

# Student Handbook



2023 – 2024

# North East STEM Academy



# North East STEM Academy

10918 ½ Bentley  
HOUSTON, TX. 77093  
713-640-3720

**Vision:** Here we are ALL - **Capable, Connected,** and **Cared For!**

**Mission:** At NESTEM we create opportunities to empower and develop leaders who are advocates for themselves and their communities.

**Established:** 2021

**Mascot:** Owls

**School Colors:** Navy Blue and Emerald Green

**Website:** [www.ryss.org/nestem](http://www.ryss.org/nestem)

**Twitter:** @RYSS\_NESTEM

**Facebook/Instagram:** @RYSS North East STEM Academy

**School Hours:** 8:00 – 4:00

**School Phone:** 713-640-3720

**Administrators:**

**Georgina Castilleja**

**Principal**

\*Para copia en Español, por favor visite la sección "About Us" en nuestra pagina [www.ryss.org/nestem](http://www.ryss.org/nestem)

\*RYSS District and TEA precede any policy herein



### Principal's Message

*Welcome to North East STEM Academy, part of Raul Yzaguirre Schools For Success. We take pride in embarking on this new journey, providing an educational environment dedicated to academic excellence, respect, and safety of every member of our community.*

*We strive to provide a challenging and safe learning environment that motivates and prepares students to achieve their academic and personal best. In our learning community, teachers, parents, stakeholders, and administrators come together to inspire and nurture every student to become a college-bound life-long learner in a global society.*

*Our campus has a STEM focus that will challenge our students in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and math. Specifically, we will focus on environmental science - making sure students know the impact they have in the world and the community around them.*

*We believe that education is not only academic, but social, emotional, and cultural as well. Our students will learn and abide by our CORE VALUES and soon learn the habits of highly successful people. Through our SERVICE component, students will see the power they hold as change agents and advocates for their community.*

*While Instruction in all subject areas is centered on high standards of literacy, critical thinking and real world problem-solving skills, our real strength will come from instilling skills and abilities that allow our students to compete and adapt in an ever-changing society. Please contact us if you have any questions. We are glad you took the opportunity to join us at North East STEM Academy and are part of our community of learners!*

Georgina Castilleja, Ed.D.  
NESTEM Principal

## I: About

### The Raul Yzaguirre Schools For Success

Founded in 1996, the Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success (RYSS) was among the first 20 open-enrollment charter school districts in Texas. RYSS was born from a vision of the Tejano Center for Community Concerns' leadership team to provide the highest quality education for children of the center's surrounding neighborhoods. From its beginning, RYSS has continued to remain committed to every student, regardless of his or her life circumstances, to provide a true college-preparatory experience. RYSS is comprised of six campuses.

As of 2021, a name change of the four original campuses took place to distinguish each campus. In Houston, Texas, there are three original campuses: PSTEM Academy (for grades Pre- K5), the Early College STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics) (for grades 6-8), and the Early College T-STEM (Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) (for grades 9-12). The fourth campus, the BRYSS Academy (for grades 6-8), is located in Brownsville, Texas. New Houston campuses included **North East STEM Academy** (grade 6th - 8th) and Leonel Castillo Early Childhood STEM Academy (PreK 3, Pre- K4, and Kinder). As an open-enrollment charter school, RYSS admits students regardless of academic limitation; however, students who enroll at RYSS, along with their parents, are fully aware that students will enter a world of high expectations – academically and socially. RYSS is committed to shaping the minds and hearts of students to help them become valuable and productive members of our community, state, nation, and global community. RYSS students learn not only for school but also for life.

### **Vision**

The Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success will be the gold standard for excellence in community-based education by graduating college-bound, civic-oriented leaders.

### **RYSS Mission**

The Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success exists to educate and empower the next generation of leaders by creating a college-bound, culturally relevant environment with a focus on academics, health and social services, and youth and human services to create stronger families and healthier communities.

### North East STEM Academy

North East STEM Academy is a newly established public charter school, located in the North East Corridor between the Houston and Aldine communities. NESTEM first opened its doors for the 2021 – 2022 school year, serving grades 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>. NESTEM offers general, gifted and talented, emergent bilingual, and special education programs with a STEM focus. The campus has a focus on social and emotional learning as well as character building, and all of its students participate in community service.

### **NESTEM Vision**

At NESTEM we are all Capable, Connected, and Cared For!

All means *every* Student, Teacher, Parent, and Community member. Capable: We all learn the skills we need to be successful. Connected: We all belong – we have ownership of our community. Cared For: We show and receive empathy – we are a family.

### **NESTEM Mission**

At NESTEM we create opportunities to empower and develop leaders who are advocates for themselves and their community.

## **II: Academics**

### **Curriculum Overview**

RYSS is committed to providing a high-quality educational experience for all students. RYSS promotes students' higher-order thinking skills and their capacity to be well-informed and responsible global citizens. Each academy maintains its course of study, designed to meet state standards and provide a uniquely enriched educational opportunity for its students.

#### **Course of Study (6<sup>th</sup> grade):**

- English Language Arts
- Science (Earth and Life Science)
- Social Studies (World Cultures)
- Math
- Technology Applications
- Physical Education

#### **Course of Study (7<sup>th</sup> grade):**

- English Language Arts
- Science (Earth and Life Science)
- Social Studies (Texas History)
- Math
- Physical Education
- Art

#### **Course of Study (8<sup>th</sup> grade):**

- English Language Arts
- Science (Earth and Life Science)
- Social Studies (US History)
- Math
- Physical Education
- Principals of Information Technology

### **Special Populations**

NESTEM complies with all state and federal regulations regarding the placement and services provided to students identified as needing special education services. Special education services are guided by a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), as defined by the student's Admission Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee decision. NESTEM Middle School is committed to providing equal access to the same opportunities and lessons afforded to all students.

- Special Education, Bilingual/ESL, Section 504, Gifted and Talented, Dyslexia and Response to Intervention teachers and staff will continue to provide specialized instruction, related services, and supports to eligible students according to their education plan to best meet their needs through a distant and/or face-to-face format.
- Our school aims at effective and constant communication with our parents. Therefore, parents will have the option to attend school meetings such as ARD meetings via Zoom or a similar internet platform or by phone if needed.
- Parents and students should contact their Special Program case manager, Mr. Cortez, with questions, or Ms. Susan Pansmith, Special Populations Manager, at 713-640-3778, or email [susan.pansmith@tejanocenter.org](mailto:susan.pansmith@tejanocenter.org)

#### **Special Education and Section 504 Referrals:**

Each school district or charter school must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's or charter school's Section 504 program. Districts and charter schools must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

#### **Contact Person for Special Education and Section 504 Referrals:**

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Special Education or Section 504 services is:

District Contact Person: Ms. Susan Pansmith

Phone Number: (713) 640-3778

Campus Contact Person: John-Paul Cortez

Phone Number: 713-640-3720

### 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](#)
- [Partners Resource Network](#)
- [Special Education Information Center](#)
- [Texas Project First](#)

### Grading Policies:

1. Teachers will update grades at least once a week. **A minimum of two grades per week in all subjects will be assigned per student.** A minimum of two grades must be assigned for each department category every grading cycle.
2. No single grade should count for more than 20% of the overall cycle grade.
3. Teachers will continue to assess learning and have flexibility to adjust grades as students demonstrate additional learning and understanding. Low grades can be replaced with higher grades that reflect increased understanding. This should include formative and summative assessments. Grades should not be based upon behavior, attendance, or attitude.

### Grading categories and weights:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 1. Exit Tickets, HW, Do Nows                               | 15% |
| 2. Assessment Grades (Tests/Projects, Minimum 2 per cycle) | 35% |
| 3. Classwork (Quizzes, Labs, Daily Work)                   | 50% |

### Make-up Work

Students will be given the opportunity to make up work missed due to absence. It is the responsibility of the student to request and complete any missed assignments or tests upon return to class from absence. **Students have three days to make up any missing work due to absences, after three days the work will then fall into the category of late work.**

### Late Work

Late work will be graded based upon the assignment standards/rubric and 5 points will be deducted for every day it is submitted past the due date, not to exceed a 50 points deduction.

### Reassessment Policy

1. Teachers shall provide students opportunity for reassessment for major tests and projects when the grade received indicates that the objective assessed was not mastered (below 70%).
2. Reassessment may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:
  - a. Alternative assessment
  - b. Same assessment
  - c. Oral assessment
3. ***Student must attend a mandatory tutorial before being allowed to retest.*** All reassessments must be completed within one week from the time the assessment is returned to the student. There may be assessments that are not available to be re-assessed: end-of-course test, benchmark assessments, assessments at the end of the grading period, final paper/essays. Teachers have the right to rescind this offer or exclude an assignment from retake opportunity, but students/parents must be notified in advance, and other opportunities must be available for students to bring their average up.

### Grades and Parent Communication/Conferences

1. Teachers are required to contact parents in a timely manner before a student fails a 6-week-cycle grading period.
2. Teachers are required to contact parents if a student fails the semester.

### **Incomplete Six-Week Averages**

A teacher shall give a grade of “Incomplete” for a grading cycle to any student who does not complete assignments or assessments due to excused absences or other extenuating circumstances. The grade of “Incomplete” shall be resolved by the end of the next grading cycle immediately following the grading cycle in which the incomplete was first given.

### **Grade Changes**

Grade changes may only be done with the approval of the principal. Grade changes may be processed if there is an error in the computation of the grade, or an error was made on the grade report sheet.

### **Field Cultural Experiences/Field Trips:**

Student travel can be a worthwhile educational experience, but the benefits come with unique challenges for all involved. For the objectives of student travel to be achieved fully, school officials must always have the full and complete cooperation of participating students. Due to the tremendous responsibility placed on school sponsors during any trip of this sort, there may be special rules that the students are expected to follow.

Students are allowed to participate in travel away from school only when their academic, attendance, and conduct records are acceptable. The principal (in collaboration with trip sponsors) has the right to make a final determination on whether a student may participate in a school activity involving travel. Students should remember that participating in such school-sponsored trips is a privilege, not a right. Students must be willing to cooperate completely with their sponsors and their fellow group members so that the trip is enjoyable and beneficial for everyone involved. Certain rules violations can be of such a serious nature when traveling with a student group as to cause a student to be sent home early at his or her parents' expense.

In addition, the student may be subsequently removed from any future activities in which the student would be representing NESTEM or the district. Trip sponsors will make both parents and students aware of the applicable rules when asking for parent permission for student travel. Also, because of the binding contractual requirements of some travel arrangements, students who find themselves unable to participate in planned student travel (due to a loss of eligibility or other reasons) may not be able to receive refunds of their travel deposits.

## **III: School Operating Procedures**

### **Attendance/Tardy:**

Daily attendance in ALL classes is necessary for academic success. The Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success adheres to the TEA attendance policy, which states that a student must be in attendance 90% of the days that class meets to be considered for promotion. Failure to meet attendance requirements will result in mandatory summer school and/or being retained. **Students have three (3) days upon return to school from absence, to submit an excuse note to the Attendance Office.** The school day begins at **8:00am**. It is important for students to be on time so that they do not miss any instruction. **Excessive absences and/or tardiness will lead to a parent conference and can lead to a student being placed on an attendance contract and probationary status.** If a student is picked up early and is signed out in the front office, the parent/guardian must still provide a written excuse note the following day, stating the reason the student had to leave early from school. Students will not be released during the last hour of school except in emergency situations.

### **Calendar:**

District and campus calendars will be distributed at orientation and the first week of school. The calendar will be made available and updated on our campus website [RYYs.org/nestem](http://RYYs.org/nestem).

### **Contacting Faculty and Staff**

To contact the school please call the school phone number: 713-640-3720. Parents may also email Dr. Castilleja or the teachers directly. Please allow 24-48 hours for a response.

## Emergency Plan

Each month a safety drill we be conducted. The drill may be announced or unannounced. In addition a monthly campus safety audit will be conducted. In the case of an actual emergency, parents will be contacted through phone and email. In case another location is needed for parent pick-up, our relocation site is next door at the North East Community Center, our secondary location is Scarborough Elementary. Parents, students, and staff are urged to stay vigilant and to report any suspicious actions or behaviors. If you see or hear something suspicious - report it to the administration OR report it anonymously by visiting [www.iwatchtx.org](http://www.iwatchtx.org) or calling 1-844-643-2251.

## Arrival & Dismissal Procedures:

NESTEM Students will be dropped off in front of the school no earlier than 7:30am. They will enter the building through the main entrance and proceed to the cafeteria for breakfast. Classes will begin at 8:00AM  
Classes will dismiss at 4:00pm and all students who are car riders will be picked up in the front of the school. Parents may begin lining up along the parking lot closest to the Kowis St entrance at 3:50pm and will line up in the parking lot. Parents will then exit through the Sagebush entrance. Students who ride a private school bus will meet the bus at the designated loading and unloading zone. Students who walk home will exit the park using the provided sidewalks and walkways. Parents must confirm with school officials if a child is to walk home or take public transportation. Please inform the school of any special circumstances that interfere with NESTEM’s arrival and dismissal times. Students will not be allowed to go to the park after school, unless the parent has contacted school administration. Students will not be allowed to walk to the parking lot on their own. Students will be released in the car line or in person in front of the school.

## Daily Schedule

Period	Time	Period	Time	Period	Time
Advocacy	8:00am - 8:30am	Advocacy	8:00am - 8:30am	Advocacy	8:00am - 8:30am
1st	8:35am - 9:35am	1st	8:35am - 9:35am	1st	8:35am - 9:35am
2nd	9:40am - 10:40am	2nd	9:40am - 10:40am	2nd	9:40am - 10:40am
3rd	10:45am - 11:15am	3rd	10:45am - 11:50am	3rd	10:45am - 11:50am
Lunch	11:20am -11:50am	Lunch	11:55am -12:25am	4th	11:55am -12:25pm
4th	11:55am - 1:00pm	4th	12:30pm - 1:00pm	Lunch	12:30pm - 1:00pm
5th	1:05pm - 2:00pm	5th	1:05pm - 2:00pm	5th	1:05pm - 2:00pm
6th	2:05pm - 3:00pm	6th	2:05pm - 3:00pm	6th	2:05pm - 3:00pm
7th	3:00pm - 4:00pm	7th	3:00pm - 4:00pm	7th	3:00pm - 4:00pm

## Dress Code:

- Khaki or Navy-Blue Bottoms: Pants, Shorts, or Skirt (No Rips or tears)
- Navy Blue Polo (6<sup>th</sup> Grade)
- Hunter Green Polo (7<sup>th</sup> Grade)
- Gray Polo (8<sup>th</sup> Grade)
- School Shirt may be worn any day
- Closed Toe Shoes with Back Strap (no slides, flip-flopss, house shoes, Croc-style shoes)
- **Solid** Navy Blue, Green, gray, or school logo Hoodie
- Jacket (any color, only outdoors)
- Fridays: Blue Jeans and School/College Shirt
- Excessively ripped jeans that expose skin are not allowed. If jeans expose skin, the student must wear leggings underneath to cover the exposed skin.
- Special Dress days will be announced by school administration.

\* Failure to adhere to the school dress code will result in disciplinary action and parents will be contacted to bring school uniform.



## **IV: Health and Wellness**

The function of the school nurse is to provide acute, chronic, episodic, and emergency health care; assessment of student's health status; identification of health problems that may affect educational achievement; development of health care plans; and administration of medications. The nurse cannot diagnose but can make recommendations based on the individual student. Parents must inform the nurse of any student with a chronic or serious illness. A medical statement describing the condition should be provided by the parent for the student's confidential health record.

Parents should keep their child at home if exhibiting any of the following symptoms:

- A fever of 100 degrees or more. Students must be fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours.
- Vomiting or diarrhea. The child must be symptom-free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- Skin rash that has not been diagnosed by a doctor as being noncontagious. The nurse/administration must have a medical release for the student to return to school.
- Untreated inflamed/pink eyes. A doctor's note is required for the student to return to school. If inflammation is due to "allergies," the doctor must document it.

**If students exhibit any of the above symptoms at school, they must be picked up by their parents.**

A contagious medical condition is one that will spread from one person to the next. The flu, strep throat, chickenpox, and infectious pink eye are some examples. When a student has been seen by the doctor, he or she must bring a doctor's note in order to return to school.

### **Medication**

The policy of the Board of Education does not authorize RYSS school personnel to dispense or administer medication of any kind. That includes aspirin, a similar preparation, or any other drugs. Nurses and other school personnel, however, can give medication during school hours under the following restrictions: Students who are noncontagious, on long-term medication, on preventative medication, or for a prolonged period on medication that cannot under any arrangement be administered other than during school hours may take medication during school hours. The health care provider's statement must be accompanied by the written permission of at least one parent. This form will be kept on file in the clinic. No medication will be dispensed without this form on file. With the required documentation on file, students may self-administer asthma medications. The medication is to be furnished by a parent and brought to the clinic in the original container labeled with the child's name, name of the medication, and directions for the time, route, and dosage. The physician's name must be on prescription medication. All medications must be delivered to the school by an adult and must be picked up from the school by an adult.

### **Lice**

If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent to determine whether the child will need to be picked up from school and discuss a plan for treatment. If a parent discovers head lice in a child's hair, parents are asked to inform the school nurse as soon as possible. Follow-up screening will be done on campus. Parents should instruct their children not to share combs, brushes, hats, or scarves with anyone.

### **Immunizations**

Each student shall be fully immunized against diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella, mumps, tetanus, and poliomyelitis. The Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) may modify or delete any of these

immunizations or may require immunizations against additional diseases as a requirement for admission to any elementary or secondary school. Education Code 38.001(a), (b) TDSHS requires students in kindergarten through twelfth grade to have the following additional vaccines, according to the immunization schedules set forth in department regulations: pertussis, hepatitis B, hepatitis A (for students attending schools in high incidence geographic areas as designated by the department), and varicella (chickenpox). TDSHS requires students in seventh through twelfth grade to have the meningococcal vaccine, according to the immunization schedules set forth in department regulations. 55 25 TAC 97.63(2)(B) If a student's immunizations are incomplete, the parent/guardian will be sent a letter by the school nurse to this effect. For the student to remain inschool, the immunizations required must be obtained within the time designated, and proof of immunization must be provided to the nurse before being readmitted to class. For a complete list of required immunizations, please contact the RYSS nurse. The Precinct 2 clinic located at James Driver Park provides free immunizations.

### **Contagious Diseases and Conditions**

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain conditions or diseases are NOT allowed to come to school while they are contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a contagious disease, the parent should keep the child at home; and it is requested until symptoms of the disease or condition are completely gone, or the child has been seen by his or her health care provider. All students exhibiting contagious conditions must NOT return to school unless written notice from a health care provider is received.

### **Health Screenings**

The State of Texas requires that all students have yearly vision and hearing screenings. All fifth-grade and eighth-grade students are also required to have a yearly spinal screening. The nurse and/or personnel who are certified by the state will perform the screenings. If the student or parent prefers, the requirements may be met by a professional examination by the student's health care provider. A copy of the results should be sent to the student clinic to verify the assessment, the results, and possible treatment. If a student is currently under a physician's care for a vision, hearing, or spinal condition, parents are asked to please send a copy of the report to the health clinic so modifications can be implemented.

### **Medical Conditions**

All medical conditions, either previous or currently being treated by a medical doctor or health care provider, MUST be reported to the school nurse. A list of all medications the student is taking must be provided to the nurse in case of an emergency and will be maintained confidential.

### **Social and Emotional Learning**

The Social and Emotional Learning team at NESTEM Academy involves every staff member. We coordinate the implementation and growth of culturally responsive and emotionally safe learning environments. We have resources to help students develop skills to manage their emotions, form positive relationships, feel empathy for others, and make responsible decisions. SEL programming is based on the understanding that the best learning emerges in the context of supportive relationships that make learning challenging, engaging, and meaningful.

## **V: Student Life**

### **Student Council**

Students will select two students from each grade level to meet once a semester with the administration and teachers to discuss student concerns and to bring student ideas to the administration.

### **Extra-Curricular/Clubs**

NESTEM will offer numerous extracurricular activities for students to enjoy. From sports, art, cooking, STEM, and other clubs. If a student would like to start a club, they need to get a faculty sponsor and approval from the administration. Clubs will meet after school or during advocacy on certain days.

## VI: Campus and Student Safety

### **Closed Campus**

NESTEM is a closed campus and students are not allowed to leave the campus during the school day. Parents that wish to pick up their children must sign them out for the day from the main office.

### **Visitors**

All visitors to campus must state their reason for entering the building prior to entering the building by accessing the video doorbell located on the right side of the main entrance. School staff will answer questions and ask for the reason for the visit. Once approved for entry the visitor must present a valid ID so that a background check may be conducted. Failure to provide an ID or not passing the background check will prevent you from remaining on campus.

### **Visitor Parking**

All visitors will park in the parking lot of James Driver Park using the Sagebrush Entrance. They will park in the lot closest to the school and pavilion.

## VII: Student Culture

### **Backpacks**

Students must have a **clear or mesh backpack**, but be aware that all students are subject to search at any time the administration has reasonable cause.

### **Bullying**

Behavior is an act that exploits a balance of power that is severe, persistent, and pervasive and creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

**NESTEM is a Bully Free Zone.** Allegations of bullying will be investigated and addressed on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with the RYSS Student Code of Conduct.

Students can report bullying through the anonymous reporting form located on our website.

### **Cellular Phones, Headphones, and Electronic Devices**

Students will be able to bring phones to school, but all student cell phones turned off and will be collected at the beginning of the school day and returned at the end of the school day. The use of cell or headphones, during school hours, is strictly prohibited. The use of AirPods or other personal headphones will only be allowed at lunch.

Inappropriate, explicit, or derogative messages or photos should never be sent via cell phone or email. Cyberbullying is on-line harassment. Any student found to be involved in such activities will receive consequences. Student must not share passwords to any devices or on-line accounts or face disciplinary action.

If a student is found with a visible cell phone during the school day, including lunch and restroom breaks, the device will be confiscated, and the following penalties will apply:

- First Offense – The electronic device will be confiscated and returned to the parent only. (This will serve as the only warning notice.)
- Second and subsequent offense – The electronic device will be confiscated and returned to the parent only and a payment of a \$20.00 administrative fee will be required.

## **Student Technology Devices**

NESTEM students will be issued a school laptop to use for instructional purposes during the school day and to take home. It is expected that students charge their laptop and bring their laptop and charger to school everyday. Students will **not** be allowed to bring in their own device to use during the day. If a student does not have their device they will get a daily use laptop from the school to use for that day. All day use laptops must be returned at the end of the school day.

There will be a **\$35.00 Technology Fee per student**. This will cover the device in-case of accidental damage. If the laptop is damaged they will be provided a loaner laptop until their device has been repaired. Students must keep the school provided cases on the laptops at all times.

## **Community Service**

NESTEM students are expected to participate in community service activities. Requirements are 15 hours of community service for all grade levels. As a school, we will provide many opportunities to fulfill the required hours as well as guidance on planning the activities best suited for each student.

## **Conduct Grade**

Conduct grades affect eligibility for participation in school activities. Poor conduct interferes with a student's ability to learn and a teacher's ability to teach. It is also disruptive to other students in the class who want to learn. Poor conduct will be reflected on one's report card. Conduct infractions, however, may not be used to affect a student's academic grade, but may affect eligibility for extracurricular activities and fieldtrips. Students who have been sent to the office for discipline problems may receive conduct points from the teacher as a result of misbehavior. A student must maintain at least an "S" average in conduct to qualify for certain honors and other special recognition, awards, clubs, and offices. The principal or an assistant principal or designee may reduce a student's conduct grade for persistent disciplinary infractions.

## **Core Values: Behaviors we model in our school and community**

### **AT NESTEM we:**

- **Believe in ourselves**
- **Embrace new experiences**
- **Respect ourselves, others, and our school**
- **Consider other perspectives**
- **Do our part to support**
- **Ask for help**
- **Are honest to ourselves and others**
- **Keep our word**
- **Are grateful**
- **ALWAYS do our best and NEVER give up!**

**Damage to School Property** Anyone who accidentally or intentionally destroys or damages anything on campus must pay the cost for repair and/or replacement. Students who are caught in the act of vandalizing the school in any way will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, and they and their parents will be billed for the cost of repairs.

### **Distribution or sale of merchandise**

Students may not sale any merchandise on the school campus without administrative permission. Selling without permission is a level 3 offense in the district student code of conduct.

### Discipline/Restorative Practices / Circles

NESTEM is a Restorative campus. We will use restorative practice as a first resort to discipline and conflict-resolution. Further disciplinary consequences will be determined by administration on a case by case basis.

Repeated or serious offenses may result in the implementation of a behavior contract between the student, parent, and school. Failure to adhere to the behavior contract will result in the student losing their seat at NESTEM and/or alternative placement.

Please see the RYSS Student Code of Conduct for behavior expectations district wide.

## NESTEM Social Emotional and Behavior Processes

**We want to catch you doing right!  
Let's Make OUR Classroom a  
Community!**

But, when Inappropriate  
Behavior Occurs...

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Violation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Verbal Warning</li><li>• Correct Your Behavior</li></ul>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Violation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Private Student/Teacher Conference</li><li>• Parent Contact (as needed)</li><li>• Determine if other people should be included</li><li>• Document on Behavior Incident Log</li></ul>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Violation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classroom detention</li><li>• Document on Behavior Incident Log</li><li>• Parent Contact (required)</li></ul>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Violation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AP Notified</li><li>• Complete Behavior Incident Log</li><li>• Contact Parent</li><li>• Office Referral</li></ul>

**If behavior stops ...**  
Good Job! We can start fresh 😊

## VIII: Parent Opportunities and Empowerment

### **PTO**

NESTEM does not currently have an established PTO. If you are interested in participating in a Parent Teacher Organization please reach out to Dr. Castilleja. We believe in a partnership approach and welcome the opportunity.

### **SDMC**

There are two parent positions in the Shared Decision-Making Committee at NESTEM. Participation is voluntary. The SDMC meets quarterly to discuss issues concerning the school and make recommendations to the School Principal. If you are interested in participating or being a substitute, you may notify Dr. Castilleja. Monthly Coffee with the Principal sessions also allow informal communication between families and the principal to discuss school events and suggestions.

### **VIPS**

Volunteers in Public Schools is a program that allows parents and community volunteers the opportunity to participate in events and activities in the school. In order to attain VIPS status you will need to fill out a VIPS application with the school administrative assistant and a more thorough background check will be performed. Once you are cleared as a VIPS you can volunteer at events and activities on behalf of the school.

### **FACE District Meetings**

Family and Community Engagement meetings are held quarterly to share information about the Tejano Center for Community Concerns program and how parents can get assistance when needed.

## IX: School – Home Communication

### **Parent Communication:**

Efforts should be made to keep parents informed regarding their child's behavioral and academic progress. Parents will be contacted if a child is failing a class, is having issues affecting his/her progress (behavior, focus, attendance, etc).

NESTEM encourages parents to contact the school concerning the education of their children. A healthy partnership between parents, students, and staff members is likely to benefit all involved.

Should parents wish to arrange a conference, they may call the school office at 713-640-3720 to make an appointment or request a return call. Due to the various duties and commitments of school personnel during the school day, teachers and other school officials may not be able to meet with parents who arrive at the school without an appointment. Parents can leave their names and phone numbers with the main office receptionist and request a return call.

In order to ensure the safety of students – especially in an emergency – and to allow for timely parent and student contact, **it is critical that the school have accurate addresses and phone numbers for all its students and their families.**

If a student's family moves during the school year, the student must report that address change (and new telephone number) immediately to the registrar's office. Also, if parents or guardians receive new work telephone numbers, that information should be updated in the registrar's office.

### **FERPA: Family Educational Records and Privacy Act (1974)**

In order to protect our students' rights to privacy NESTEM staff will never share academic or behavioral records with any individual other than the child's parent or legal guardian.

**School Website:** [www.ryss.org/NESTEM](http://www.ryss.org/NESTEM) **Social Media:** Follow NESTEM on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for the latest information and school updates. @RYSS North East STEM Academy