.

The rules and standards set forth in this Handbook apply to conduct:

1. on school premises or on school vehicles or involving school property,
2. off school premises which directly affects other students or the school, and
3. at school functions of any kind.

This Handbook does not define all types and aspects of student behavior; however, the Board of Trustees has the responsibility to set forth policies, rules, and regulations to help each student conduct himself or herself in a proper manner as a good citizen of the school community. If changes in state law become effective after the printing of this Handbook, the state law will supersede the local policy. The Board of Trustees and the Superintendent may establish written policies, rules, and regulations of general application governing student conduct in all schools. In addition, each Campus Principal, within his or her school, may establish certain rules and regulations not inconsistent with those established by the Board and the Superintendent.

Any conduct that causes or creates a reasonable likelihood that it will cause a substantial disruption in or material interference with any school function, activity, or purpose, or that interferes or creates a reasonable likelihood that it will interfere with the health, safety, or well-being or the rights of other students is prohibited.

A teacher may send a student to the Campus Principal's office to maintain effective discipline in the classroom. In addition, a teacher may remove from class a student:

1. who has been documented by the teacher to repeatedly interfere with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn; or
2. whose behavior the teacher determines is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn.

A referral to the Campus Director's office may be given for any violation of a school rule: any of the general violations of the student code of conduct, dress code violations, tardiness to class, disorganization or unpreparedness for class, failure to return a signed assessment or progress report the following day, failure to comply with teacher instructions, etc.

The Board of Trustees has authorized detention, in- school and out-of-school suspension, and expulsion as methods of disciplining students. The Board of Trustees has also given authority to the Superintendent or designee to use any other disciplinary actions which, in his or her judgment, is appropriate for the violation.

### **Responsibilities of Staff, Parents, and Students**

Each member of the school community must fulfill certain responsibilities if a positive learning environment is to be achieved. A cooperative relationship among staff, parent, and student requires that:

#### **School Staff**

1. maintain an atmosphere conducive to good behavior;
2. are in regular attendance and on time, and are prepared to perform their duties with appropriate working materials;
3. exhibit an attitude of respect toward individuals and property and conduct themselves in a responsible manner;
4. plan a flexible curriculum to meet the needs of all students;
5. promote effective training and discipline based upon fair and impartial treatment of all students;
6. encourage parents to keep in regular communication with the school and encourage parental participation in school affairs;
7. develop a cooperative working relationship among staff and students; and
8. obey school policies and regulations.

#### **Parents**

1. ensure their student's compliance with school attendance requirements and promptly report and explain absences and tardiness to the school;
2. assist their child in being properly attired;
3. take an active interest in the overall school program;
4. communicate regularly with the school concerning their student's conduct and progress;
5. discuss report cards and work assignments with their student;
6. bring to the attention of school authorities any problem or condition that affects their student;
7. maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers at the school;
8. cooperate with the Campus Principal and teachers in their efforts to achieve and maintain a quality school system; and provide transportation for their student to and from mandatory tutorials and Saturday school.

#### **Students**

1. attend all classes daily and on time;
2. prepare for each class, taking appropriate materials and assignments to class;
3. meet school standards of grooming and dress;
4. exhibit an attitude of respect and courtesy toward individuals and property, and conduct themselves in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline;

5. refrain from making profane, insulting, threatening, or inflammatory remarks;
6. refrain from engaging in disruptive conduct or cheating;
7. obey all school and classroom rules;
8. seek changes in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner through approved channels;
9. respect the rights and privileges of students, teachers, and other staff and volunteers;
10. cooperate with and assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline; and
11. adhere to the requirements of the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Jurisdiction**

The school may discipline a student for any violation of the Student Code of Conduct committed while a student is:

1. on school property;
2. within 300 feet of school property as measured from any point on the real property boundary line;
3. during the regular school day, including lunch periods, no matter when or where it takes place;
4. attending any school-related or school-sponsored activity, no matter when or where it takes place, including while the student is in transit to and from the activity;
5. on the property of another school;
6. attending another school's school-sponsored or school-related activity; when a student engages in cyberbullying, as provided in state law; or
7. off school property, if
  - a) the violation causes a material and/or substantial disruption at school, or
  - b) it is reasonably foreseeable to school officials that the violation will cause a material and/or substantial disruption at school.
8. When a student engages in cyberbullying, as provided in the state law;
9. While a student is participating in any remote / virtual classroom or other period of online instruction provided by the school, including any virtual or remote school-related or school-sponsored activity.

The school may also discipline a student for any offense listed in Sections 37.006(a) or 37.007(a), (b), and (d) of the TEC, no matter when or where the offense takes place.

## **Code of Conduct Violations**

### **Abuse**

Actions or threats of actions which constitute verbal or physical abuse of any employee or volunteer of the school by a student or any other individual will not be tolerated. Appropriate measures necessary to correct these situations shall be taken by the school, including expulsion.



### **Academic Dishonesty**

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests and disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Academic dishonesty includes cheating or copying the work of another student; plagiarism; possessing, viewing, or distributing pictures, text messages, or e-mails of test content or answer keys; and unauthorized communication between students during an examination. The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher or other supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students.

### **Generative AI**

The use of Generative AI to complete school work is prohibited. Generative AI refers to the use of computer algorithms to generate original content that mimics human writing styles. Students are encouraged to use a variety of resources in researching, studying concepts, and completing assignments. Submitting work generated or heavily assisted by AI without proper attribution constitutes plagiarism and breaches academic integrity standards, and will result in disciplinary actions (see policy on plagiarism).

### **Alcoholic Beverages**

Alcoholic beverages are prohibited on school property at all times and at all school-sanctioned activities occurring on or off school property. Any student found to have sold, given, delivered, been in possession of, or been under the influence of any alcoholic beverage while in school or while a participant in or spectator of a school-sponsored event, shall be subject to disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. An “alcoholic beverage” means any beverage containing alcohol, including wine or beer. A student is considered “in possession” if he or she has contact with the alcohol regardless of the amount of time it is in the student’s possession. If a student becomes in possession of alcohol, he or she needs to immediately inform an adult on campus. The smell of alcohol detectable on one’s breath is sufficient evidence to indicate being “under the influence.”

### **Bomb or Terroristic Threats**

Any threat of this type will not be tolerated. A student making a bomb or terroristic threat will be subject to expulsion and dealt with to the full extent of the law. The school will notify the parent of each student at the campus if the school receives a bomb threat or terrorist threat relating to a campus or other school facility at which students are present.

### **Conduct While Riding in School Vehicles**

The Campus Principal shall take steps to maintain acceptable student conduct while riding a school vehicle. Students who fail to follow the behavioral standards described in this Handbook (see “Transportation,” p. 28) may be denied the privilege of school transportation. Parental involvement will be sought before a student is excluded

from riding a school vehicle, except in situations involving a flagrant violation. Flagrant violations include fighting, gross insubordination, and other acts that may cause a safety hazard. It should be understood by all that the driver has the responsibility for maintaining order in his or her school vehicle. It is the duty of the Campus Principal—not the driver—to exclude a student from riding a school vehicle. However, the driver is not prohibited from exercising reasonable judgment in order to protect other passengers from bodily harm.

### **Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**

Students learn best, and their welfare is best served, in a school-environment that is free of discrimination, dating violence, harassment, and retaliation. Students must not engage in harassing behavior directed toward another student. Students are expected to treat other students and school staff with courtesy and respect, to avoid any offensive behaviors known to be offensive, and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop.

Heritage Academy has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly address inappropriate and offensive behaviors, including those that are based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law. A copy of the policy is available at the corporate office and on the Heritage Academy website.

### **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 or any of the person's past or subsequent relationships. This type of conduct is considered harassment if it is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a 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.

### **Harassment**

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a 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.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student is prohibited. Consequently, romantic, sexual, and other inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual. Upon receiving a formal complaint of sexual harassment, Heritage policies and procedures concerning Title IX sexual harassment shall apply. At the time of filing a formal complaint under Title IX, a complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the school.

### **Freedom from Sexual Harassment (Title IX)**

Heritage Academy prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, by an employee, volunteer, or another student.

Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A school employee conditioning the provision of aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the School's educational programs or activities;
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking (as those offenses are defined in the Clery Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f), and the Violence Against Women Act, 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)).

### General Definitions

A "complainant" means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

A "respondent" means an individual who is reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

A "formal complaint" means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the school investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

"Supportive measures" means non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered appropriately and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the school's educational program or activity without unreasonably burdening either party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the school's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. Examples of supportive measures include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of class schedules, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, and other similar measures.

### Reporting Sexual Harassment

Any person may report sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by email, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator on [page 10](#) of this Handbook, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. Such a report may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, by using the telephone number or email address, or by mail to the office address, listed for the Title IX Coordinator. The school's response to a report of sexual harassment must treat complainants and respondents equitably by offering supportive measures and by following a grievance process before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures against a respondent.

After a report of sexual harassment has been made, the Title IX Coordinator must promptly contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.

### **Notice of Allegations**

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the school must provide the following written notice to the parties who are known:

- Notice of the school's grievance process, including any informal resolution process.
- Notice of the allegations of sexual harassment, including, to the extent known, the identity of the parties, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident.
- Notice that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made known at the conclusion of the grievance process.
- Notice that the parties may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney.
- Notice that the parties may inspect and review evidence related to the complaint.
- Notice that the school prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

If, during an investigation, the school decides to investigate allegations about the complaint or respondent that are not included in the initial notice of the complaint, the school must provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

### **Grievance Process**

At the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the school.

The following guidelines apply when the school receives a formal complaint of sexual harassment. This process is designed to incorporate due process, principles, treat all parties fairly, and to assist the school reach reliable responsibility determinations.

- The school will require an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence – including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence – and credibility determinations may not be based on a person’s status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.
- Any individual designated by the school as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, or to facilitate an informal resolution process must not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent responsible. The school will ensure that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and anyone who facilitates an informal resolution process receive appropriate training related to the requirements of Title IX and the school’s sexual harassment policy.
- The school recognizes a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the complaint process.
- The school shall attempt to complete an investigation of reported sexual harassment within 60 calendar days of receiving a complaint. However, the investigation process may be delayed or extended for a limited time for good cause with written notice to the complainant and the respondent of the delay or extension. Good cause may include considerations such as absence of a party, a party’s advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities.
- Students found to have engaged in sexual harassment are subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
- The school shall employ the preponderance of the evidence standard to determine responsibility when reviewing formal complaints.
- The school may not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions of evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure, of information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

### **Consolidation of Formal Complaints**

The school may consolidate formal complaints as to allegations of sexual harassment against more than one respondent, or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against the other party, where the allegations of sexual harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

### **Dismissal of Formal Complaints**

The school must investigate the allegations in a formal complaint. The school must dismiss a formal complaint if the conduct alleged in the formal complaint:

- Would not constitute sexual harassment, even if proved;

- Did not occur in the school's education program or activity; or
- Did not occur against a person in the United States.

The school may dismiss a formal complaint or any allegations therein if, at any time during the investigation:

- A complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein;
- The respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the school; or
- Specific circumstances prevent the school from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

Upon a dismissal, the school must promptly send simultaneous written notice to the parties of the dismissal and the reason(s) for the dismissal. Dismissal of a formal complaint does not preclude the school from taking appropriate action under the Student Code of Conduct or any other school policy that may apply to the alleged conduct.

### **Investigating Formal Complaints**

The following guidelines apply during the investigation of a formal complaint and throughout the grievance process.

- The school will ensure the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rests on the school and not on the parties.
- The school cannot access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, unless the school receives that party's voluntary, written consent to do so.
- The school will provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
- The school will not restrict the ability of either party to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence.
- The school will provide the parties with the same opportunities to have others present during any grievance proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisory of their choice, and not limit the choice or presence of an advisor for either the complainant or respondent in any meeting or grievance proceeding. The school may establish

restrictions regarding the extent to which the advisor may participate in the proceedings, as long as the restrictions apply equally to both parties.

- The school will provide to a party whose participation is invited or expected written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all investigative interviews or other meetings with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate.
- The school will provide both parties an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in a formal complaint, including the evidence upon which the recipient does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a party or other source, so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to conclusion of the investigation.
- Prior to completing an investigative report, the school must send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy, and the parties must have at least 10 days to submit a written response, which the investigator will consider prior to completing the investigative report.
- The school must create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence and, at least 10 days prior to a determination regarding responsibility, send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the investigative report in an electronic format or a hard copy, for review and written response.
- After sending the investigative report to the parties and before reaching a determination of responsibility, the decision-maker(s) must afford each party the opportunity to submit written relevant questions that a party wants asked of any witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party. Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent. The decision-maker(s) must explain to the party proposing the questions any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

### **Determination Regarding Responsibility**

The decision-maker(s) making a determination regarding responsibility cannot be the same person(s) as the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator(s). The decision-maker(s) must review the investigation report and make a written determination, based on the preponderance of the evidence standard, regarding responsibility. The written determination must include:

- Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
- A description of the procedural steps taken from receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, or methods used to gather other evidence;
- Findings of fact supporting the determination;
- Conclusions regarding application of the school's Code of Conduct to the facts;
- A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the school's education program or activities will be provided to the complainant; and
- The school's procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal.

The school must provide the written determination to the parties simultaneously. The determination becomes final either on the date the school provides the parties with the written determination of the result of the appeal, if an appeal is filed, or if an appeal is not filed, the date on which an appeal would no longer be considered timely.

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for effective implementation of any remedies.

## **Appeals**

The school will offer both parties an appeal from a determination regarding responsibility, and from the school's dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein, on the following bases:

- Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
- New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; and
- The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

As to appeals, the school will ensure that the decision-maker(s) for the appeal is not the same person as the decision-maker(s) that reached the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal, or the investigator(s), or the Title IX Coordinator. The school will provide both parties a reasonable equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome.



The decision-maker(s) for the appeal will issue a written decision, based on the preponderance of the evidence standard, describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result, and provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties.

A party who is dissatisfied with the appeal decision may file an appeal to the Board of Directors through the process outlined in the school's grievance procedures.

### **Retaliation**

Retaliation against a person who makes a good- faith report or participates in an investigation of discrimination, harassment, or 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, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a Heritage Academy investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

### **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, school counselor, Campus Principal, or other Heritage Academy employee. The report may be made by the student's parents. The student may also report the alleged acts to one of the Heritage Academy Compliance Coordinators below:

1. Reports of discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment, may be directed to the Title IX Coordinator. The name, office address, telephone number, and e-mail of the Title IX Coordinator is: Derrick Armstead, 6013 Fountainwood St., San Antonio, TX 78233 ; 210-659-0329. Email is: darmstead@heritageacademy.net.
2. Reports of discrimination based on disability may also be directed to the Director of Special Education, Dyslexia and 504, Melissa Cortez: 6013 Fountainwood St. San Antonio, TX 78233. 210-659-0329; mcortez@heritageacademy.net.

Upon receiving a report, Heritage Academy will determine whether the allegations, if proven, constitute prohibited conduct as defined by Heritage Academy policy. If not, Heritage Academy will refer to policy to determine whether the allegations, if proven, constitute bullying, as defined by law and District policy. If the alleged prohibited conduct also meets the statutory and policy definitions for bullying, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

Heritage Academy will promptly notify the parent of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an employee or adult associated with Heritage Academy. In the event alleged prohibited conduct involves another student, The District will notify the parent of the student alleged to have experienced

the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by Heritage Academy policy.

### **Investigation of Report**

Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated.

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

If a law enforcement or other regulatory agency notifies Heritage Academy that it is investigating the matter and requests that the District delay its investigation, Heritage Academy will resume its investigation at the conclusion of the agency's investigation.

During the course of an investigation and when appropriate, Heritage Academy will take interim action to address the alleged prohibited conduct.

If the investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary action and, in some cases, corrective action will be taken to address the conduct. Heritage Academy may take disciplinary and corrective action even if the conduct was not unlawful.

All involved parties will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within the parameters and limits allowed under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with Heritage Academy policy.

### **Disruptive Activity**

In order to protect student safety and sustain an educational program free from disruption, state law permits the school to take action against any person— student or non-student—who: interferes with the movement of people in an exit, an entrance, or a hallway of a school building without authorization from the Campus Principal;

1. interferes with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building;
2. uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly;
3. uses force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly;
4. interferes with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to school property;
5. uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving school property without authorization from the Campus Principal
6. disrupts the conduct of classes or other school activities while on school property or on public property that is within 500 feet of school property (disruption includes making loud noises;

enticing, attempting to entice, preventing, or attempting to prevent a student from attending a required class or school activity; entering a classroom without the consent of either the Campus Principal or the teacher and, through either acts of misconduct or the use of loud or profane language, disrupting class activities); or

7. interferes with the transportation of students in school vehicles.

### **Drug-Free School Notice**

Heritage Academy believes that student use of illicit drugs is both wrong and harmful. Consequently, the school prohibits the use, sale, possession, or distribution of illicit drugs by students on school premises or any school activity, regardless of its location. The school also prohibits the use, sale, possession, or distribution of look-alike substances and/or synthetic substances designed to imitate the look and/or effects of illicit drugs, and the possession, use, sale, or distribution of any paraphernalia related to any prohibited substance. Student violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law, as well as the disciplinary terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Electronic Equipment in the Classroom**

Students may only use audio visual or electronic equipment in the classroom with permission of the teacher. These items include, but are not limited to, audio or video taping equipment. The school is not responsible for the damage, loss, or theft of these items.

### **Exposure**

Inappropriate exposure of body parts, even without any sexual intent, is a serious offense and will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Freedom from Bullying and Cyberbullying**

Bullying, as well as retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process, is prohibited. Bullying is defined as a single significant act or pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, including through electronic means or physical conduct, that in the judgment of the Campus Principal:

1. is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the student;
2. has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or places a student in reasonable harm to their person or of damage to the student's property;
3. materially and substantially disrupts the educational process, the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or

4. infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Bullying also includes cyberbullying, which means bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, e-mail, instant messaging, social media applications, text messaging, and internet-based communication tools and internet websites.

The school's bullying policy applies to: bullying that occurs on or is delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property;

1. bullying that occurs on a publicly or privately owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of students to or from school, or a school-sponsored or school-related activity; and
2. cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside a school-sponsored or school-related event, if the conduct interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the operations of a school, classroom, or school-related activity.

The school will also take steps to prevent and mediate bullying incidents between that:

1. Interfere with student's education opportunities;
2. Substantially disrupts the orderly operations of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school-related activity.

### **Reporting**

If a student believes that he or she has experienced any form of bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying, he or she should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school office staff, the Campus Principal, or another district employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. A report can be made verbally, online, or in writing, and can be submitted anonymously. Any school employee who receives notice that a student has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the Campus Principal. The Campus Principal or designee will provide notice of the alleged incident to the parent of the victim and of the student who is alleged to have engaged in the bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to the individuals, as well as to any students who have been identified as witnesses to the bullying. Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited.

### **Investigation of Report**

The Campus Principal or designee will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct. The Campus Principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, constitute harassment and, if so, proceed under that policy instead. The Campus Principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report and shall take prompt interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of investigation, if appropriate. The Campus Principal or designee shall prepare a

written report of the investigation, including a determination of whether bullying occurred.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the Campus Principal will take appropriate action, including disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct and in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. A student who receives special education services will be subject to disciplinary action for conduct meeting the definition of bullying or cyberbullying within applicable requirements under state and federal law, including the IDEA. A student will not be subject to disciplinary action if the results of the investigation indicate that a student involved in a bullying incident engaged in reasonable self-defense in response to bullying. To the greatest extent possible, the school will respect the privacy of the students involved in the report, including witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct the investigation.

### **Appeal**

The student or parent may appeal the decision regarding the outcome of the investigation in accordance with Board Policy.

### **Gambling**

Students are forbidden to gamble in a school building or on school property.

### **Gang-Free Zones/Gang Activity**

Any student found to have engaged in organized criminal activity, gang-related, and other criminal acts will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Student behavior considered to be “gang related” will not be tolerated at school or at any school activity regardless of the location of the activity. This includes, but is not limited to, articles of clothing, hand signs, graffiti, and any other behaviors considered by the administration to interfere with the educational program of the school.

### **Harmful Drugs**

The use of “Harmful Drugs” poses a serious threat to the physical, psychological, and emotional health of individuals, their families, and their communities. In recognition of this fact, the school enforces this policy.

The term “Harmful Drugs” includes, but is not limited to, all those substances considered to be marijuana, dangerous drugs, narcotics, depressants, stimulant substances, controlled substances, and simulated controlled substances listed in the state and federal codes covering the possession, sale, and use of such controlled substances, drugs, and narcotics. The term also includes all forms and species of the plant substance known as marijuana and all forms and species of the plant substance known as hemp, including cannabidiol or “CBD”, as well as any abusable chemical substance used for inhalation such as glue, aerosol paint, thinners, *etc.* A Harmful Drug includes an over-the-counter drug or prescription drug if the student is misusing or abusing the drug or medication and it causes impairment of the physical or mental faculties.

Any student found to have had a Harmful Drug in his or her possession, or found to have been under the influence thereof while in school or while a participant in or spectator at a school-sponsored event, shall be subject to

disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. A student is considered “in possession” if he or she has contact with a Harmful Drug regardless of the amount of time it is in the student’s possession. If a student becomes in possession of a Harmful Drug, he or she needs to immediately inform an adult on campus. Those students involved in selling or distributing a Harmful Drug while in school or while a participant in or spectator at a school-sponsored event will be subject to disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Other sanctions may include completion of a drug rehabilitation program or referral for prosecution.

A student may not keep in his or her possession any medication, even medication for which he or she has a prescription. Failure to comply may result in Level II discipline. The only exception to this policy is asthma medication (see “Asthma and Anaphylaxis Medication,” p. 43).

Texas laws prohibit students from engaging in, encouraging, aiding, or assisting in hazing. Hazing is defined as an intentional, knowing, or reckless act, on or off campus, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student for the purpose of pledging, initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in a student organization, including:

3. any type of physical brutality;
4. an activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the student’s mental or physical health, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement to small spaces, calisthenics, or consumption of food, liquids, drugs, or other substances;
5. any activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that violates the Penal Code; and
6. coercing a student to consume a drug or alcoholic beverage in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe the student is intoxicated.

Hazing will not be tolerated by the school. If an incident of hazing occurs, disciplinary consequences will be handled in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. It is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report this to the Campus Principal.

### **Inappropriate Sexual Conduct**

Inappropriate sexual conduct encompasses any inappropriate, indecent, or offensive act that implies, suggests, or involves contact of a sexual nature. Inappropriate sexual conduct is prohibited and is subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Interference with School Activities or Discipline**

Any student whose conduct, whether in class or out, materially and substantially interferes with school activities, school-sponsored functions (whether on public or private property), or school discipline, or invades the rights of school staff or other students, shall be subject to disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

“Conduct” includes, but is not limited to, the following activities:

1. preparing, circulating, or presenting petitions;
2. displaying on or about his or her person, books, materials, locker or vehicle, symbols, arm bands, flags,

- pennants, signs, or other decorations; and
3. preparation, printing, publishing, or distributing any unauthorized publication, periodical, paper, pamphlet, magazine, or book.

### **Lockers: Security and Search**

Lockers, if provided by the school, are purchased, furnished, and maintained by the school and remain the property of the school. The decision to assign lockers rests with the Campus Principal. No charges are made for their use. Items of non-school nature should not be placed or kept in lockers as they are subject to inspection at any time without prior notice to or permission from students. A student has full responsibility for the security of the locker and is responsible for making certain that it is locked and that the combination is not available to others. Searches of lockers may be conducted at any time, whether or not the student is present.

Any student who shall place, keep, or maintain any article or material in a school-owned locker that is prohibited by the school or of a non-school nature, shall be subject to discipline.

### **Report to Law Enforcement for Conduct Constituting Assault or Harassment**

A Campus Principal may make a report to local law enforcement, if, after an investigation is completed, the Campus Principal has reasonable grounds to believe that a student has engaged in conduct that constitutes an offense under Section 22.01 (assault) or 42.07(a)(7) (harassment, including harassment via electronic communications), of the Penal Code. Reports to Law Enforcement of Criminal Conduct

Under state law, a Campus Principal is required to notify local law enforcement if the Campus Principal has reasonable grounds to believe that activities have occurred at school, on school property, or a school- sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property that constitutes deadly conduct as defined under the Penal Code; a terroristic threat as defined under the Penal Code; conduct that may be an offense subject to mandatory supervision; the use, sale, or possession of a controlled substance, drug paraphernalia, or marijuana, the possession of any weapon or device under 46.01 (1)-(14) or (16) of the Penal Code; conduct that may constitute a criminal offense under 71.02 of the Penal Code; or conduct that may constitute a criminal offense for which a student may be expelled under Texas Education Code 37.007(a), (d), or (e).

Criminal harassment under 42.07(a)(7). Penal Code includes the following conduct: (1) initiating a communication and in the course of the communication making a comment, request, suggest, or proposal that is obscene; (2) threatening, in a conveying a false report that another person has suffered death or serious bodily injury; (3) conveying a false report that another person has suffered death or serious injury; (4) causing a telephone of another to ring repeatedly or making repeated telephone communications anonymously or in a manner reasonably likely to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, embarrass, or offend another; (5) making a telephone under the person's control to be used by another to engage in harassment; or (7) publishing on an Internet website, including a social media platform, repeated electronic communications in a manner reasonably likely to cause emotional distress, abuse, or torment to another.

## **Respect for Others**

Inappropriate verbal or physical behavior that is motivated due to race, ethnicity, culture, sex, or disabilities will not be tolerated and is subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

## **School Property**

A good citizen, among other things, takes pride in the care of school property, realizing that the appearance of the building and campus is a credit or discredit to him or herself, as well as to the student body in general.

Any student found to have intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly damaged or destroyed school property shall be subject to disciplinary measures. In addition, the school may seek restitution from the parent for damage to school property to the fullest extent permitted by state law.

## **Self-Defense**

The privilege of self-defense is limited. A claim of self- defense in the use of physical force will not exempt a student from discipline when:

1. the student provokes, invites, or encourages the use of physical force by another person; the student has an opportunity to avoid physical force or to inform school staff of the threatened use of force;
2. the student uses physical force after the other party abandons or attempts to abandon a fight or confrontation;
3. the student does not attempt to walk away from a confrontation; or the student does not attempt to get help from school staff.

The student or parent may appeal the decision regarding the outcome of the investigation in accordance with Board Policy.

## **Social Media**

Heritage Academy's social media sites are intended to serve as informational outlets for the community. Inaccurate, threatening and/or inappropriate posts including comments involving Heritage Academy social media accounts or involving any social media account that is not an authorized account (including a social media account that appears to be related to the District or a school by using or referencing the Heritage Academy name, any school name, references any school-sponsored activity or uses any Heritage Academy or school mark, logo, or image) may be reported to the relevant social media provider and law enforcement authorities. Heritage Academy students involved in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action.

## **Telecommunications or Other Electronic Devices**

Students are prohibited from using any telecommunication devices, including cell phones or other electronic devices (unless otherwise issued by the school for the purpose of instruction), within a school building before or during school hours or on a school campus during school hours. Devices are to remain off during the school day, including during all testing. Devices that are on and/or cause a disruption during the school day will be confiscated.



Any student refusing to give the device to school staff shall be subject to disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The campus is not responsible for damage that may occur to confiscated devices before it is picked up by a student or parent. Once a device has been taken up, the following procedure will be used to return the device.

1. First Confiscation: The device may be picked up by the student or parent no earlier than the end of the school day. An administrative fee of \$5 will be charged before the device can be returned.
2. Second Confiscation: The device may be picked up by the student or parent no earlier than the end of the school day. An administrative fee of \$10 will be charged before the device can be returned.
3. Third and Subsequent Confiscations: The device may be picked up by the student or parent no earlier than the end of the school day. An administrative fee of \$15 will be charged per occurrence before the device can be returned.

Campus Principal shall use discretion to determine the appropriate use of phones for students participating in extracurricular activities while on school property or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities on or off school property. Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, students are not permitted to possess electronic devices (*e.g.*, electronic games, iPods, mp3 players, pagers, radios, cameras, *etc.*) at school, unless prior permission has been obtained from the Campus Principal. Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them into the Campus office. The Campus Principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

Sending, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, e-mails, or other material of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form on a cell phone or other electronic device is prohibited and dealt with to the full extent of the law and the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Recording. Videoing or Taking Photos without Consent**

Any recording, videoing, or photographing of students or staff without the person's expressed permission is prohibited and subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

#### **Threats**

Oral or written threats to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, an employee, or school property, including threats made using the internet or other electronic resources at school, will not be tolerated and is subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

#### **Tobacco**

Matches, lighters, *etc.*, are not permitted at school or at school-related functions. A student is considered "in

possession” if he or she has contact with tobacco or tobacco products, regardless of the amount of time it is in the student’s possession. If a student becomes in possession of tobacco or a tobacco product, he or she needs to immediately inform an adult on campus.

Smoking and using smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, electronic vapor devices, or tobacco products are not permitted in school buildings, vehicles, or on school property, 300 feet from school property, or at school- related or school-sanctioned events off school property. Students who act in violation of this prohibition shall be subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Weapons**

A student shall not possess, exhibit, use, or threaten to exhibit or use any firearm, explosive weapon, knife, or materials that could be used as a weapon to inflict physical harm or damage to persons or property on school property or at any school-related function, whether on or off school property. A student is considered “in possession” if he or she has contact with a weapon regardless of the amount of time it is in the student’s possession. If a student becomes in possession of a weapon, he or she needs to immediately inform an adult on campus.

Weapons include, but are not limited to:

1. Firearms, which are any devices designed, made, or adapted to expel a projectile through a barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance or any device readily convertible to that use;
2. Knives, which are blades or hand instruments designed to cut or stab another by being thrown, such as a daggers, bowie knives, swords, or spears;
3. Clubs, which are instruments that are specifically designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with the instrument;
4. Explosive weapons;
5. Firearm silencers;
6. Knuckles (*i.e.*, brass knuckles);
7. Chemical dispensing devices (such as mace or pepper spray);
8. Zip guns;
9. Any object used in a way that threatens to inflict bodily injury on another person;
10. Firearm ammunition;
11. Fireworks of any kind, smoke or stink bombs, or any other pyrotechnic device;
12. Chains;
13. Razors (including box cutters);
14. Pellet guns;
15. BB guns;
16. Stun guns;
17. Air guns; and
18. Toys that imitate weapons (“look-alikes”).

## Offenses and Consequences

### Level I: Major Offenses

#### ***Examples (not inclusive list):***

1. Being in an unauthorized area
2. Computer system violations
3. Disrespect of school staff and persons in authority
4. Failure to complete assigned homework
5. Failure to comply with school dress code policies
6. Failure to comply with directives of school staff (insubordination)
7. Failure to leave campus within 30 minutes of school dismissal (unless involved in an activity under the supervision of school staff)
8. Failure to report known hazing, harassment, or bullying of students
9. Hazing, harassment, or bullying of students (verbal)
10. Inappropriate behavior (not abusive, threatening, violent)
11. Inappropriate public display of affection Inappropriate physical contact not defined as a Level II, Level III, or Level IV offense
12. Insensitivity to others
13. Parking infraction
14. Persistent tardiness (tardy, without excuse, on four or more days within a period of 45 rolling school days)
15. Possessing any electronic devices without permission
16. Possessing matches, lighters, *etc.*
17. Skipping or not attending class, detention, tutorial sessions, Saturday school, or extended day
18. Using a skateboard, scooter, and/ or roller blades while on campus
19. Using any telecommunications or other electronic devices, without permission, during school hours
20. Vehicle operation infraction

#### ***Appropriate Disciplinary Actions:***

1. Behavioral contracts or individually developed behavior management plans
2. Classroom management techniques
3. Community service
4. Cooling-off time or "time-out"
5. Counseling by teachers or Campus Principals
6. Demerits
7. Detention
8. Fee for the return of telecommunications device that has been confiscated

9. In-school suspension up to 30 days
10. Parent contracts to restrict home privileges
11. Parent observations in student's classes
12. Parent conference with teacher or Campus Principal
13. Peer mediation
14. Placement in another appropriate classroom
15. Restitution/restoration, if applicable
16. Saturday school
17. Seating changes within the classroom
18. Temporary or permanent confiscation of items that are prohibited and/or disrupt the educational process  
Withdrawal of privileges, such as parking privileges, participation in extracurricular activities, eligibility for seeking and holding honorary offices, membership in school- recognized clubs or organizations, *etc.*

Disciplinary actions may be used individually or in combination for any offense.

*No employee or agent of the school shall cause corporal punishment to be inflicted upon a student to reform unacceptable conduct or as a consequence for unacceptable conduct.*

## **Level II: Discretionary Suspension**

### ***Examples (not inclusive list):***

1. Academic dishonesty
2. Being a member of, pledging to become a member of, joining, or soliciting another person to join, or pledge to become a member of a school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang, as defined in TEC 37.121
3. Bypassing of internet blocks on school computers or networks to enter unapproved sites
4. Causing an individual to act through the use of or threat of force (coercion)
5. Engaging in conduct on campus that constitutes dating violence, including intentional use of physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person with whom the student has or has had a dating relationship
6. Engaging in conduct that constitutes sexual harassment (verbal and/or physical)
7. Engaging in offensive conduct of a sexual nature (verbal or physical)
8. Extortion/blackmail
9. Failure to comply with conditions of in- school suspension placement
10. Failure to comply with school medication policies
11. False accusation of conduct that would constitute a misdemeanor or felony
12. Falsification of school records
13. Fighting/mutual combat
14. Gambling

15. Gang activity (nonviolent)
16. Hazing, harassment, or bullying of students (physical)
17. Inappropriate behavior (*e.g.*, violent; threat of being violent; threat of self-harm; racially, ethnically, or culturally motivated actions)
18. Interference with school activities or discipline
19. Leaving classroom, school property, or school- sponsored events without permission
20. Making an obscene gesture
21. Persistent Level I offenses (two Level I offenses within a period of 45 rolling school days)
22. Possessing ammunition
23. Possessing paraphernalia related to any prohibited substance
24. Possessing or selling “look-alike” drugs
25. Possessing or using fireworks or other explosive devices
26. Possessing tobacco or tobacco products or items such as e-cigarettes or electronic vaporizing devices
27. Possessing or abusing over the counter drugs in violation of school policy
28. Possessing prescription drugs, giving a prescription drug to another student, or possessing or being under the influence of another person’s prescription drug
29. Possessing, viewing, or distributing pictures, text messages, e-mails, or other material of a sexual or inappropriate nature in any media format, including but not limited to cell phones
30. Sending or posting electronic messages or images that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another’s reputation, or illegal, including conduct involving off school property (online or otherwise) if the conduct creates a substantial disruption to the school environment.
31. Posting inappropriate or disparaging remarks, pictures, videos, or links to any Heritage Academy- managed social media site
32. Any unauthorized recording, taping, or photographing students or staff
33. Refusing to allow student search
34. Sexual harassment/sexual abuse not defined as a Level III or IV offense
35. Theft
36. Threats (nonviolent/verbal or written), including those initiated through social media, or other electronic forms, made outside of the campus setting for action or threat of action to be taken while on campus  
Throwing object not considered an illegal weapon that can cause bodily injury or property damage
37. Unruly, disruptive, or abusive behavior that interferes with the teacher’s ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class
38. Use of profanity or vulgar/offensive language (orally or in writing)
39. Using the internet or other electronic communications to threaten students or employees, or cause disruption to the school program

40. Verbal or written abuse (*e.g.*, name calling, racial or ethnic slurs, or derogatory statements that may disrupt the school environment, *etc.*)
41. Willful destruction of school or personal property and/or vandalism
42. Self-harm, including but not limited to severe scratching, branding, cutting, self-hitting, burning, and biting
43. Making false accusations or perpetrating hoaxes regarding school or student safety, including without limitation of false alarm to induce an emergency response.
44. Selling paraphernalia related to any prohibited substance
45. Possessing or selling “look-alike” drugs or attempting to pass items off as drugs or prohibited items
46. Using, selling or giving to another student any form of tobacco or tobacco products or items such as e-cigarettes or electronic vaporizing devices, and smokeless tobacco, including chewing tobacco
47. Possessing or abusing over-the-counter drugs in violation of school policy
48. Refusing to allow lawful student search

**Appropriate Disciplinary Actions:**

1. Level I disciplinary techniques
2. Out-of-school suspension for up to three days

Disciplinary actions may be used individually or in combination for any offense.

**Level III: Mandatory Suspension and Discretionary Expulsion**

***Examples (not inclusive list):***

1. Any offense listed in Sections 37.006(a) or 37.007(b) of the TEC, no matter when or where the offense takes place
2. Burglary of a motor vehicle on campus
3. Conduct punishable as a felony not defined as a Level IV offense
4. Criminal mischief against school, student, or school staff
5. Deliberate destruction of or tampering with school computer data or networks
6. Disruptive activity (see “Disruptive Activity,” p. 78)
7. Gang activity (violent)
8. Inappropriate exposure of body parts
9. Inappropriate sexual conduct
10. Persistent Level I offenses (four Level I offenses within a period of 45 rolling school days)
11. Persistent Level II offenses (two Level II offenses within a period of 45 rolling school days)
12. Possessing a knife, razor, box cutter, or chain
13. Possessing any object used in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury to another person
14. Possession, use transfer, or exhibition of any firearm, handgun, improvised explosive device or any other prohibited item or harmful object (as determined by the Campus Director)

15. Possessing a look-alike weapon, including without limitation, BB guns, CO<sub>2</sub> guns, air pistols or rifles, pellet guns, or any other device designed to appear to be a firearm or other weapon
16. Possessing a stun gun, mace, or pepper spray
17. Possessing, selling, distributing, or under the influence of a Harmful Drug (see "Harmful Drugs," p.80)
18. Posting any vulgar, grossly inappropriate or illegal remarks, pictures, videos, or links on any Heritage Academy managed social media site
19. Setting or attempting to set a fire on a school property (not arson)
20. Targeting someone for bodily harm
21. Threats (violent/verbal or written)
22. Engaging in bullying that encourages a student to commit or attempt to commit suicide; incites violence against a student through group bullying; or releases or threatens to release intimate visual material of a minor or a student who is 18 years or older without the student's consent
23. Possessing, selling, distributing or under the influence of alcohol
24. Threats (violent/verbal or written), including those initiated through social media or other electronic forms, made outside of the campus setting for action or threat of action to be taken while on campus or toward another student
25. Engaging in conduct containing the elements of the criminal harassment
26. Assault (aggravated, sexual, or otherwise)
27. Conduct endangering the health and safety of others or another person

**Appropriate Disciplinary Actions:**

1. Out-of-school suspension for up to three days
2. Expulsion

**Level IV: Mandatory Expulsion**

***Examples (not inclusive list):***

1. Any offense listed in Section 37.007(a) and (d) of the TEC, no matter when or where the offense takes place
2. Required to register as a sex offender

***Appropriate Disciplinary Actions:***

1. Expulsion

**Conferences, Hearings, and Appeals**

All students are entitled to conferences, hearings, and/ or appeals of disciplinary matters as provided by state and federal law and school policy.

**Suspension Process**

In addition to the above list of Student Code of Conduct violations, the Campus Principal has the authority to suspend a student for up to five days for any of the following additional reasons:

1. the need to further investigate an incident,

2. a recommendation to expel the student, or
3. an emergency constituting endangerment to health or safety.

### **Prerequisites to Suspension**

Prior to suspending a student, the Campus Principal must attempt to hold an informal conference with the student to:

1. notify the student of the accusations against him or her,
2. allow the student to relate his or her version of the incident, and
3. determine whether the student's conduct warrants suspension.

### **Notification to Parents**

If the Campus Principal determines the student's conduct warrants suspension during the school day, the Campus Principal will make reasonable effort to notify the student's parents that the student has been suspended before the student is sent home. The Campus Principal will notify a suspended student's parents of the period of suspension, the grounds for the suspension, and the time and place for an opportunity to confer with the Campus Principal.

### **Credit During Suspension**

A student shall receive credit for work missed during the period of suspension if the student makes up work missed during the period of suspension within the same number of school days the student was absent on suspension.

## **Expulsion Process**

### **Hearing**

Students alleged to have committed an expellable offense will receive a hearing before a Hearing Officer within a reasonable time following the alleged misconduct. The Hearing Officer shall be a District Employee. Prior to the hearing, the school will send a written notice to the student and the student's parents, including:

1. the basis for the proposed expulsion;
2. the date, time, and location of the hearing; and
3. the right of the student, at the hearing, to:
  - a) be accompanied by his or her parents;
  - b) be represented by any adult representative, including legal counsel;
  - c) present evidence, call witnesses, and testify; and
  - d) be informed of the school's evidence.

After making a good faith effort to inform the student and the student's parents of the time and place of the hearing, the school shall hold the hearing regardless of whether the student, the student's parents, or another adult representing the student attends. The Campus Principal shall audio record the hearing.



### **Expulsion Order**

Within seven days following the hearing on expulsion, the Hearing Officer or his or her designee will notify the student and the student's parents in writing of his or her decision. If the outcome of the expulsion hearing is that the student will be expelled, the Hearing Officer or his or her designee will enter an expulsion order and provide a copy to the student and the student's parents specifying:

1. the length of the expulsion;
2. the procedures for re-admittance at the end of the expulsion period, if applicable; and
3. the right to appeal the Hearing Officer's decision.

The notice shall also state that failure to timely request such a hearing constitutes a waiver of further rights in the matter.

### **Appeals**

The student or a parent may appeal the decision of the Campus Principal in accordance with the school grievance procedure (see "Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns," p. 104).

Discipline consequences will not be deferred pending the outcome of an appeal of an expulsion.

### **Effect of Student Withdrawal**

If a student withdraws from the school before the expulsion hearing is conducted or an expulsion order is entered, the school may continue with the proceedings and enter an order. If the school fails to enter an expulsion order after the student withdraws, the next district in which the student enrolls may complete the proceedings and enter an order.

### **No Credit Earned**

Except when required by law, students will not earn academic credit during a period of expulsion.

### **Emergency Removal**

If a Campus Principal reasonably believes a student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with a teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students in a class, with the ability of a student's classmates to learn, or with the operation of the school or a school-sponsored activity, the Campus Principal may order immediate removal of the student. Immediate suspension may be imposed by a Campus Principal or designee if they reasonably believe such action is necessary to protect persons or property from eminent harm. At the time of such an emergency removal, the student will be given verbal notice of the reason for the action and appropriate hearings will be scheduled within a reasonable time after the emergency removal.

### **Placement of Students With Disabilities**

All disciplinary actions regarding students with disabilities shall be conducted in accordance with the most current federal and state laws.

If a student's IEP includes a behavior improvement plan or behavioral intervention plan, the student's ARD committee shall

review the plan at least annually and more frequently if appropriate to address:

1. Changes in a student's circumstances that may impact the student's behavior, such as:
  - a. Placement of the student in a different educational setting;
  - b. An increase or persistence in disciplinary actions taken regarding the student for similar types of behavioral incidents;
  - c. A pattern of unexcused absences; or
  - d. An unauthorized unsupervised departure from an educational setting; or
2. The safety of the student or others.

## SECTION V: Parental Rights

### Surveys and Activities

Students 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:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family;
3. sexual behavior or attitudes;
4. illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship;
6. relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. 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.

Parents will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation.

### “Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities

Parents have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for their student’s participation in:

1. any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding;
2. school activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from their student for the purpose of marketing or selling that information;
3. any non-emergency, invasive physical examination, or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student (exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law).

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

Parents may request that their student be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires that students in social studies classes in Grades 3–12 recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless:

1. the parent provides a written statement requesting that the student be excused,
2. the school determines that the student has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or
3. the parent is a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity.

### Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff

Parents may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their student’s teachers, including:

1. whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and
3. undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree.

Parents also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to their student.

### **Requesting Observations During the School Day**

Parents/guardians may submit a request in writing to the campus Principal to observe their student during the school day. Observations are allowed depending upon both availability of campus administration and school activities. Observations will not occur during a designated closed campus or at a time that would jeopardize the learning environment. If an observation is approved, the parent/guardian must be accompanied by school administration or their designee for the duration of the observation. Parent observations for the time and date requested are not guaranteed. Parent observations are limited to one observation per semester not to exceed 45 minutes.

# APPENDIX

## Annual Notice of Parent and Student Rights (Annual FERPA Confidentiality Notice)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s educational records. These rights are:

### **The Right to Inspect and Review**

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student’s educational records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Campus Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

If circumstances effectively prevent the parent or eligible student from exercising the right to inspect and review the student’s educational records, the school shall provide the parent or eligible student with a copy of the records requested or make arrangements for the parent or eligible student to inspect and review the requested records.

The school shall not destroy any educational records if there is an outstanding request to inspect and review the records under this section. The school may charge a fee for a copy of an education record that is made for the parent or eligible student, unless the imposition of a fee effectively prevents a parent or eligible student from exercising the right to inspect and review the student’s education records. The school will not charge a fee to search for or to retrieve the student’s educational records. If the student’s educational records contain information on more than one student, the parent or eligible student may inspect and review or be informed of only the specific information about that student.

### **The Right to Seek Amendment of the Student’s Educational Records**

Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s privacy rights. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Campus Principal a written request that clearly identifies the part of the record they want changed, and specifies why it is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s privacy rights. The school will decide whether to amend the record as requested within a reasonable time after the school receives the request. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing to challenge the content of the student’s education records on the grounds that the information contained in the educational records is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s privacy rights.

If, as a result of the hearing, the school decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights, it shall amend the record accordingly and inform the parent or eligible student of the amendment in writing. If, as a result of the hearing, the school decides that the information in the

educational record is not inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights, it shall inform the parent or eligible student of the right to place a statement in the record commenting on the contested information in the record or stating why he or she disagrees with the decision of the school, or both. If the school places an amended statement in the student's educational records, the school is obligated to maintain the amended statement with the contested part of the record for as long as the record is maintained and disclose the statement whenever it discloses the portion of the record to which the statement relates.

## **The Right to Consent Prior to Disclosure**

Parents or eligible students have the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information (PII) contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

### **Disclosure Without Consent**

#### **Officials with Legitimate Educational Interests**

The school may disclose PII contained in the student's educational records without obtaining prior written consent of the parent or eligible student if the disclosure is to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is:

1. a person employed by the school as a Campus Principal, teacher, teacher aide/ paraprofessional, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel);
2. a person serving on the Board of Trustees;
3. a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from education records (*e.g.*, attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, *etc.*);
4. a parent or student serving on an official committee (*e.g.*, disciplinary committee, grievance committee, *etc.*); or
5. a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

#### **Officials of Another School**

The school may disclose—and does so upon request—PII contained in the student's educational records without obtaining prior written consent of the parent or eligible student if the disclosure is to officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled, if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

#### **Federal and State Program Purposes**

The school may disclose PII contained in the student's educational records without obtaining prior written consent of the parent or eligible student if the disclosure is to authorized representatives of:

1. the U.S. Comptroller General,
2. the U.S. Attorney General,
3. the U.S. Secretary of Education, or

4. state and local educational authorities.

Disclosures under this provision may be made in connection with an audit or evaluation of federal- or state-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf.

#### **Financial Aid**

The school may disclose PII contained in the student's educational records without obtaining prior written consent of the parent or eligible student if the disclosure is in connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.



## **State and Local Officials**

The school may disclose PII contained in the student's educational records without obtaining prior written consent of the parent or eligible student if the disclosure is to state and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a state statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released.

### ***Certain Studies***

The school may disclose PII contained in the student's educational records without obtaining prior written consent of the parent or eligible student if the disclosure is to organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to:

1. develop, validate, or administer predictive tests;
2. administer student aid programs; or
3. improve instruction.

### ***Accrediting Organizations***

The school may disclose PII contained in the student's educational records without obtaining prior written consent of the parent or eligible student if the disclosure is to accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.

### ***Tax Purposes***

The school may disclose PII contained in the student's educational records without obtaining prior written consent of the parent or eligible student if the disclosure is to parents of an eligible student, if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.

### ***Judicial Order or Subpoena***

The school may disclose PII contained in the student's educational records without obtaining prior written consent of the parent or eligible student if the disclosure is to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.

### ***Health and Safety Emergency***

The school may disclose PII contained in the student's educational records without obtaining prior written consent of the parent or eligible student if the disclosure is to appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.

### ***Directory Information***

The school may disclose PII contained in the student's educational records without obtaining prior written consent of the parent or eligible student if the school has designated the information as "directory information."

The school has designated the following categories of information as directory information for the purpose of disclosure relating to school-sponsored/school-affiliated purposes:

1. student's name;
2. address;
3. telephone listing;
4. electronic mail address;
5. photographs (including video images);
6. date and place of birth;
7. major field of study;
8. dates of attendance;
9. grade level;
10. participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
11. weight and height of members of athletic teams;
12. degrees, honors, and awards received;
13. the most recent educational agency or institution attended; and
14. student identification (ID) number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, *etc.* A student's social security number, in whole or in part, cannot be used for this purpose.

School-sponsored/school-affiliated purposes are those events/activities which the school conducts and/or sponsors to support the school's educational mission. Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. extracurricular programs or events (*e.g.*, plays, sporting events, graduation ceremony, *etc.*),
2. publications (*e.g.*, newsletters, yearbook, *etc.*),
3. honor roll and other recognition lists, and
4. marketing (*e.g.*, videos, print media, website, newspaper, *etc.*).

The school has designated the following categories of information as directory information for the purpose of disclosure to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, but only for secondary students:

1. student's name,
2. address, and
3. telephone listing

**The school shall not release directory information except for the purpose indicated above, namely:**

1. disclosure relating to school-sponsored/ school- affiliated purposes; and

2. disclosure to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, but only for secondary students.

**A parent or eligible student may opt out of the release of directory information for either or both of these purposes by submitting a written objection to the school office within 15 school days after receiving this “Annual Notice of Parent and Student Rights (Annual FERPA Confidentiality Notice).”**

## **Records**

Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, FERPA requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents or eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures.

### **The Right to File a Complaint**

Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office of the U.S. Department of Education (“Office”) concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name, address, and phone number of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW. Washington, D.C. 20202 Phone: 1

(800) 872-5327

A complaint must contain specific allegations of fact giving reasonable cause to believe that a FERPA violation has occurred. A complaint does not have to allege that a violation is based on the school’s policy or practice.

The Office investigates a timely complaint filed by a parent or eligible student, or conducts its own investigation when no complaint has been filed or a complaint has been withdrawn, to determine whether the school has failed to comply with FERPA. If the Office determines that the school has failed to comply with FERPA, it may also determine whether the failure to comply is based on the school’s policy or practice.

A timely complaint is defined as an allegation of a FERPA violation that is submitted to the Office within 180 days of the date of the alleged violation or of the date that the complainant knew or reasonably should have known of the alleged violation. The Office may extend the time limit for good cause shown.

### **Access to Medical Records**

Parents are entitled to access their student’s medical records.

## **Computer Resources, Web Learning Tools, and Network Services Acceptable Use Guidelines**

### **Computer Resources**

To prepare students for an increasingly computerized society, the school has made a substantial investment in

computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of those resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students with access to school computers and their parents agree to follow the following user agreement regarding use of these resources. Violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of computer privileges and other disciplinary action. Electronic communications such as e-mail using school computers or school-issued email accounts are not private and may be monitored by school staff.

### **Technology Mission Statement**

The school is committed to utilizing the maximum potential of technology to enhance student learning and increase teacher effectiveness by providing students with technology-related experiences. Recognizing the ever-changing influences of technology on all aspects of our lives, the school is dedicated to providing an integrated technological curriculum for all students and staff. Students will have access to the technology necessary to introduce, manage, communicate, and retrieve information in an efficient manner for educational use. In the attainment of both present and future goals, the school will provide a continually evolving staff development program oriented toward the integration of technology in areas of curriculum.

### **Instructional Resource**

The school is proud to bring network and internet access to school staff and students. The school believes the internet offers many diverse and unique resources to both students and staff. The school's goal in providing this service to staff and students is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovative teaching, and communication skills.

The internet is a global electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers. Services available to our school internet users include:

1. educational opportunities and electronic field trips,
2. public domain software and shareware,
3. access to university libraries and various museums,
4. online encyclopedias,
5. access to research databases,
6. access to hundreds of reference sources,
7. online subscriptions to educational journals,
8. virtual classrooms and laboratory simulations, and
9. information and news from NASA and other research institutions.

Through the school, students and staff have access to numerous research-oriented and instructional resources via the internet. Online encyclopedias, professional journals, and databases filled with timely information on thousands of topics are just a few of the resources provided. Computers at the school have the technology necessary to support student research and to promote academic achievement.

### **Student Safety**

The school is aware that resources which are inappropriate or not designed for use in the educational setting may be accessed on the internet. To protect students and staff from such inappropriate material, the school's internet access is filtered with one of the highest rated internet filtering systems available. However, users must recognize that it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial material and individuals must be responsible for their own actions in navigating the network.

### **Consent to Use Technology Resources**

Parent consent is required before your child can use technology resources, such as websites, e-mail, and other internet-based services required to provide instruction. Please be advised that some educational software tools may collect personal information about your child, consisting of items similar to, or inclusive of: (i) first name; (ii) last name; (iii) school assigned email address; (iv) unique student identifier; and; (v) date of birth. Under the federal law entitled, "Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule (COPPA)," some websites must provide parental notification and obtain verifiable parental consent before collecting personal information from children. However, the law permits the school to obtain this consent, thereby eliminating the need for each website operator to request parental consent.

In addition, while every reasonable effort is made by the school to prevent student exposure to inappropriate online content when using technology resources, it is not possible to completely eliminate the risk of such exposure. By signing the "Acknowledgement Form and Agreement to Abide by the Parent/Student Handbook," you acknowledge the requirements to use, and the associated risks of, these technology resources and are providing parental consent for your child to access and utilize all necessary technology resources.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure school-level compliance with all procedures and regulations regarding the local area network and internet usage. All students, parents, teachers, administrators, and school staff who obtain their internet access through the school are expected to use these services appropriately.

### **User Responsibilities**

1. The school is providing internet resources for educational purposes only. Student/staff use of internet resources must be related to an expressed educational and/or administrative goal or objective.

2. The use of the school internet and computer network must be in support of educational goals, research, and class assignments and be consistent with the educational objectives of the school.
3. Users must have a valid, authorized account to access the network, and use only those computer resources that are authorized. Accounts may be used only in accordance with authorized purposes.
4. Individual accounts may be used only by the owner of the account except where specifically authorized by school administrators. In the case of class accounts, all use must be under the supervision of the sponsoring teacher/supervisor.
5. The user is responsible for safeguarding the computer account. Users are expected to protect access to accounts by periodically changing the password and keeping it confidential. They must respect the privacy of others by not tampering with their files, passwords, or accounts.
6. The care of electronic devices provided by Heritage Academy is the responsibility of the student. An electronic device needs to remain in the same working and physical condition as it was when provided to the student. Devices that are damaged, lost or stolen should be reported to the school immediately. The parent/student will be responsible for charges associated with repairing or replacing the device

## **Policy Terms and Conditions**

### **Acceptable Use**

Users are to properly use school network resources for educational and/or administrative purposes. Respectful and responsible network etiquette and behavior should be in keeping with the school's mission statement. Students and staff are expressly prohibited from accessing obscene, profane, vulgar, or pornographic sites or materials.

### **Privileges**

The use of the internet is a privilege. Abusive conduct will lead to the privilege being revoked.

### **Warranty**

The school makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The school will not be responsible for loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed deliveries, viruses, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or user errors or omissions. Opinions, advice, services, and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers, or other third party individuals in the system are those of the providers and not the school. The school specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the school network services.

### **Disclaimer of Liability**

The school shall not be liable for the user's inappropriate use of electronic communication resources or violations of copyright restrictions, user's mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The school shall not be responsible

for ensuring the accuracy, age appropriateness, or usability of any information available on the internet.

### **Monitored Use**

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications system by students and staff shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated school staff to ensure appropriate use for educational or administrative purposes. Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic mail messages is prohibited. Only authorized school personnel designated by the Superintendent, may read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other system users. Deliberate interference with the ability of other system users to send/receive electronic mail, or the use of another person's user ID and/or password is prohibited. Forgery or attempted forgery will result in the cancellation of system privileges, as well as other appropriate consequences.

### **Vandalism**

Vandalism is prohibited and will result in cancellation of privileges. It is subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct. "Vandalism" is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, disrupt, or destroy data of another user of the school's network, or any of the agencies or other networks that are connected to the internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses. Any of these actions may be viewed as violations of school policy, administrative regulations and, possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Users must respect the privacy of other users. Users will not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or represent themselves as another user unless explicitly authorized to do so by that user. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance and/or degrade, disrupt, or bypass system security are violations of school policy and administrative regulations and may constitute criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws.

The school will, in accordance with school policy, cooperate with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the school's network.

### **Network Etiquette**

The user is expected to exhibit the following behavior:

1. Be polite (*e.g.*, an all caps message implies shouting);
2. Use appropriate language;
3. Maintain confidentiality of the user, colleagues, and students;
4. Respect copyright laws; and
5. Be respectful in all aspects of network use.

## **Consequences**

Students found to have violated school policies and procedures concerning use of school computers or networks shall be subject to disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Vandalism Prohibited**

Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy school equipment or data or data of another user of the school's system, or any of the agencies or other networks that are connected to the internet is prohibited. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance are violations of school policy and administrative regulations and may constitute criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Such prohibited activity includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses. Vandalism as defined above will result in the suspension of system use privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with system restoration, as well as other appropriate consequences as allowed by school policy and state and federal law. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the school.

## **Electronic Communication Device Commitment Policy**

Electronic communications at school and at school- related functions are subject to regulation by the school.

This Electronic Communication Device Commitment policy grants authority and permission to the school to regulate electronic communication devices when these devices are brought to and/or used while on school property or when attending school-related functions and events. Such communication devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, tablets, ipads and gaming devices. These regulations are made necessary in light of the unique opportunities these devices create for violations of law, school policies, and to perpetrate conduct disruptive of an educational environment essential to the school's educational program. These concerns are exacerbated by electronic security protections and the personal size of these devices, which are often concealed in pockets and purses.

Therefore, all students who would possess or use such devices on school property or at school-related activities, together with their parent, agree to the following:

1. The possession and use of cell phones, tablets, iPads, and other electronic communication devices by a student on school property or at school- related events is a privilege and not a right.
2. In consideration for the privilege to possess and use such devices on school property and at school- related events, the school is authorized and has the student's full consent to confiscate, power on or off, manipulate and do all things necessary to search his or her device and recover or intercept communications (including but not limited to text messaging) when reasonable suspicion exists that such device has been used to transmit or receive communications in violation of law, the Student Code of Conduct, school policy, or school regulation.



3. An electronic communication device used or possessed in violation of law, the Student Code of Conduct, school policy, or school regulation is subject to confiscation and may cause the loss of the privilege to possess and use such devices on school property and at school-related events for an indefinite period of time.

### **Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns**

The purpose of this policy is to secure, at the lowest possible administrative level, prompt and equitable resolution of student or parent complaints and/or concerns. Usually, student or parent complaints can be resolved simply by an informal phone call or conference with the teacher or Campus Principal who is the subject of the complaint. Generally, should the complaint involve a problem with a teacher, the student or parent is expected to discuss the matter with the teacher before requesting a conference with the Campus Principal. For those complaints that cannot be handled informally, the school has adopted the following grievance policy.

Complaints regarding certain topics are addressed by specific policies or other documents that modify this complaint process or require an alternative process.

### **Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy, “days” shall mean regular school days.

For the purposes of this policy, “parent” shall mean a person standing in parental relation, but does not include a person as to whom the parent-child relationship has been terminated or a person not entitled to possession of or access to a child under a court order. Except as provided by federal law, all rights of a parent under Education Code Title 2 and all educational rights under Family Code 151.003(a)(10) shall be exercised by a student who is 18 years of age or older or whose disabilities of minority have been removed for general purposes under Family Code Chapter 31, unless the student has been determined to be incompetent or the student’s rights have been otherwise restricted by a court order.

### **Level One**

A student or parent who has a complaint that could not be resolved informally shall request a conference with the Campus Principal by filing the complaint in writing on a form provided by the school. The form must be filed with the school office within seven days of the time the student or parent knew, or should have known, of the event or series of events about which the student or parent is complaining. Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the student or parent does not have copies of these documents, they may be presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted unless the student or parent did not know the documents existed before the Level One conference. A complaint form that is incomplete in any material way may be dismissed, but may be re-filed with all the requested

information if the re-filing is within the designated time for filing a complaint.

The Campus Principal shall hold a conference with the student or parent within seven days of the request. The seven-day timeframe for holding the Level One conference may be extended if mutually agreed to by both the student or parent and the Campus Principal. An adult may represent a student at this and any level of the complaint.

The Campus Principal shall have seven days following the Level One conference within which to respond. Announcement of a decision in the student's or parent's presence shall constitute communication of the decision.

Should the complaint involve a problem with the Campus Principal, then the Level One complaint form should be submitted to the Superintendent or designee at the following address:

Heritage Academy  
6013 Fountainwood St.  
San Antonio, TX 78233

## **Level Two**

If the outcome of the Level One conference with the Campus Principal is not to the student's or parent's satisfaction or the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may appeal the Level One decision to the Superintendent's Designee by filing the appeal notice in writing on a form provided by the school.

**Note:** In the event that the Level One conference was held by the designee, the Level Two conference shall be held by another designee.

The appeal notice must include a copy of the Level One complaint, a copy of the Level One decision being appealed (if applicable), and a copy of any documents presented at the Level One conference.

The appeal notice must be postmarked to the above address within seven days following receipt of a response or, if no response is received, within seven days of the response deadline.

The designee shall hold a conference with the student or parent within seven days of the appeal notice. The seven-day timeframe for holding the Level Two conference may be extended if mutually agreed to by both the student or parent and the designee.

The designee shall have seven days following the Level Two conference within which to respond. Announcement of a decision in the student's or parent's presence shall constitute communication of the decision.

## **Level Three**

If the outcome of the Level Two conference with the designee is not to the student's or parent's satisfaction or the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may appeal the Level Two decision to the Superintendent by filing the appeal notice in writing on a form provided by the school. The appeal notice must include a copy of the Level One complaint, a copy of the Level Two appeal notice, a copy of the Level One and Level Two decisions being appealed

(if applicable), and a copy of any documents presented at the Level One and Level Two conferences.

The appeal notice must be postmarked to the following address within seven days following receipt of a response or, if no response is received, within seven days of the response deadline:

Heritage Academy  
6013 Fountainwood St.  
San Antonio, TX 78233

The Superintendent or designee shall hold a conference with the student or parent within 14 days of the appeal notice. The 14-day timeframe for holding the Level Three conference may be extended if mutually agreed to by both the student or parent and the Superintendent or designee. The Level Three conference may be held via telephone or video conference at the discretion of the Superintendent.

The Superintendent or designee shall have seven days following the Level Three conference within which to respond. Announcement of a decision in the student's or parent's presence shall constitute communication of the decision.

#### **Level Four**

If the outcome of the Level Three conference with the Superintendent or designee is not to the student's or parent's satisfaction or the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may appeal the Level Three decision to the Board of Trustees by filing the appeal notice in writing on a form provided by the school. The appeal notice must include a copy of the Level One complaint; a copy of the Level Two and Level Three appeal notices; a copy of the Level One, Level Two, and Level Three decisions being appealed (if applicable); and a copy of any documents presented at the Level One, Level Two, and Level Three conferences.

The appeal notice must be postmarked to the following address within seven days following receipt of a response or, if no response is received, within seven days of the response deadline:

Heritage Academy  
6013 Fountainwood Dr..  
San Antonio, TX 78233

The appeal will then be placed on the agenda of a future Board meeting. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the student or parent of the date, time, and place of the meeting.

The Board of Trustees is not required to consider documentation not previously submitted or issues not previously presented. The Board may accept written testimony from the complainant and may request a written response from the school. The board will consider the grievance and may, at its discretion, require the appearance of the complainant and administration. The Board of Trustees shall then make and communicate its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If for any reason the Board of Trustees fails to reach a

decision regarding the complaint by the end of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, the lack of a response by the Board of Trustees upholds the decision at Level Three.

If the complaint involves concerns or charges regarding an employee or concerns personally identifiable information of a student, The Board of Trustees shall review the complaint in a closed meeting unless the employee to whom the complaint pertains requests that the Board considers the complaint in open session.

### **Consolidation of Complaints**

When the school determines, in its sole discretion, that two or more individual complaints are sufficiently similar in nature and remedy to permit their resolution through one proceeding, the complaints may be consolidated.

### **Modification of Procedures**

The Superintendent may, at his or her sole discretion, modify this complaint process or require an alternative process, so long as the Board of Trustees retains final authority to hear and decide complaints and concerns brought hereunder.

# HERITAGE ACADEMY

## 2024–2025 PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

### **Acknowledgment Form and Agreement to Abide by the Parent/Student Handbook**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Research tells us that a safe, orderly, school is essential to student learning. The importance of that kind of an environment has been a long-standing value of this school. That environment promotes a positive school climate and high expectations for both behavior and learning.

This Handbook is published to outline those expectations. We want to assure and protect the rights of all students to a safe, orderly, and educationally efficient environment. If we can free the school from disruptions that result from inappropriate behavior and appearance, we seek to do so. We solicit your support and cooperation in a partnership which provides the best possible learning environment for your student.

This Handbook, including the Student Code of Conduct, has been developed through the cooperative efforts of our school community. It is extremely important that all students are aware of the expectations that the school has for them and that each parent encourages their student to accept and follow the behavioral standards outlined in this Handbook.

Your signature is requested to acknowledge your receipt of this Handbook and your commitment to abide by the provisions contained herein.

**My signature indicates that I have received and agree to abide by the Parent/Student Handbook, including, *but not limited to*, the following provisions thereof:**

- 1. Student Code of Conduct (p. 68);**
- 2. Computer Resources, Web Learning Tools, and Network Services Acceptable Use Guidelines (p.100); and**
- 3. Electronic Communication Device Commitment Policy (p.103).**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**School**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Grade Level**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent Email Address**

**PARENT/STUDENT COPY- Please remove/print this page, sign it, and keep it for your records. Thank you for allowing our staff the opportunity to partner with you in the education of your child.**

# HERITAGE ACADEMY

## 2024-2025 PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**School**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Grade Level**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent Email Address**

Please remove/print this page, sign it, and return it to the school office.

Thank you for allowing our staff the opportunity to partner with you in the education of your child.