

Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success

2020-2021

District and Campus

Parent - Student Handbook

Draft to be presented to the Board for approval on July 28, 2020

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Houston T-STEM and ECHS
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Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success is a program of the Tejano Center for Community Concerns

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&
Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success Board of Education (RYSS)**

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A Message from the Superintendent of Schools

August 2020

Dear Students and Parents,

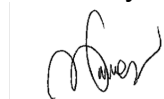
The school year will begin differently than any other in history due to COVID-19. These are undoubtedly unprecedented and different times, but our commitment to provide the best educational opportunities, whether in a virtual or in-person environment are no different not different. And, when the time comes that we are all able to be together on-campus, we want it to be the safest and healthiest environment possible. At RYSS, the administration, faculty, and staff want to ensure every student is on the path to achieve academic success, and to be well-informed, responsible, and active members of the community, now and in the future. We want every student to be prepared to make a difference in the world.

The *2020-2021 District and Campus Student and Parent Handbook* is designed to guide the RYSS community to work together in a respectful and mature manner. It is not designed to hold any student back. Instead, the handbook helps create an environment where everyone collaborates to provide the safest and healthiest environment for our students, our families, our visitors, our administrators, faculty, and staff.

RYSS is known for being a caring and nurturing community. Such a community is the result of good communication between home and school, and parents' active involvement in school activities. In order to maintain our special community, it is important that parents feel free to contact teachers and the administration with any concerns, ideas, or compliments. If there is a concern, I ask parents to first bring it to the teacher involved for resolution, and if the resolution is not acceptable, parents are free to contact the school administration. While my office is available to discuss concerns, I am confident that most are effectively addressed at the campus level.

Finally, on behalf of our Board of Directors and all of us who work at RYSS, thank you for making RYSS your school of choice. Let us work together to make 2020-2021 an exceptional school year.

Sincerely,



Adriana Tamez EdD
President & CEO, Tejano Center for Community Concerns
Superintendent of Schools, Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success

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A Message from the Chief Academic Officer

August 2020

Dear Students, Parents and Families,

Welcome to the 2020-21 academic year! The world around us is quite different and many things are uncertain as we begin the school year. We start the year in an asynchronous (virtual) environment, with plans to transition to a synchronous (in-person) environment as soon as possible. Whether asynchronous or synchronous, the year will be filled with many diverse global learning experiences for our students. Our goals are to challenge our students intellectually, grow them socially, and guide them toward independent thinking and problem-solving. Just as we strive to promote healthy development in all aspects of students' lives, we also strive to develop our students within our school values—RYSS: *nurturing lifelong learners, empowering families, transforming lives.*

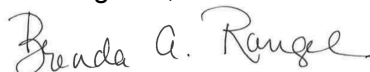
Information in this handbook is provided to improve communication and understanding between students, parents and the school. Board of Education and campus policies are included in the handbook to ensure everything we do at RYSS creates an environment where personal and academic excellence prevails.

During the school year, let us work together to ensure that our students make good choices and decisions, resulting in successful and healthy outcomes. We will encourage students to demonstrate their best demeanor every moment of every day and to make positive contributions to RYSS. We strive to instill within our students a sense of personal RYSS PRIDE as well as collective love of and for our schools. Our faculty and staff are excited to work alongside students and families, so together WE will achieve Jaw-Breaking Results, and our Panthers and Eagles are, as always, will be fired up and ready for a fabulous year!

I want to emphasize the importance of reading and writing. They are fundamental to all learning, and I strongly encourage parents to guide your child to read and write every day for at least one (1) hour. And, parents, regularly discuss with your child what he/she is learning, since a students' ability to recall what they have learned is the ultimate test. You have entrusted us with your most precious possession, your children, and together we will walk this journey to excellence!

Finally, The 2020-21 school year begins in a virtual (asynchronous) learning environment, with the plan to transition to an in-person (synchronous) learning environment as soon as possible. We will alert you as soon as possible when a change is required.

Kind regards,



Brenda A. Rangel
Chief Academic Officer
Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success

What to Do If . . . **Quick Reference Guide**

You arrive late to class...

Go to the front office and get a pass. If you do not have a valid excuse submitted by a parent, disciplinary action may be taken.

You are returning after an absence...

All excuse notes must be left with the attendance office or dropped off in the Note/Excuse box located at one of the two locations (Houston Primary entrance or Registration entrance). Notes are not given to teachers or office staff.

You need to leave school early...

Before leaving campus, your parent/guardian must sign you out. Only parents and family listed as pre-approved contacts by the parent can sign you out for early departure.

You need to use a telephone...

For actual emergencies requiring the use of a telephone, see the office for assistance. No classroom phones may be used by students for personal use. Students should only use school phones to contact parents. No cell phone use is allowed during school hours. Any student making a phone call must log the phone call and number.

You have lost a textbook or personal item...

Immediately report all losses or thefts to the Intervention office, your principal, or a teacher. An incident report must be completed to properly document stolen items. Please keep a copy of the incident report for your records. This will serve as proof of the incident. Textbooks will not be replaced until the lost books are paid for in the office and your financial records are cleared.

You have found a textbook or personal article that is not yours...

Turn in the item to the Office and report where you found it.

You need to leave your classroom...

Obtain a hall pass from your teacher. No students are allowed in the hallways without a hall pass that has your name, date, time, and destination. Students in hallways without a hall pass are subject to disciplinary action and will be marked absent in class, which may cause loss of course credit to meet promotion requirements.

You have questions, concerns, or need advice...

Schedule an appointment with your caseworker/counselor. If they are not available, see the College and Career Readiness Department (CCR). Return to class, and the CCR caseworker will send for you when an appointment is available. Remember that the RYSS CCR staff are your advocates and are here to serve you.

You become ill or injured during school...

Obtain a permit from your teacher and go to the school nurse. Once seen by the nurse, she will determine if you will go to the Baylor College of Medicine Teen Clinic. Only students 13 years and older are eligible to receive medical attention at the BCM Teen Clinic located on the Houston campus.

You experience difficulty due to someone committing an illegal act against you, another student, or the school...

Seek the immediate assistance of the nearest teacher, caseworker, or administrator. File a report with the Principal's Office.

You need to take medication during school...

If your doctor has prescribed medication for you that must be taken during the school day, your parent must meet with the school nurse. For students 13 years of age and older, the Baylor College of Medicine Teen Clinic/Nurse will need written permission from your doctor whose name is on file in the clinic office.

You must strictly adhere to these policies:

- A student may not carry medication on his/her person. All medications must be kept locked in the Health Clinic/Nurse’s office.
- A written medication permission form with the original signatures of both a parent and the prescribing physician must accompany all medications.
- Each medication must be in its original container with an affixed prescription label listing the patient’s name for whom the drug was prescribed, the drug name, and the proper dosage and administration information.

These guidelines apply to ALL medications—both prescription and over-the-counter. Students found to be in possession of any unregistered medication will be subject to disciplinary action

You have a conflict with another student...

Seek immediate assistance from a teacher, mentor, caseworker, principal, or an intervention team member.

You need to withdraw from school...

Visit with your administrator/caseworker prior to making this decision. The administrator/caseworker can offer assistance in helping you find appropriate educational opportunities if your circumstances have changed. The computerized withdrawal process begins in the attendance office and with your principal. Remember that the enrolling parent/guardian must be present with an identification to be verified. Please bring all books, uniforms, etc. belonging to RYSS or programs related to RYSS (such as JROTC) to be returned when you check out. Failure to do so will result in fees.

You want to know more about your rights and responsibilities at RYSS...

Read this handbook carefully. It contains much of the information you will need as a student during your attendance at RYSS. School officials at RYSS have made every effort to include useful and accurate information for you.

In searching for additional avenues of communication, you can talk with your caseworker or principal about issues important to you. Teachers are also available to serve you; ask for help. At RYSS, we want you to be well informed of both your student rights and obligations.

Have a great year!

Foreword

The *2020-2021 Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success (RYSS) District and Campus Student and Parent Handbook* includes information and guidance determined to be essential for creating a safe and healthy environment for all RYSS students, faculty, staff, parents, and visitors. RYSS has established as one of its primary goals the provision of a high-quality education program for each student in a school environment, free of disruptions that interfere with the educational process. The purpose of this handbook is to provide parents and students one comprehensive resource that contains thorough information, guidance, and administrative policies and procedures in all areas related to the operation of RYSS educational programs throughout the district and at each academy.

In order to provide a comprehensive and easy-to-use document, the *2020-2021 RYSS District & Campus Student and Parent Handbook* is divided into four sections. The first section, District Information, contains information and guidance that applies to all RYSS academies. Subsequently, there is a section pertinent to each RYSS academy. Herein, “academy,” “school,” “campus,” and “RYSS” refer to the Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success. In all instances, district protocols and procedures shall take precedence over campus procedures.

The handbook was produced under the guidance of the Handbook Committee, comprising representative faculty and administrators from each of the RYSS academies. A word of appreciation is due to each of the committee members. Their insight, professional experience and expertise, and commitment to creating an environment where they may provide the best educational opportunities are truly special gifts to each RYSS student.

The *2020-2021 Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success District & Campus Student and Parent Handbook* is distributed to parents and students upon the advice and approval of the RYSS Board of Education, including review and consideration of directives as provided by:

The Texas Education Agency
Texas Administrative Code
Texas Education Code
Local governmental agencies

The Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success, as an equal opportunity educational provider and employer, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, and/or age in educational programs or activities that it operates or in employment decisions. The District is required to do so by Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended. (Not all prohibited categories apply to all programs.)

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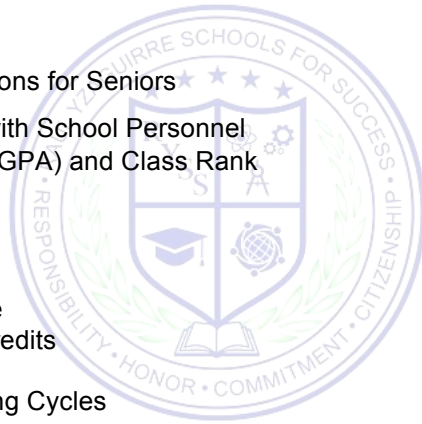
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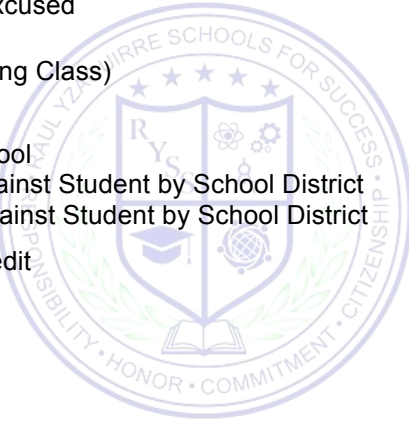
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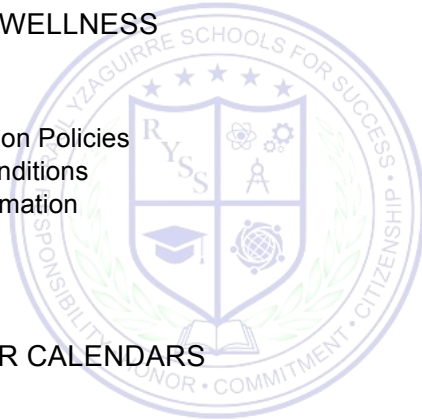
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1.0. ABOUT THE RAUL YZAGUIRRE SCHOOLS FOR SUCCESS

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. At RYSS, it is our mission to prepare students not only to *enter* college, but also to have each one *graduate* from college!

RYSS is comprised of four campuses. As of 2017, a name change of the four campuses took place to distinguish each campus. In Houston, Texas, there are three campuses: Elite STEM Primary Academy (for grades K-5), the Houston STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics) and Early College Middle School (for grades 6-8) and the Houston T-STEM (Texas Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and Early College High School (for grades 9-12). The fourth campus, the Brownsville Raul Yzaguirre STEM Scholars Preparatory (for grades 6-8), is located in Brownsville, Texas.

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 the global community. *RYSS students learn not only for school, but also for life.*

1.0.1. School Namesake

The Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success is named in honor of Raul Humberto Yzaguirre, Sr. As does its namesake, RYSS strives to embody the values and ideals to which Mr. Yzaguirre has devoted his life – to empower the Latino community and the United States.

Mr. Yzaguirre was born in San Juan, Texas, a small community in the Rio Grande Valley along the Texas-Mexico border. Beginning at a very young age, he has been an advocate for civil rights. For over 35 years, Mr. Yzaguirre has been internationally recognized as one of the nation's premier leaders and advocates on behalf of civil rights for the Hispanic American community. As the CEO and President of the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), he was directly responsible for transforming NCLR into the premier national Hispanic advocacy organization and think-tank in the country.

Mr. Yzaguirre's accomplishments and accolades within the political, educational, corporate, and community-service arenas are unparalleled. In 1979, he was the first Hispanic to receive a Rockefeller Public Service Award for Outstanding Public Service from the trustees of Princeton University. From 1989 to 1990, he served as one of the first Hispanic Fellows of the Institute of Politics at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. In 1993, Mr. Yzaguirre was the recipient of the Hubert H. Humphrey Civil Rights Award from the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights.

In 1998, he was honored with the Charles Evan Hughes Gold Medal Award for courageous leadership in civic and humanitarian affairs by the National Conference for Community and

Justice. Mr. Yzaguirre has also been awarded five honorary degrees.

Mr. Yzaguirre is the immediate past Chairperson of the Independent Sector, a nonprofit coalition of over 850 corporates, foundation, and voluntary organizations. He serves on the Board of Directors of numerous organizations, including the Enterprise Foundation, the National Democratic Institute, and the trustees of Dowling College. He was recently elected to the national boards of the Salvation Army and the 4-H Club. He was the first Hispanic to serve on the Executive Committee of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. He was Chairperson of President Clinton's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, and is currently the President of the Mexican and American Solidarity Foundation. Mr. Yzaguirre also serves on the Visiting Committee for the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Mr. Yzaguirre has been described by *Hispanic* magazine as being "at the center of the Hispanic leadership stage." He is a frequent commentator on Latino issues; he has appeared on NBC Nightly News, ABC World News Tonight, CBS Evening News, The Today Show, CNN, and National Public Radio and in *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *The National Journal*.

In 1993, Mr. Yzaguirre received the Order of the Aztec Eagle, the highest honor given by the Mexican government to non-citizens. On November 30, 2009, he was nominated by President Barack H. Obama to be United States Ambassador to the Dominican Republic. The Senate confirmed him on September 29, 2010. His service in that post ended on May 29, 2013.

1.0.2. 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.

1.0.3. 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.

1.1. ACADEMICS

RYSS is committed to providing a high-quality education experience for all students. RYSS promotes the development of students' higher-order thinking skills, and their capacity to be well-informed and responsible global citizens. Each academy maintains its own course of study, designed to meet state standards and provide a uniquely enriched educational opportunity for its students. A description of each academy's academic program is contained in the respective academy section of the handbook. Central to fulfilling its academic purpose, RYSS has identified certain areas of note.

1.1.1. Academic Integrity: RYSS Honor Code

At RYSS, all students demonstrate intellectual honesty, honesty in the use of information, completing class work, assignments, tests, and products. The world of learning in the 21st century offers amazing access to information. All information that is available is to be used to stimulate thinking and creativity; however, how information is used in the RYSS environment shall always be used with respect to the original authors and respect for others. Academic integrity is not only about conforming to rules; it is about the pursuit of learning and developing one's own higher-order thinking, without taking credit for someone else's work.

Violating standards of academic conduct is a serious matter subject to discipline. Examples of violations of academic integrity and honesty include:

1. Plagiarism
2. Inappropriate collaboration
3. Dishonesty in examination (cheating on tests)
4. Dishonesty in papers i.e. (compositions, thesis, research papers, etc.)

Truth and Integrity are the basic precepts of the RYSS Academic Honor Code.

Truth: This principle is maintained through each student's understanding of his or her responsibility to tell the truth and make sure the truth is known. This precludes lying, cheating, stealing, plagiarizing, and evading; there is no fundamental distinction among them.

Integrity: This principle stresses the obligation of all students to demonstrate uprightness of character. Students should commit themselves to academic excellence and to full acceptance of responsibility for their actions.

The following examples will help students understand what kinds of behavior are dishonest:

- Cheating
 - Looking on someone else's paper during a test or quiz
 - Removing a test from a classroom or other location without teacher consent
 - Giving or getting information about a test or quiz before or while taking it
 - Looking in a book or at notes during a closed-book test or quiz
 - Collaborating with someone on an assignment or project unless such work has been specifically cleared with the teacher in advance
 - Getting information from someone under false pretenses

- Plagiarism
 - Copying sentences or parts of sentences manually or electronically from someone else's writing without proper credit, and/or writing someone else's idea(s) without giving the source credit from the original idea(s)

Any student who is aware of another student's violation of the honor code is obligated to report the incident to the teacher. Actions or attempted actions that run counter to these principles are violations of the RYSS Academic Honor Code and the Student Code of Conduct.

The teacher will handle violations in accordance with the following:

- A zero will be given on the assignment.
- Contact will be made with the parents.
- A "P" will be given for conduct on the progress report.
- A "P" will be given for conduct on the report card for that six-week period.
- Submit discipline referral to principal, assistant principal or designee(s)

It is the student's responsibility in cases that seem unclear to check with the appropriate teacher. Ignorance of the honor code is not an excuse for a violation. Students are expected to adhere to the RYSS K-12 Honor Code.

I pledge to uphold the RYSS K-12 Honor Code. I will NOT:

- Cheat, lie, steal, deceive or participate in plagiarism.
- Collaborate or participate in any inappropriate acts or events.
- Participate in any acts of violence, threats, harassment, or cyberbullying.
- Engage in bribes, favors and threats.
- Participate in copyright violations of any sort.

I will collaborate as a member of this learning community. I am expected to report violations of this code as I know them to occur.

1.1.2. 2020-21 Learning Environment

The 2020-21 school year begins in a virtual (asynchronous) learning environment, with the plan to transition to an in-person (synchronous) learning environment as soon as possible. RYSS is committed to providing instructional continuity, regardless of the learning environment, and has developed a strategic plan to address the unique circumstances precipitated by COVID-19 and provide innovative high-quality instruction for RYSS students.

The response to COVID-19 is seemingly fluid, as new developments of its spread and mitigation are discovered. These conditions create an environment where flexibility is essential, and the dates provided below are subject to change based on guidance and direction from local and state authorities. The RYSS administration will alert students and parents of any impending changes as quickly as feasible.

1.1.2.1. School Calendar

FALL SEMESTER	
August 3- 11	Teachers Report for Professional Development
August 5-7	Teachers will conduct individual Virtual Family Orientations
August 5-10	Student Instructional Materials' Deployment (Campus administration will notify families.)
August 12	1st Day of School: Students Begin Virtual Learning Instruction
September 23	Students Begin Hybrid Instructional Model (RYSS will alert students and parents if there is a change to this plan)

HYBRID INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Each student will be assigned to Group A or Group B ➤ Friday is an instructional day, students are expected to participate in learning activities, whether in-person at school or virtual learning at home 					
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	Group A In-Person Learning at School	Group A Virtual Learning at Home	Group A In-Person Learning at School	Group A Virtual Learning at Home	1. Identified Students attend in-person learning at school 2. All other students participate in Virtual Learning at Home
8 a.m.-4 p.m.					

8 a.m.-4 p.m.	Group B Virtual Learning at Home	Group B In-Person Learning at School	Group B Virtual Learning at Home	Group B In-Person Learning at School	1. Identified Students attend in-person learning at school 2. All other students participate in Virtual Learning at Home
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October 5-9 Virtual Learning Week for all Students

December 17 Last Day of 1st Semester for Students

December 17 Last Day of 1st Semester for Students

SPRING SEMESTER

January 4 Teachers Report for Professional Development

January 5 **1st Day of Spring Semester:** Students begin in-person instruction

February 8-12 Virtual Learning Week for all students

June 3 **Last Day for students**

1.1.2.2. At-Home Curriculum and Instruction Model

RYSS will begin with virtual learning for the first six-weeks, with plans to transition to the RYSS Hybrid Instructional Model. Parents and students will also receive training via ZOOM to learn how to access Google Classroom and any other student platforms before the start of Virtual Learning. Parents will receive a Weekly Assignment At a Glance with all the assignments by content every Sunday by 6 p.m. This will allow families to plan for virtual learning for the upcoming week.

1.1.2.3. Grading and Progress Monitoring Policies

Teacher will collaborate and create data-driven, personalized lessons.

- All grading practices will remain the same as per the in-person instruction.
 - Students will participate in both informal and formal assessments
 - Students will have a minimum of two grades per content every week
 - Students will receive a Progress Report at the end of the three weeks grading period
 - Students will participate in daily Do Now, CFU, and Exit ticket data to drive daily instruction
 - Students with IEPs will drive weekly student assignments and goals
 - Renaissance 360 Star Diagnostic will be used for grades K- 12 to progress monitor at the Beginning, Middle and End of Year

- Teacher/Student Conferences regarding academic progress will be conducted every six-weeks

1.1.2.4. Design At-Home Learning Schedules and Attendance Plans

A. Student Expectations for Time

RYSS student's asynchronous instructional schedule is from 8:30 until 3 p.m., Monday thru Friday. The schedule is an essential guide and supports how teachers gauge how much material to ensure they meet the needs of all students. Student Engagement ensures that academic works remains at a level of rigor that is comparable to synchronous instruction. This asynchronous schedule meets and/or exceeds the prescribed TEA instructional minutes.

B. Instructional Blocks

- **Grades Kinder 1 - 5 = Approximately 180 minutes per day.** The block would include instruction, on-task activities, on-line programs, along with independent practice and a minimum of 30 min. independent reading.
- **Grades 6-12 = Approximately 240 minutes per day.** The block would include instruction, on-task activities, on-line programs along with independent practice and a minimum of 30 min. independent reading.

C. Attendance

RYSS students who engage in learning activities via Google Classroom, participate in Virtual Conference Classroom meetings with teachers, or submit assignments via the LMS are considered "present" and will not be marked absent. State law TEC §25.092 and Raul Yzaguirre School for Success Charter School Policy still require students to attend at least 90% of their classes to receive credit and be promoted. Remote attendance will count in the same manner as on-campus in-person attendance in satisfying this requirement.

1. Students can engage with their teacher through the following:

- Daily participation in Google Classroom, the RYSS Learning Management System (LMS), completion of independent reading and work assignments, use of assigned digital tools, and/or group interactions.
 - Interaction with faculty and staff via Virtual Conference Meetings as part of large, small group, or one to one instruction.
 - Students' assignment submission via the Google Classroom for each scheduled class. When unable to submit via Google Classroom students can submit assignments via emails, photos, or other forms of documentation.
 - All K-12 students who have not logged in by 3 pm will be marked absent:
- This absence can be resolved if the student engages in daily learning assigned by their teachers via the PEIMS Blackboard by 1 pm that same day. Parents and students will receive absence notifications via Blackboard Messenger by 4 pm

each day and will be reminded of the opportunity to resolve that day's absence if the student engages in learning before 11:59 p.m. of the same day via Google Classroom. Any absences recorded, but resolved by the student before 11:59 p.m. on the same day, will be reconciled based on login records in Blackboard.

2. Student Attendance & Engagement Incentives

- Student attendance and engagement is critical to everyday learning and success. In order to promote attendance and engagement, RYSS students will have an opportunity to be eligible to participate in various incentive activities.
 - Six Weeks Perfect Attendance- LUNCH ON US from selected local restaurant of choice
 - Fall & Spring Semester Perfect Attendance- Gift Cards and Bicycle Raffles
 - ALL-Year Perfect Attendance – Students will choose from an iPad or Kindle

1.1.2.5. Adapt Staffing Models

Teachers will be supporting Instructional Continuity by providing whole group, small group and one to one instruction. Teachers will also make on-line videos of daily and weekly lessons and assign activities via on-line programs for students to access and complete. Special Population students will be serve according to their individual educational plans and goals.

Special Populations: Special Education/EL/504/GT Plan

- Special Education/EL/504/GT staff will continue to provide individualized services for students according to their IEP best to meet their abilities through a distant and face-to-face format.
- students should contact their Special Education/EL/504/GT case manager with questions. For more information, please call Ms. Maggie Salinas at 713-640-3778.

Daily Expectations for Learning

- Students will check daily posts (K-12 grades) in Google classroom from teachers. Expectations for the week will be posted by Sunday 6:00 pm the day class is meeting so that students and families do not need to continue to check back throughout the day for new posts
- Students will write weekly goals, objectives, and class assignments in their 2020-21 Student Assignment agenda.
- Students will report on time to their virtual learning platform and actively engage in their daily learning activities
- Students will complete and upload learning activities for each class by the date and time identified by the teacher.
- Students will respond to any teacher email or question on assignments within 24 hours, Monday-Friday
- Students and their families will establish a functional workspace at home (Separate space, clean and organized, have all the tools/items you need, and set aside.)

- Students will engage virtually with peers and staff as if in-person classroom
- Student will follow the set norms and behavioral participation expectations established as if in-person classroom

Weekly Assignments At a Glance

- The students will receive Weekly Assignments At a Glance that include on-line programs, videos, notes, & slide decks of materials to help students learn the content:
 - All written assignments, online quizzes, reading, or other assigned work must be completed during the instructional day.
 - Possible platforms may include whole group, small group and one-to one instruction as indicated by the needs of the student.
 - Videos or screencasts of presentations and explanations will be available in Google Classroom.
 - Students may be to record themselves -- for oral language development, math talks, reading for fluency and comprehension, doing physical activity, and other enrichment activities.
 - Students will be learning by engaging with modules, assignments, & quizzes.
 - Students will be learning and communicating via chat, collaborations, and with scheduling time during the teacher's office hours.

SAMPLE OF Weekly Assignments At a Glance

Daily/Weekly Work @ a Glance: 5/11/20 - 5/15/20

Student Expectation	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Reading <i>Story (Pearson Book)</i>	Poem Artist to Artist p.132	Poem Artist to Artist p.132	Poem Artist to Artist p.132	Poem Artist to Artist p.132	Poem Artist to Artist p.132
Focus:	Figurative Language	POV	Plot	Characters	Theme
Task A (Reading)	Provide evidence from where the poet uses literal or figurative language. What does it say? What is the meaning?	What POV is the poem written in? Who is telling about the events described in the poem?	What is the resolution of the poem? Using a comparison (double bubble thinking map), compare what happened in the beginning of the poem to the resolution.	Write about the main characters actions at the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Respond in writing about any changes the character went through.	What is the theme of the story? (What problem did the character go through? What was the solution?) What does the word vivid mean in line 19?
Task B (Writing)	Explain why the poet uses in line 3: He drew people with meat on their bones? What is the author trying to emphasize, suggest that?	How would the poem change if told in third person or by another student?	What if the daddy dirt have to be a mail man? Write about how this would change the resolution of the poem? Create an alternate resolution.	Create another character in the story that could help the main character overcome the main problem of the story.	Quiz on Google Classroom
Focus:	5.8A Weather Vs. Climate	5.8A Weather Vs. Climate	3.8D Planets	3.8D Planets	3.8D Planets
Science	Google Classroom 1. Organism of the Day (Attendance) 2. Generation Genius: Video and DIY activity	Google Classroom 1. Organism of the Day (Attendance) 2. Edusmart: Two review videos and 2 quizzes	Google Classroom 1. Organism of the Day (Attendance) 2. Edusmart: Four videos	Google Classroom 1. Organism of the Day (Attendance) 2. Edusmart: Glossary and interactivity	Google Classroom 1. Organism of the Day (Attendance) 2. Edusmart: Revision de video y 2 cuestionarios
Focus:	5.4CD Numerical Patterns	5.4CD Numerical Patterns	5.5A Classifying 2D Shapes	5.5A Classifying 2D Shapes	5.5A Classifying 2D Shapes
Math	Google Classroom 1. Problem of the Day (Attendance) 2. Video: Review on 5.4CD numerical patters 3. Google form- Questions over Review on 5.4CD numerical patters	Google Classroom 1. Problem of the Day (Attendance) 2. Quiz on 5.4CD numerical patters (google form)	Google Classroom 1. Problem of the Day (Attendance) 2. Video: Classifying Triangles 3. Google form- Questions over Classifying triangles video.	Google Classroom 1. Problem of the Day (Attendance) 2. Video: Classifying Quadrilaterals 3. Google form- Questions over Classifying Quadrilaterals video.	Google Classroom 1. Problem of the Day (Attendance) 2. Video: Classifying all 2D shapes using graphic organizers. 3. Google form-questions on classifying 2D shapes using graphic organizers.

Teachers, counselors, and principal/campus leadership will reach out to students for extra support with academics, workload, or social and emotional support. Each campus will provide resources and contacts to support all students.

1.1.2.6. Communication with Families and Students



1.1.2.7. Distribution of Instructional Materials

Campuses plan for deployment of personalized instructional materials including supports for asynchronous instruction. A schedule of deployment will begin **August 5- 10, 2020**. Additional deployments will be scheduled and the **end of every six-week period**. Instructional Materials may include the following:

- WiFi Hotspots and/or Technology Devices (if applicable)

- Content Area adopted consumable workbooks and TEKS aligned assessment support
- Grade Level novels, reading books
- Learning kits, Math manipulatives
- Imagine Math Notebook
- Supplemental Aids
- Language Support (Dictionaries, Thesaurus, High Frequency Word charts, Math and Science, Formula Chart)

1.1.2.8. Special Programs Services

- 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 individual education plan to best meet their needs through a distant and/or face-to-face format.
- If a student is under the virtual or hybrid model of instruction, and is eligible per IEP to receive related services such as speech therapy or counseling, after written parent consent, the school will provide tele-health services accordingly.
- If a parent considers their child with special needs has a medical condition that prevents their child from wearing a face covering, please contact the Special Populations Department to discuss the specific case.
- Our schools appreciate effective and constant communication with our parents. 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 with questions, or Ms. Maggie Salinas, Special Populations Manager at 713-640-3778, or email maria.salinas@tejanocenter.org

1.1.2.9. Student Services

1. Troubleshoot Problems – Tech Support

- If a student has a school-issued device or a hotspot and need assistance with technical support, please call RYSS Parent Specialist at 713-640- 3736. We will try to respond to all work orders within 24 hours.
- If students are having any other technical issues related to accessing the online instructional materials or platforms students will contact teacher during Office Hours to ensure learning is on track.

2. Support Ongoing Operations – Safety

- The plans for the 2020-2021 school year are continuously evolving due to the current COVID 19 situation. Planning remains fluid as we plan to determine next steps on what the school year will look like. While TEA and CDC have provided preliminary information, final guidance will be determined local health authorities.
- Return to School committee, which consisted of educators, parents, students, staff, and community members helped determine guidelines and protocols to resume operations at campus and district levels. The district has identified three options that may be implemented dependent on the COVID 19 situation.

- Classes could resume in-person (Synchronous).
- Classes could continue to take place entirely via virtual learning (Asynchronous)
- Classes could be held as a combination of in-person and distance learning instruction (Hybrid)

To ensure that we are slowing the spread of COVID 19, we are implementing the CDC safeguards:

The district and campuses will provide the following external safeguards:

- Social Distancing signage
- CDC Informational Signage of COVID 19
- Handwashing stations must be used before anyone enters the building

The district and campuses will provide the following internal safeguards:

- Students will have their temperature taken before they enter the premises
- Any child displaying signs of sickness such as a temperature above 100.4 F, excessive coughing, dry coughing, excessive sneezing, etc. will be turned away from the school
- Wearing a labeled mask is mandatory for all students and parents entering the premises, no matter their age
- Face Coverings will be provided for students who lose, damage or forget their face coverings. Students are encouraged to manage their personal coverings at school.
- No more than 9-12 students will be allowed inside a classroom. This estimate depends on the physical size of each individual classroom
- Each student will work at their own desk, or table with the required social distancing measures
- Each student will use their own supply learning kit
- All materials used during a class, including the table, will be immediately disinfected after each class

Raul Yzaguirre is preparing for a safe and secure environment for our students. By wearing face coverings and maintaining social distance, we can slow the spread of COVID 19.

If families want to keep their children at home, we encourage you to use our Virtual Learning platform. Families will make arrangements with the Campus Principal.

3. Student Academic Support

- Academic Concerns: Grade Level Meetings, teams will discuss Students of Concern and create Action Plan of Support for students in need of assistance.
 - Teachers and Staff will be proactive in connecting daily with students to ensure that their academic as well as social emotional needs are met.
 - For elementary students in K-3rd grade, parents should contact their child's teacher via Google Classroom or email.
 - If students have questions, grades 4-12 students are encouraged to contact the teacher via their District-issued email or Google Classroom.
 - We encourage students to remain patient for teachers to respond, as teachers may be assisting other students.

4. Social-Emotional Support

The Virtual Learning or the Hybrid models of instruction may be particularly challenging for some students. If a student is struggling to cope with the challenges and stress while receiving virtual instruction, the school is able to offer social-emotional support through a team of professionals created specially to assist our student body during this unprecedented time. To find information about services available, including making arrangement to speak with a professional in the social-emotional support team, please contact Ms. Maggie Salinas at 713-640-3778 or email maria.salinas@tejanocenter.org. Valuable information is also posted on the school website: www.ryss.org

1.1.3. Grading Policy

RYSS has uniformly adopted a grading policy. The grading policy may be subject to change in accordance with government and state policy therefore a grading policy will be distributed and communicated to students and parents in all academies each year. RYSS is on a six-week grading cycle; therefore, report cards will be sent out every six weeks.

1.1.3.1. Student Product Grading Scale

The following is the grading scale for each academy:

90-100 = A	Excellent quality of work through mastery of subject
80-89= B	Good quality of work, above average with consistent effort
75-79= C	Satisfactory quality of work, average achievement
70-74= D	Below quality of work, poor average achievement
69 or below = F	Unsatisfactory quality of work, poor work, failing

Midterms and final exams weigh a specific percentage of the student grades. Students are provided syllabi in all 6-12 grade classes to inform them of such.

1.1.3.2. Student Conduct Grading Criteria

E =	Excellent quality of behavior, totally self-disciplined
S =	Satisfactory quality of behavior, cooperates readily
P =	Poor quality of behavior, below average
U =	Unsatisfactory quality behavior, needs drastic improvement

1.1.4. Technology Use

RYSS makes various forms of technology and media available for use by the students. Every form of technology is to be used to enhance learning according to each academy's approved academic program. Students shall exercise caution in the use of any technology and not knowingly access content that is determined by RYSS to be defamatory, inaccurate, potentially offensive, and possibly illegal; such use is a violation of the RYSS acceptable use policy (included in full in the Required Documents section at the end of this handbook).

Any use of RYSS technology deemed to be inappropriate will be considered a violation of this RYSS acceptable-use policy with consequences according to the Student Misconduct section of this handbook.

1.1.5. Testing and Assessment

RYSS considers testing and assessment essential to maintaining pertinent educational programs. RYSS utilizes various assessment means and instruments to fulfill its purpose. Assessment means and instruments include quizzes, tests, benchmark tests, essays, projects, and other paper and online instruments. Additionally, RYSS adheres to the administration of all state mandated assessments, as well as the administration of a norm-referenced test. Technology protocols must be aligned to assessment standard policy.

RYSS adheres to the Texas Education Agency's guidelines in regards of all State assessments.

It was determined and notified to all public schools in Texas last August 8th, 2019 that changes in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are necessary to be implemented in the instruction of Reading Language Arts and the related assessment (STAAR). Changes in STAAR assessments for grades 3-8 and End of Course (EOC) exams will take place in a two-year transition period, starting the 2020-2021 school year.

For more detailed information, please see the campus principal or visit TEA's website:

https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Subject_Areas/English_Language_Arts_and_Reading/Resources_for_the_Revised_English_and_Spanish_Language_Arts_and_Reading_TEKS

(Ref. House Bill 3906 of the 86th Legislative Session)

1.1.6. Report Cards

RYSS is on a (6) six-week grading cycle. Report card dates are usually one week after the grading cycle ends. All students enrolled on the day report cards are to be handed out will receive a report card for that 6-week grading cycle. Any student that withdraws prior to the six-week grading cycle will not receive a report card for the cycle prior to withdrawing.

The report card dates are listed on the RYSS Academic Calendar and may be accessed by parents on The Tejano Center/RYSS website: www.ryss.org

1.1.7. Textbooks and Supplies

Textbooks issued to students remain the property of RYSS. In most cases, textbooks are the property of the State of Texas. Textbooks are distributed to students on loan for their use while enrolled at RYSS. Additionally, students are held responsible to respect school-owned supplies and materials. Students who lose or deface school-owned textbooks, supplies, or materials shall be held responsible for their replacement cost. RYSS shall not distribute report cards, transcripts, or complete any other requested non-RYSS documentation until all outstanding replacement costs have been paid.

1.1.8. Promotion, Retention and Reinforcement

RYSS has established specific guidelines related to student retention or promotion to the next grade level. These guidelines are parallel to district and state guidelines and will be distributed in the spring of each academic year as well as posted on the district and academy websites.

1.1.8.1. RYSS adheres to the following promotion standards:

- All students in grades 3-8 must have a passing score on each STAAR administered for the grade level in order to be promoted to the next grade level.
- All students in grades 6-8 must have a score of 70 or above in each of the core subjects (Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) in order to be promoted to the next grade level.
- Students not meeting the required level of achievement on any of the STAAR tests at the end of the school year may be required to attend summer school and provided another opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the standards on STAAR in order to be promoted to the next grade level.
- Students not meeting the required course grade of 70 in each core subject will be required to attend summer school to attain the required level of proficiency to be promoted to the next grade level.
- Students not meeting “grade level status” on the most recently administered standardized or norm referenced test (STAAR, Naglieri, NWEA/MAP) may be required to attend summer school.

1.1.8.2. RYSS Reinforcement

RYSS provides all students a variety of intervention opportunities to receive additional academic assistance and reinforcement. Such intervention opportunities include:

- Extended-day (after school) tutorials
- Saturday STAAR tutorials
- Enrichment activities
- Peer tutoring
- High school mentors/tutors
- Teacher-developed workshops and tutorials
- Response to Intervention (RtI)

1.1.9. Special Education

Pursuant to state and federal law, RYSS has a duty to identify, refer, evaluate and, if eligible, provide a free, appropriate public education to disabled students. If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the school to learn about RYSS’s overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links the students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services.

The parent can make an evaluation request by filling out the appropriate documents in the Special Education office.

Within a reasonable amount of time, RYSS must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. RYSS must complete the evaluation and the report within the timeline prescribed by law. RYSS must give a copy of the report to the parent.

In the case of a parental request for an evaluation, if RYSS determines that the evaluation is not needed, the school will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent of their rights if they disagree with RYSS. Additionally, the school will give parents the Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities.

1.1.9.1. Aiding Students

Aiding 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 Response to Intervention (RtI).

The implementation of RtI 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 parent may contact the individual(s) listed below to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links the student 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 laws prior to 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:

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

Contact Person: Ms. Maria Salinas

Phone Number: (713) 640-3778

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 Section 504 Referrals:

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

Contact Person: Ms. Maggie Salinas

Phone Number: (713) 640-3778

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](#)

1.1.10. Section 504

Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504

A student determined to have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law, and who does not otherwise qualify for special education

services, may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 is a federal law designated to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine if the child is in need of services and supports under Section 504 to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), as this is defined in federal law.

1.1.10.1. Dyslexia Program

The objective of the Dyslexia program is to assess students suspected of having dyslexia and provide dyslexia intervention to those students with dyslexia. All students Kindergarten and 1st grade will be administered a screener to help identify if the student shows characteristics of Dyslexia. Parents will be notified of the results and if necessary, the school will request written parent consent for additional testing to confirm eligibility to receive Dyslexia services.

The Dyslexia Program provides explicit, direct instruction organized in a systematic, sequential, and cumulative way to meet the specific learning needs of students with dyslexia. This intervention program fulfills the requirements of the Texas Dyslexia Law to utilize individualized, intensive, and multisensory methods to deliver the components of instruction, which include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Dyslexia specialists are trained to deliver an appropriate instructional program to students eligible for these services.

For more detailed information about the Section 504 or the Dyslexia Program, please contact Ms. Maggie Salinas at 713-640-3778 or email: maria.salinas@tejanocenter.org

1.1.11. Special Programs

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, bilingual students, students who are learning English as a second language, students academically struggling, students diagnosed with dyslexia and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district. A student or parent with questions about these programs can learn more through the school website at: www.ryss.org

1.2. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RYSS students have a right to the pursuit of a high-quality, world-class education in a safe and healthy environment that is free from disruption, harassment, and discrimination. RYSS parents have a right to expect that students' rights will be honored. Additionally, students and parents share in the responsibility to ensure that students' rights are upheld.

1.2.1. School Responsibilities

- Provide a safe and healthy learning environment.
- Provide an equitable system of student management.
- Provide an educational experience that includes the latest best practices of teaching.
- Provide learning and enrichment opportunities outside the school setting.
- Provide open and consistent communication with parents.
- Provide access to the most current educational technology.
- Provide clean and well-maintained facilities.

1.2.2. Student Responsibilities

- Show respect toward others.
- Take responsibility for one's actions and active commitment to one's learning.
- Attend all classes every day and on time in conformity with RYSS guidelines and the compulsory attendance law of the State of Texas.
- Arrive to class prepared with appropriate learning tools and completed assignments.
- Dress according to RYSS dress code.
- Pay required fees and fines for all school activities and requirements.
- Know and obey all school rules or risk of losing membership as student in RYSS.
- Cooperate with all faculty and staff members K-12.
- Report to an administrator any incident or conduct that suggests a safety risk to others or RYSS property immediately. Not reporting an incident, delays correction of such situation.
- Use technology solely for school business and appropriate educational purposes.
- Know that the use, possession, and/or sale of illegal and unauthorized drugs, alcohol, and weapons are unlawful and prohibited.
- Know that random searches in accordance with state and federal law are possible in order to assure a safe school environment.
- Know that RYSS campuses have a zero tolerance policy.

1.2.3. Parent Responsibilities

- Support school, district, and classroom rules and regulations for student behavior and ensure that children conduct themselves according to district standards.
- Provide school uniform and supplies to meet campus safety and instructional needs.
- Provide the school with current address of residence, and when available, current telephone numbers.
- Ensure students' attendance at school. By state law, student attendance is the responsibility of parents and guardians.
- Provide the appropriate school personnel with any student information that will affect the student's ability to learn or the student's behavior.
- Support students by attending parent meetings, which will cover topics such as academics, extracurricular activities, resources, socialization, community involvement, etc.
- Read, acknowledge, and understand these rules and the rules applicable to their children's conduct while they are at school.
- Acknowledge and support school policies.

1.2.4. Instructional Programs

RYSS shall be responsible for providing a well-balanced curriculum and delivering effective instruction to all students. Students have the responsibility to strive for academic growth by participating in the appropriate educational program to the best of their ability.

1.2.5. Attendance of Students

RYSS schools will follow the Texas compulsory attendance laws. The state requires children to attend school each day that instruction is provided. The law applies to children ages 6-19. If a child is voluntarily enrolled in kindergarten before age 6, school attendance laws apply to that child as well.

The Texas Education Code requires a student to be in attendance 90% of the days that a course is offered during a semester in order to be awarded credit for the class (TEC §25.092).

1.2.6. Grading, Assessment, Promotion and Retention

Students shall be assessed on a continuous basis in the most effective manner to determine the extent of their progress. Students have the responsibility to maintain reasonable standards of academic performance commensurate with their ability (See Section 1.2.7).

1.2.7. Concerns

Student concerns are paramount and are not taken lightly. Students who wish to have particular concerns of any kind addressed may do so in person, email, or in writing to the campus principal. A *RYSS Student Incident Report* must be completed in detail providing the correct contact information. (See Section 1.13.1.) Please allow 24-48 hours for the concerns to be processed.

1.2.8. Violent Situation on Campus

At RYSS the highest priority is the safety of students and staff, and the district is committed to provide students and staff with a secure environment. As a prevention action, in addition to having Houston Police Department officers on campus at all times to safeguard our students, key RYSS personnel have undergone Preventing Training to respond to critical incidents in the form of violent disasters, such as: active shooter, violent intruder, mass shooting, terrorism, workplace violence, and other unexpected crises.

In the event of a violent disaster or any abnormal situation, the campus principal, in collaboration with the Houston Police Department, will alert parents/guardians via text message and/or voice call, to keep them updated as the situation progresses, and will contact them once the situation has been contained.

In an attempt to maintain everyone in our campus safe, we would also like to encourage parents/guardians to keep their contact information as updated as possible. This may be done by visiting the Registrar's office located in the main building, or by requesting a *Contact Information Form* in the district office's reception area. The form is also available in Section 6.0 of this handbook.

1.2.9. Student Dress Code and Personal Grooming

Each school shall adopt a specific dress code. All parents and students have the responsibility to become familiar with the school's dress code and grooming standards, and to adhere to them. There are three fundamental reasons for a school dress code: 1) to ensure the health and safety of everyone on campus; 2) to avoid any unacceptable disruptions to the learning environment; and 3) to encourage students to have appropriate dress habits.

1.2.10. Students and School Property

Students are expected to show proper respect for others and for property. Students are responsible for their actions directed toward school property and for any damage caused to school property. Damages to school property will result in disciplinary action and restitution. (See Section 1.12).

1.2.11. Search of Property and Students

Students are entitled to the guarantees of the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and are subject to reasonable search and seizures by any authorized school personnel.

Students have the responsibility not to carry on their person or to have on school property or at school-sponsored events items such as drugs, e-cigarettes or vaping products, weapons, alcohol, or other contraband materials in violation of school policy or state law.

School officials are empowered to conduct reasonable searches of students and school property when there is reasonable cause to believe that students may be in possession of drugs, weapons, contraband, or other materials, in violation of RYSS policies or state law. Students do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy in the use of school lockers or school desks.

RYSS administration may utilize dogs and metal detectors to conduct searches of property and students. They may be used at random times and locations by RYSS administrative and law enforcement personnel.

1.2.12. Education During Suspension

Student absences while suspended shall be considered excused absences. Excused absences notwithstanding, students are responsible to make up all schoolwork missed while suspended within five school days after they return to school from suspension in order to receive credit for the work.

1.2.13. Gang-Free School Zone

HB 2086 of the 81st Texas Legislative Session establishes gang-free school zones and provides for enhanced punishment for gang-related criminal activity occurring in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any real property that is owned, rented, or leased by a school or a school board. Under the statute, the punishment for certain offenses is increased to the punishment prescribed for the next-highest category of offense if the actor is 17 years of age or older and it is shown, beyond a reasonable doubt after the trial of the offense, that the actor committed the offense at a location that was owned, rented, or leased by a school or school board.

1.2.14. Communication between School and Home

Communication between home and school is essential for the student to make the most of the opportunities provided. School communication starts with information documents such as handbooks, newsletters, progress reports, report cards, and student work. This communication continues with messages and phone calls between parents and school staff, information on campus web pages, home visits by school staff, and school open houses.

Communication might also include requests for conferences initiated by the school or the parent. Phone communication and conferences are encouraged whenever school staff members or parents have a concern regarding a student's academic or behavioral progress. Parents are asked to report any phone, email address or residential address changes to the school office as soon as possible.

In addition to regular home and school communication, the most current home contact information is essential in case of emergency.

Home visits are conducted at the beginning of the school year. The primary purpose of the home visit is to establish and encourage a solid foundation for both school and home, so that regular home-school communication may best take place.

1.2.15. Co-curricular and Extracurricular Participation

RYSS provides numerous enrichment, celebration, and extracurricular opportunities for the students. Such opportunities as field trips, banquets, proms, class outings, etc. are provided to enrich and celebrate the student; however, STUDENTS MUST BE IN GOOD ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL STANDING IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY SUCH OPPORTUNITY.

In order for a student to be considered in *good academic standing*, the student must be passing all courses. In order for a student to be considered in good behavioral standing, the student must not have committed a Level I, II, III, IV, or V violation in the three weeks preceding any event.

In situations where additional or conflicting information is present, the guidelines of the University Interscholastic League (UIL) shall prevail.



1.3. STUDENT MISCONDUCT

This section describes a broad range of behaviors considered to be student misconduct and should be viewed as representative of the misconduct that most frequently causes a disruption to an orderly educational process. These acts of misconduct are listed in Levels I, II, III, IV, and V. The student who commits an act of misconduct that may be classified into any of the five levels will be subject to disciplinary action.

1.3.1. When and Where These Rules Apply

- The policies and administrative procedures concerning student conduct apply to actions of students on school property (including before/after school, dismissal time, and after school care/activities) and school buses and, in some cases, for conduct occurring off of school property or within 300 feet of school property.
- These rules are applicable to students placed in the In-School Suspension Program (ISS). Under state law, a student may be expelled by RYSS for Level V misconduct that occurs on the property of another school district within Texas.
- The rules apply to actions of students at all school-sponsored or school-related activities or events, such as field trips, sporting events, stadium assemblies, fairs, or evening, school-related activities.
- Students should be aware that the commission of any felony offense, whether at school or away from school, may result in placement of the student in ISS or further disciplinary action determined by administration.
- Students should be aware that administrators who are made aware of criminal activity, whether on or off of campus, will make a report to appropriate law enforcement agencies and that, in addition to these administrative rules, students may be subject to criminal charges for violations of the law.

1.3.2. General Discipline Guidelines for Assessing Penalties

When administering discipline, RYSS personnel shall adhere to the following general guidelines:

1. Discipline shall be administered when necessary to protect students, school employees, or property and to maintain essential order and discipline.
2. Students shall be treated fairly and equitably. Discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case. Administrators should use caution and should ordinarily consider developmentally appropriate interventions for very young children who engage in misconduct. Factors that must be considered in each decision concerning suspension, placement in ISS, or expulsion may include such factors as:
 - Seriousness of the offense;
 - Student's age and intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct;
 - Student's disciplinary history;
 - Student's attitude;
 - Potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment;
 - State law requirements for certain disciplinary consequences;
 - Whether the facts of the case warrant consideration of self-defense as a mitigating factor in the assessment of any punishment;

- Whether the student has a disability that substantially impairs the student’s capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student’s misconduct.
3. Serious offenses are those that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with the orderly process in the classroom, RYSS transportation, the school, or any school-related activity, and may include persistent behavior of Level II or higher misconduct. An administrator may find, on the basis of the facts and circumstances of the case, that a Level III offense constitutes a serious offense. Finally, a finding that a student has engaged in any offense listed as an offense under Level IV or Level V constitutes a finding that the student has engaged in serious misbehavior.

1.3.3. Levels of Offenses—Overview

Acts of misconduct are categorized into the following five levels of offense:

1.3.3.1. Level I – Violation of Classroom or Transportation Rules

Offenses that generally occur in the classroom and can be corrected by the teacher.

1.3.3.2. Level II – Administrative Intervention

Offenses that are more serious in nature or a continuance of Level I misconduct.

1.3.3.3. Level III – Suspension and/or Removal to In-School Suspension (ISS)

Offenses that seriously disrupt the educational process in the classroom, in the school, and/or at school-related activities, or a continuance of Level I or Level II-misconduct. A finding that a student has engaged in a Level III offense may constitute a serious offense.

1.3.3.4. Level IV – Required Placement in In-School Suspension (ISS)

Criminal offenses as defined in Level IV. This may include any felony, whether school-related or not, unless it is one for which expulsion is required. A finding that a student has engaged in an offense listed under Level IV constitutes a finding that the student has engaged in serious misbehavior.

1.3.3.5. Level V – Expulsion for Serious Offenses

Offenses that include those for which a student may or shall be expelled under state law. They include continued serious or persistent misbehavior that violates RYSS guidelines and policies while placed in ISS. A finding that a student engaged in an offense listed under Level V constitutes a finding that the student has engaged in serious misbehavior.

Staff members will use their professional judgment to determine the most effective way to correct student misconduct. Disciplinary actions apply equally to all students.

1.3.4. General Procedures for Resolving School Problems

School problems can best be resolved at the campus level. In order to resolve problems,

parents, guardians, and/or students can do the following:

- Meet with a teacher at appropriate times to discuss existing problems.
- If the parents, guardians, and/or students are dissatisfied with the teacher's decision or explanation, they can meet with the principal or designee to review the area of concern.
- If further assistance is needed, students or parents may consider a formal complaint (See Section 1.13).

1.3.5. Corporal Punishment

RYSS prohibits corporal punishment as a disciplinary method. Anyone who suspects a student has experienced corporal punishment is directed to file a report with a teacher, principal, or other RYSS personnel.



1.4. LEVELS OF STUDENT MISCONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS

1.4.1. Level I: Violation of Classroom or Transportation Rules

Each teacher or staff member establishes the rules for the classroom and for school-related activities. The classroom teacher can manage most of the behavior. The teacher may use any of the disciplinary options listed below in maintaining discipline.

Level I acts of misconduct include such behavior as:

- Violations of rules or procedures established by the teacher or staff member
- Refusal to participate in classroom activities
- Unexcused tardiness or absences to class
- Failure to bring required classroom learning tools or assigned work to class
- General misbehavior, such as eating in class, horseplay, making excessive noise, general disruption, or violating campus dress codes
- Any other act that disrupts the classroom or interrupts the educational process of the class
- Failure to deliver or return written communications between home, office, and school
- Disruptive or noncompliant behavior on a school bus, at a school bus stop, or during dismissal of school
- Failure to protect individual computer account passwords from disclosure

Level I disciplinary options/responses include:

- Verbal redirection, correction, or warning
- Teacher-student conference
- Parent contact: note or telephone call to parent
- Student-counselor/principal/caseworker conference
- Detention (maintained by teacher) before or after school
- Other appropriate in-class disciplinary action
- Restriction of school-bus privileges by the bus operator and RYSS administration

Level I procedures:

- Any RYSS staff member who observes a student violating class rules or other school rules may correct the student.
- A record of the offenses and disciplinary actions should be maintained by the teacher or staff member on the appropriate form.
- The teacher should discuss the misbehavior with the parent, an administrator, or support personnel.
- Level I behavior violations and disciplinary options/responses are not limited to those provided. Serious repeated violations may result in a more severe response or referral to Level II.

1.4.2. Level II: Administrator Intervention

Some infractions will result in a referral to the principal or designee. The disciplinary response depends on the offense, previous misbehaviors, and the seriousness of the misbehavior. Level II acts of misconduct include those student acts that interfere with the orderly educational process in the classroom or in the school. A teacher who observes a student engaged in Level II or higher misconduct will fill out a discipline/referral form for the principal or designee. The intervention specialist will forward an oral or written report to the parents.

Level II acts of misconduct include such behavior as:

- Any infraction that goes against RYSS Code of Honor
- Repeated violation of classroom or transportation rules under Level I
- Cheating, plagiarism, or copying the work of other students
- Leaving the classroom or school grounds without the permission of school personnel
- Cutting class or other forms of truancy
- Possession of matches or other flammable materials
- Inappropriate display of affection
- Posting or distributing unauthorized materials on school grounds
- Failure to abide by rules and regulations at extracurricular activities or at co-curricular activities such as field trips
- Loitering in unauthorized areas
- Use or operation of paging devices, including beepers, cell phones, electronic pagers, or any other type of electronic communication system on school campuses or at functions during school hours. In addition to disciplinary action, the unauthorized use or operation of electronic devices will result in confiscation. The Intervention Specialist or other administrator will notify the parent. An administrative fee payable to RYSS will be charged. **NOTE: RYSS is not responsible for any confiscated items.**
- Possession of iPods, iPads, headphones, earbuds, mp3 players, personal radios, or personal music or electronic devices at school will not be allowed.
- Cafeteria disturbance
- Violation of a school's mandatory school-uniform policy
- Disruptive behavior on a school bus or at a school bus stop
- Any other acts that interfere with the orderly educational process in the classroom or the school
- Accessing materials and sites on the Internet that are deemed to be inappropriate by RYSS
- Sending or forwarding inappropriate email, including email containing offensive language, cyberbullying, untruthful statements, junk email, chain letters, or jokes
- Any infraction that goes against RYSS Code of Honor.

Level II disciplinary options/responses include:

- Parental contact by phone and written or oral notification to parent or guardian
- Required administrator/student/parent conference
- Detention or placement in in-school suspension (ISS)
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities, such as field trips, and commencement exercises/award ceremonies
- Removal of school transportation privileges

- "Behavior," "behavioral," and/or "conduct" contracts
- Teacher removal of the student from the classroom
- Suspension of transportation privileges
- Any other appropriate disciplinary actions determined by the intervention specialist or administration

Level II procedures include:

- Referral to principal or designee is made by way of written report not to exceed one page in length.
- Administrator confers with student and/or teacher to establish appropriate action.
- Written or oral notification of action is sent to parent. Notification is sent to the teacher indicating action taken.
- The Intervention Specialist retains discipline referral form.
- Level II behavior violations and disciplinary options/responses are not limited to those provided.
- Repeated violations shall result in a more severe response and/or referral to Level III.

1.4.3. Level III: Off-Campus Suspension and/or Placement in ISS

Level III acts include misconduct for which an administrator may suspend the student from attendance at school or place the student into ISS. The principal or designee makes the disciplinary determination. The period of suspension is limited to three days per occurrence. A decision to suspend a student is final and may not be appealed.

Level III acts of misconduct include such behavior as:

- Chronic or repeated disciplinary infractions of Level I and/or Level II offenses
- Fighting
- Gambling
- Misdemeanor stealing/theft of property, including computers and related equipment, in an amount under \$750
- Repeated instances of cutting class or other forms of truancy
- Possession of a knife
- Persistent disruptive behavior on a school bus
- Smoking, using, or possessing tobacco or tobacco products
- Interfering with school authorities
- Aggressive, disruptive action or group demonstration that substantially disrupts or materially interferes with school activities. This includes such acts as boycotts, sit-ins, trespassing, and walkouts.
- Failure to comply with reasonable requests of school personnel and/or defiance of the authority of school personnel
- Changing school records or documents or signing a parent's name on school documents
- Failure to adhere to terms of behavior contracts
- Indecent/unsolicited sexual proposal/sexual harassment
- Harassment, including threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, engaging in sexually intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another student, subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or

emotional health

- Selling or soliciting for sale any merchandise on school campus without the authorization of the building principal
- Display of disrespect toward school personnel or campus visitors
- Participation in activities by groups such as gangs and cults
- Wearing dress or attire signifying gang affiliations such as caps, bandanas, etc....
- Profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures
- Possession or use of fireworks, "poppers," smoke or stink bombs, or any other pyrotechnic device that may be used to disrupt the educational process
- Possession of laser pens or laser pointers
- Possession of live ammunition or bullets
- Engaging in threats or other acts of intimidation that interfere with another student's desire or willingness to participate in the educational process
- Any verbal abuse or bullying of others, including but not limited to slurs, name-calling, or derogatory statements to another person because of that person's race, color, religion, national origin, disability, physical/personal appearance, or sexual orientation. Bullying is defined as any act or speech that subjects persons to indignity, humiliation, intimidation, physical abuse or threat of physical abuse, social or other isolation, shame, or disgrace.
- Engaging in assault not involving bodily injury, which is defined as intentionally or knowingly threatening another with imminent bodily injury (Section 22.01(a)(2), Penal Code)
- Misdemeanor criminal mischief (i.e., vandalism) resulting in the destruction or defacing of any property, including surveillance cameras, computers and related equipment, in an amount greater than \$20 but less than \$1,500. This includes rendering surveillance cameras, computers or related equipment inoperable or damaging them by erasing data with magnets; intentionally introducing viruses, worms, or trojans; or tampering with programs or data without authority.
- "Hacking" or other use of computers to gain unauthorized access to district or other databases, including student, faculty, or district data files, without permission. In addition to any criminal penalties, students may have their computer privileges suspended.
- Use of school computers, facsimile equipment, or other electronic devices, including cell phones or digital cameras, to transmit, receive, view, or display obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, or racist media or to display information that advocates unlawful activities or provides guidance on the construction or production of weapons, illegal devices, or controlled substances
- Use of the school computer network with the intent to incite violence or aggressive and/or disruptive action on the part of the student body, use of slanderous language, or use of language that promotes racial disorder or sexual harassment and is disruptive to the school environment.
- Use of the school computer network for soliciting or purchasing commercial materials and/or services of any kind
- Sending or forwarding inappropriate emails containing offensive language
- Logging on to a computer, sending email, or accessing the Internet or the district's intranet using a name or password other than the student's own
- Posting unauthorized Web pages, graphic images, or offensive language or comments on a school/district server, Web page, or guest book
- Use of the school computer network to engage in participation in hate groups
- Misdemeanor extortion, which is defined as obtaining money or information from another by coercion or intimidation of a value less than \$1,500

- Possession or use of any prescription or nonprescription drug, medicine, vitamins, or other chemical in violation of the Guidelines for Dispensing Medications at School
- Refusal to cooperate in, or interference with, a random metal-detector safety search
- Any other acts of serious misconduct that disrupt the school environment in the classroom and/or school
- Hazing, which means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act directed against a student by one person alone or acting with others that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student for the purpose of being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization or general classification of students whose members are or include other students
- Assisting (directly or indirectly) with the promotion of any behavior prohibited by the RYSS Code of Student Conduct
- Damaging/tampering with school cameras
- Use or possession of electronic cigarettes or vapor products

Level III disciplinary options/responses:

- Required administrator/student/parent conference
- Restitution or restoration, as applicable, for vandalism to property
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities, such as field trips, and commencement exercises/award ceremonies
- Placement of the student into in-school suspension
- Suspension for up to three school days per occurrence
- Removal of transportation services for up to one year
- Restriction or removal of computer-use privileges for up to one year
- Teacher removal of the student from the classroom
- Any other appropriate disciplinary actions determined by the administration

Level III procedures include:

- Referral to principal or designee by way of discipline report will be sent to the parent.
- Principal or designee confers with student and parent about the misconduct. The student is given an opportunity to explain the incident. The administrator determines misconduct.
- Principal or designee decides whether to suspend student or refer him or her to ISS. Written notice of the offenses and the action taken are given to the parent and teacher. If the student is referred to ISS, the parent shall be given a letter stating the reasons for the removal and setting the term. The letter placing the student should state the term of placement in a specific number of days of successful attendance in the ISS. The final day of placement shall extend to a natural transition point such as the end of a grading cycle, a semester, or the end of the school year. Students under the age of 6 may not be placed in ISS.
- If the referral to ISS extends beyond the end of the next grading period or the end of the school year, the rules contained in the procedures Section 1.4.3 for a long-term removal to ISS will be followed.
- Repeated violations shall result in a more severe response and/or Suspension.

1.4.4. Level IV: Required Placement in ISS

A student shall be removed from the classroom and placed in ISS by the principal or designee when the student engages in any conduct listed below. If the student is a threat to the safety of other students or to RYSS employees, it may be determined that ISS placement is in the best interest of the student. Additionally, there is no limitation on length of placement of a student in ISS if it is determined that the student engaged in sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault against another student. Teachers, attendance office and parents will receive notice of ISS assignment. Teachers must provide work. Students must complete work.

Level IV acts of misconduct include such behavior as:

- Felony conduct. There are three instances of felony conduct for which a student must be referred to ISS. The placement made in accordance with this section shall be for any period considered necessary on the basis of the circumstances and facts known; however, the student shall still receive a review of the placement at intervals not to exceed 120 days. The circumstances include:
 1. Engaging in any conduct punishable as a felony on campus, at a school-related function or activity, or within 300 feet of the school property line
 2. While enrolled in RYSS and regardless of the location of the offense, receiving deferred prosecution or a finding by a court or jury of delinquent conduct under the Family Code, or the reasonable belief of the principal that the student has committed a felony under Title 5 of the Penal Code, which includes criminal homicide; murder; capital murder; manslaughter; criminally negligent homicide; false imprisonment; kidnapping; aggravated kidnapping; indecency with a child; sexual assault; aggravated sexual assault; injury to a child, elderly individual, or disabled individual; abandoning or endangering a child; deadly conduct; terroristic threat; aiding suicide; or tampering with a consumer product, regardless of where the offense occurs
 3. Engaging in any conduct punishable as a felony other than one defined in Title 5 of the Penal Code that occurs more than 300 feet from the campus and is not related to a school-based activity or function if the principal reasonably believes that the student has engaged in such felony and the principal also determines that the continued presence of the student in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students or teachers or will be detrimental to the educational process

Level IV misconduct also includes a finding that the student has engaged in the following conduct on a school campus, at a school-related activity, or within 300 feet of school property:

- Engaging in assault, which is defined as intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury to another and which may include causing bodily injury by recklessly or intentionally pointing a laser pointer or laser pen at another student or a staff member (Section 22.01(a)(1) and Section 1.07(a)(8), Penal Code)
- Selling, giving, delivering to another person, possessing, using, or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled drug, or other controlled substances (Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code, or 21 U.S.C. Section 801 et seq.), unless punishable as a felony

- Selling, giving, delivering to another person, possessing, using, or being under the influence of a dangerous drug (Chapter 483, Health and Safety Code), unless punishable as a felony
- Possessing, using, or being under the influence of alcohol
- Selling, giving, or delivering an alcoholic beverage to another person
- Committing a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol
- Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to an abusable volatile chemical or possession, delivery to a minor, or possession of paraphernalia used with volatile chemicals (Sections 485.031 through 485.034, Health and Safety Code)
- Engaging in conduct that contains elements of the offense of public lewdness or indecent exposure, defined to include offenses against chastity, common decency, morals, and the like.
- Felony stealing/theft of computer equipment or any other property in an amount greater than \$75
- Burglary of any RYSS facility
- Defacing of school property with graffiti or other means that results in a loss or destruction to property in an amount less than \$20,000.

Level IV misconduct also includes a finding that the student engaged in the following conduct on school property or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity:

- Knowingly making a false report against a staff member that is later determined to be unsubstantiated at the conclusion of any investigation initiated as a result of the report
- Engaging in assault not involving bodily injury, which is defined as intentionally or knowingly causing physical contact with another when the person knows or should reasonably believe that the other will regard the contact as offensive or provocative
- Participation in an illegal organization such as a fraternity, sorority, secret society, gang, cult, or other criminal combination prohibited by law that is defined as an organization composed at least in part of students and that seeks to perpetuate itself by recruiting members from the students enrolled in school on the basis of the decision of its membership rather than on the free choice of a student in the school who is qualified by the rules of the school to fill the special aims of the organization (Section 37.121, Texas Education Code). Participation includes indirect participation such as recruiting and indirect guidance or leadership of the activities of gangs, cults, secret societies, and fraternities and sororities
- Repeated possession of ammunition or bullets
- Possession of BB guns, pellet guns, or air rifles
- Possession of electric stun guns or other protective devices designed to administer an electric shock
- Possession of replicas of guns that are sufficiently similar in appearance to a real gun such that, if pointed or shown to another person, a reasonable person may believe the student to be in possession of a firearm
- Possession of drug paraphernalia
- Use of computers or any other means to access and to tamper with RYSS records, to include grade books or any other public school records or any other records of a school-related activity maintained by RYSS
- Level IV additionally includes the following, regardless of whether the offense occurs on school property or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity:
 - Conduct involving a public school that contains the elements of the offense of false

- alarm or report of terrorist threat
- Terrorist threat is defined as threatening to commit violence or harm to any person or property with intent to cause an emergency response or that places any person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury; or interrupting the occupation or use of a building, room, place of assembly, or place to which the public has access by threats of violence or other means, or causing impairment or interruption of public communications, public transportation, the public water, gas, or power supply, or other public service
- Making a "hit list," in which a student makes a list of people to be harmed by means of a firearm, a knife, or any other object to be used with the intent to cause bodily harm
- Engaging in the offense of retaliation against any school employee by engaging in conduct such as intentionally or knowingly threatening to harm another by an unlawful act in retaliation for that person's performance of his or her official duties, unless the student engages in conduct punishable as a felony in retaliation against a person, in which case the student may be expelled under Level V

Level IV disciplinary options/responses:

- Required administrator/student/parent conference
- Restitution or restoration, as applicable, for vandalism to property
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities, such as field trips, and commencement exercises/award ceremonies
- Placement of the student into in-school suspension
- Suspension for up to three school days per occurrence
- Removal of transportation services for up to one year
- Restriction or removal of computer-use privileges for up to one year
- Teacher removal of the student from the classroom.
- Any other appropriate disciplinary actions determined by the administration

Level IV procedures include:

- Referral to principal or designee by way of discipline report will be sent to the parent.
- Principal/designee confers with student and parent about the misconduct. The student is given an opportunity to explain the incident. The administrator determines misconduct.
- Principal/designee decides whether to suspend student or refer him or her to ISS. Written notice of the offenses and the action taken are given to the parent and teacher. If the student is referred to ISS, the parent shall be given a letter stating the reasons for the removal and setting the term. The letter placing the student should state the term of placement in a specific number of days of successful attendance in the ISS. The final day of placement shall extend to a natural transition point such as the end of a grading cycle, a semester, or the end of the school year. Students under the age of 6 may not be placed in ISS.

- If the referral to ISS extends beyond the end of the next grading period or the end of the school year, the rules contained in the procedures Section 1.4.3 for a long-term removal to ISS will be followed.
- Repeated violations shall result in a more severe response and/or suspension.

1.4.5. Level V: Expulsion

Level V acts of misconduct include serious misbehavior and/or illegal acts that threaten to impair the educational efficiency of the school and/or that most seriously disrupt the orderly educational process in the classroom and/or school. Under state law, students may be expelled for any violation listed under this section. Expulsions may occur if the Level V act of misbehavior occurs on school property or at a school-related or school-sponsored activity on or off school property. Expulsion means removal of a student from school for more than three days but not longer than one calendar year.

Level V Required Expulsion

A student shall be expelled from school if the student, on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property, engages in any act of misconduct that qualify for expulsion, such as:

- Uses, exhibits, or possesses** a firearm, which is defined as any device 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 (Section 46.01(3), Penal Code)
- Uses, exhibits, or possesses** an illegal knife, which is defined under state law (Section 46.01(6), Penal Code) as a knife with a blade over five-and-a-half inches and also includes hand instruments designed to cut or stab by being thrown (martial-arts stars), a dagger, a bowie knife, a sword, or a spear
- Uses, exhibits, or possesses** a club, which is an instrument that is specially designed to inflict serious bodily injury or death when a person is struck with the instrument and includes a blackjack, nightstick, mace, and tomahawk (Section 46.01 (1), Penal Code)
- Uses, exhibits, or possesses** a weapon listed as a prohibited weapon under Section 46.05, Penal Code. Prohibited weapons are an explosive weapon, a machine gun, a short-barrel firearm, a firearm silencer, a switchblade knife, brass knuckles, armor-piercing ammunition, a chemical-dispensing device, or a zip gun
- Engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of:
 - a) Aggravated assault, which includes causing serious bodily injury to another during the commission of an assault or using or exhibiting a deadly weapon during the commission of an assault (Section 22.02, Penal Code) and which may include damage to a person's eye caused by pointing a laser pen or laser device at another
 - b) Sexual assault (Section 22.011, Penal Code)

- c) Aggravated sexual assault, which includes causing or threatening to cause serious bodily injury to another during the commission of a sexual assault or using or exhibiting a deadly weapon during the commission of a sexual assault (Section 22.021, Penal Code)
 - d) Arson (Section 28.02, Penal Code)
 - e) Murder (Section 19.02, Penal Code)
 - f) Capital murder (Section 19.03, Penal Code) or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder (Section 15.01, Penal Code)
 - g) Indecency with a child (Section 21.11, Penal Code)
 - h) Aggravated kidnapping (Section 20.04, Penal Code)
 - i) Aggravated robbery (Section 29.03, Penal Code)
 - j) Manslaughter (Section 19.04, Penal Code)
 - k) Criminally negligent homicide (Section 19.05, Penal Code)
 - l) Continued sexual abuse of a child or children (Section 21.02, Penal Code)
 - m) If punishable as a felony, possessing**, using, selling, giving, delivering, or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, or a dangerous drug or committing a serious act or offense while being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, but only if the conduct is punishable as a felony.
- Brings to school a firearm, as defined by 18 U.S.C. Section 921, that includes any weapon, including a starter pistol, which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or any destructive device. Students violating this section shall be expelled for at least one year except that:
 - a) The superintendent of schools may modify the length of the expulsion in the case of an individual student.
 - b) The district must expel the student for one year but may modify the expulsion in order to provide educational services to the expelled student in ISS.
 - c) Federal law requires the expulsion of any student who brings a firearm to school for a minimum term of one year.
 - State law does not allow students under the age of 10 to be expelled. The district or other local educational agency shall provide educational services to an expelled student under the age of 10 in a disciplinary alternative education program
 - The district or other local educational agency may provide educational services to an expelled student who is 10 years of age or older in a disciplinary alternative education program
 - The term of the expulsion may be modified by the superintendent/designee in the case of the individual student, complying with state and federal laws
 - Additionally, a student shall be expelled for engaging in any conduct containing the elements of an offense for which expulsion is required while retaliating against a district employee as a result of the employee's employment with the district, whether it occurs on or off of school property or at a school-related function.
- ** Possession means actual care, custody, control, or management. A student shall be considered to be in possession of any substance or object prohibited or regulated by

RYSS if the substance or object is:

(1) on the student's person or in the student's personal property, such as the student's clothing, purse, book bag, or briefcase; (2) in any private vehicle used by the student for transportation to or from school or school-related activities, such as an automobile, truck, motorcycle, or bicycle; or (3) in any school property used by the student, such as a locker or desk.

Level V Options/Responses under Optional Expulsion:

- Notification and investigation by local law enforcement is required. If a decision is made by local law enforcement to transport the student, the administrator should normally contact the parents within one hour.
- Required administrator/parent/student conferences
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities, including field trips, and commencement exercises/award ceremonies
- Restitution or restoration as applicable
- Referral to principal or designee, counselors and/or appropriate agencies
- Referral to juvenile court for legal action
- Suspension for up to three consecutive days per occurrence
- Referral to ISS
- Expulsion (more than three consecutive school days per occurrence, but not longer than one year). In cases of a student who engages in sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault against another student, there is no limitation on the length of the expulsion or the length of the placement in ISS

Level V Procedures:

1. The administrator contacts the police to investigate the school infraction and/or illegal act and confers with the student after consulting with law enforcement. If the student is arrested, the parents should be notified within one hour. Any expulsion must include an official police or law-enforcement investigation. However, it is not necessary to await the results of the investigation before proceeding to an expulsion hearing.
2. The investigating building administrator notifies the student and parents or guardians in writing of the reasons for the proposed expulsion and of the disciplinary response to the conduct. If the student withdraws from the district prior to the imposition of an expulsion, the administrator may proceed with determining an appropriate punishment for the offense.
3. A school administrator who is an impartial hearing officer will conduct a full hearing before a decision to expel a student is made.
4. The district shall inform the student's teacher(s) of the conduct of a student who has engaged in any violation listed in this section. The teacher shall keep this information confidential.
5. Students expelled from RYSS are entitled to receive educational services but are not entitled to participate in any regular or extracurricular district programs during the period of the expulsion.

1.4.6. Zero Tolerance of Criminal Charges

All students who unlawfully possess a firearm, illegal knife as defined by state law, explosive, or any other dangerous object or weapon on RYSS property, on school buses, and/or in attendance at RYSS related activities shall be recommended for expulsion. In every case where students engage in conduct that contains the elements of an offense in violation of the Texas Penal Code or Education Code, RYSS will pursue arrest and charges.

1.4.7. Reports to Local Law Enforcement

RYSS has an obligation under the law to notify local law enforcement if the principal has reasonable grounds to believe that any of the following offenses has occurred in school, on school property, or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property.

Such offenses include:

- Murder; capital murder
- Aggravated kidnapping
- Aggravated assault
- Injury to a child or an elderly individual
- Sexual assault; aggravated sexual assault
- Arson
- Robbery; aggravated robbery; burglary
- Manufacture or delivery of a controlled substance; manufacture, delivery, or possession of a miscellaneous illegal substance or delivery of marijuana within 1,000 feet of a school or playground
- Deadly conduct, as described by Section 22.05, Penal Code, which includes recklessly engaging in conduct that places another person in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or knowingly discharging a firearm in the direction of an individual, home, or occupied vehicle
- Terrorist threat, which generally involves the threat of a violent act that places a person in fear of serious bodily injury or is designed to incite panic; cause disruption to the use of a public building or space; interrupt the use of public communications, transportation, the water, gas, or power supply, or another public service; or cause an emergency response as more specifically described by Section 22.07, Penal Code
- Use, sale, or possession of a controlled substance, drug paraphernalia, or marijuana, as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code
- Possession of a club, explosive weapon, firearm, firearm silencer, handgun, illegal knife, knife, brass knuckles, machine gun, short-barrel firearm, switchblade knife, armor-piercing ammunition, hoax bomb, chemical dispensing device, or zip gun, as listed in Sections 46.01(1-14) or Section 46.01(16) of the Penal Code
- Organized criminal activity, which includes commission of murder, capital murder, arson, aggravated robbery, robbery, burglary, theft, aggravated kidnapping, kidnapping, aggravated assault, aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault, forgery, deadly conduct, burglary of a motor vehicle, unauthorized use of a motor vehicle, a gambling offense, or other criminal activity if it is done with the intent to establish or maintain or participate in a collaboration of three or more persons or participate in the profits of such a combination in carrying on criminal activity as further defined under Section 71.02 of the Penal Code
- Any other criminal offense for which a student may or shall be expelled

The principal or designee who notifies local law enforcement of these offenses shall notify each instructional or support staff member who has regular contact with the student who has committed the offense.

1.4.7. 86th Legislation TEC Chapter 37

Beginning this school year 2020-2021 and based on the 86th Legislation on Student Discipline under the Texas Education Code Chapter 37, the following will be implemented in all our schools:

1. It is prohibited the out-of-school suspension of homeless students unless the student engages in certain behaviors defined by TEC §37.005(c)(1)-(3) while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property. (Ref. House Bill 692)
2. Effective the 2020-2021 school year, two new conditions that must be considered to determine what is in the best interest of the student before ordering a suspension, removal to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP), expulsion, or placement in a juvenile justice alternative education program (JJAEP) (House Bill 811, TEC §37.001(a)(4) amendment), which are:
 - a. (E) a student's status in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services; or
 - b. (F) a student's status as a student who is homeless.
3. It will be implemented a transition plan for students being released from a DAEP, JJAEP, or a juvenile detention center. The school will create a personalized transition plan developed by the campus administrator and other specified persons. (House Bill 2184, TEC §37.023 addendum)
4. The school will provide an alternative means of receiving all course work provided in the classes in the foundation curriculum that the student misses as a result of an in-school or out-of-school suspension. Also, it will include the conduct that contains the elements of the offense of a terroristic threat as described by Penal Code 22.07(c-1), (d), or (e), as a reason that a student must be served academically by a JJAEP during the term of the removal. (House Bill 3012, TEC §37.005 Subsection (e) and TEC §37.011(b) amendments).
5. The school will post on the district's Internet website, for each district campus, the designated person, e-mail address and dedicated telephone number of the campus behavior coordinator under TEC §37.0012) according to Senate Bill 1306, Texas Education Code §26.015.
6. In all schools, the duties for school district peace officers, school resource officers, and security personnel be included in:
 - (1) the district improvement plan under TEC §11.252;
 - (2) the local student code of conduct adopted under TEC §37.001;

(3) any memorandum of understanding providing for a school resource officer; and
(4) any other campus or district document describing the role of peace officers, school resource officers, or security personnel in the district.
(Ref. Senate Bill 1707, TEC §37.081(d))

7. The schools, when determining whether there is a reasonable belief a student has engaged in conduct defined as a felony offense by the Penal Code, the superintendent or the superintendent's designee may consider all available information, including the information furnished under Article §15.27 (related to notification to schools by law enforcement agencies of the arrest or referral of children), Code of Criminal Procedure, and upon request, the information included in new TEC §37.006(k-1):

(k-1) In addition to the information provided under Subsection (k), the law enforcement agency shall provide to the superintendent or superintendent's designee information relating to the student that is requested for the purpose of conducting a threat assessment or preparing a safety plan relating to that student. A school board may enter into a memorandum of understanding with a law enforcement agency regarding the exchange of information relevant to conducting a threat assessment or preparing a safety plan. Absent a memorandum of understanding, the information requested by the superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall be considered relevant.

(Ref. Senate Bill 2135, TEC §37.006(e)).

8. The schools will consider new reasons for which a student must be placed in a DAEP. A student who engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of harassment under Texas Penal Code §42.07(a)(1), (2), (3), or (7) against an employee of the school district must be placed in a DAEP. Penal Code §42.07(a):

A person commits an offense if, with intent to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, or embarrass another, the person:

- (1) initiates communication and in the course of the communication makes a comment, request, suggestion, or proposal that is obscene;
- (2) threatens, in a manner reasonably likely to alarm the person receiving the threat, to inflict bodily injury on the person or to commit a felony against the person, a member of the person's family or household, or the person's property;
- (3) conveys, in a manner reasonably likely to alarm the person receiving the report, a false report, which is known by the conveyor to be false, that another person has suffered death or serious bodily injury;
- (7) sends repeated electronic communications in a manner reasonably likely to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, embarrass, or offend another.

(Ref. Senate Bill 2432, TEC §37.006(a)(2))

1.5. BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

RYSS prohibits bullying, cyberbullying, harassment and making hit lists. Students who violate this prohibition will be dealt with to the fullest extent allowed in the Student Misconduct section of this handbook, and as allowed by law; at minimum, any incident of bullying is considered a Level III offense (See Section 1.3.3.3).

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by RYSS and that:

- Will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or damage to the student's property;
- Is so sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;
- Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; or
- Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

1.5.1. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is defined as the use of the Internet, cell phones, or other devices to send, post, or text-message images or material intended to hurt or embarrass another person. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Continuing to send email to someone who has said he or she wants no further contact with the sender; sending or posting threats, sexual remarks
- Ganging up on victims by making them the subject of ridicule in forums and posting false statements as fact intended to humiliate the victim
- Disclosure of personal data such as the victim's real name, address, or school on websites or forums
- Posing as the victim for the purpose of publishing material in his or her name that defames or ridicules him or her
- Sending threatening and harassing texts, instant messages, or emails to the victim
- Posting or sending rumors of gossip to instigate others to dislike and gang up on the target, which is determined to have material and substantial interference with school activities or with the rights of students and teachers

1.5.2. Reporting of Bullying

Anyone (parents, students, employees) who suspects bullying is or has occurred shall report this as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A report of the alleged acts should be made to a teacher, counselor, principal, or other RYSS employee. Any RYSS employee who receives a report of bullying is required to immediately notify the principal or designee. A record of all reports of bullying shall be reduced to written form. RYSS employees are obligated under penalty of law to report any incident of suspected or actual bullying, and the principal or designee must timely respond to any report, up to and including

taking disciplinary action as described in Section 1.6. Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten business days from the date of the report; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

A Bullying Report Form is available in each academy office to be used by students and parents who suspect or have witnessed bullying. To the extent possible, RYSS respects the confidentiality of anyone filing a Bullying Report Form. One can find assistance to fill out this form in the Intervention Office. All reports are investigated.

1.5.3. Bullying and the Special Education Student

In all cases of suspected bullying in which a student enrolled in Special Education is involved, no discipline consequences shall be imposed until an admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee meeting has been held to review the conduct.

1.5.4. Examples of Bullying

Behaviors that are not acceptable and considered as bullying include, but is not limited to:

- Any verbal abuse of others, including slurs, name calling, or derogatory statements to another person because of that person's race, color, religion, national origin, disability, physical/personal appearance, or sexual orientation
- Any act or speech that subjects persons to indignity, humiliation, intimidation, physical abuse or threat of physical abuse, social or other isolation, shame, or disgrace
- Cyberbullying (See Section 1.5.1);
- Harming someone's self-worth by verbal and nonverbal communication, for example, teasing, name calling, insulting, intimidating, threatening, making gestures, staring, or eye rolling
- Harming another person's group acceptance through gossip, rumors, trying to ruin his/her reputation, arranging public humiliation, excluding others, getting others to exclude others, or interfering in someone's making or keeping friends in any way

- Engaging in threats or other acts of intimidation that interfere with another student's desire or willingness to participate in the educational process
- Indecent/unsolicited sexual proposal/sexual harassment
- Harassment/dating violence, including threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, engaging in sexually intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another, subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraining, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health
- Engaging in assault not involving bodily injury, which is defined as intentionally or knowingly threatening another with imminent bodily injury
- "Sexting" or using a cell phone or other personal communication device to send text or email messages or possessing text or email messages containing images reasonably interpreted as indecent or sexually suggestive while at school or at a school-related activity.

NOTE: In addition to any disciplinary action, phones will be confiscated; and any images that are

suspected to violate criminal laws will be referred to law enforcement authorities.



1.6. ENROLLMENT

In accordance with the RYSS Original Charter and the Charter Renewal, the following represents the Charter Holder's formal Admission Policy.

The Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success (RYSS) prohibits discrimination in its admission policy on the basis of sex, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic, artistic, or athletic ability, or the district the child would otherwise attend in accordance with Section 12.111 of the Texas Education Code. RYSS may deny enrollment of a student who has a documented history of a criminal offense, juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems as described in the Texas Education Code, Subchapter A, Chapter 37. The decision to enroll a student with one or more such issues rests with the principal of the campus to be impacted.

Enrollment applications for new students will be available at the front desk from April – June of the current school year. New students applying for admission are enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis, with one exception. Siblings of returning students who have submitted an application for admission are given priority for filling the vacant enrollment spaces.

1.6.1. Out-of-District Transfers

Students who meet RYSS attendance zone requirements at time of initial enrollment but whose place of residence changes while enrolled at the school may file a request for an Out-Of-District Transfer. An Out-of-District Transfer, if approved by RYSS administration, will allow the student to remain enrolled at RYSS. An Out-of-District Transfer is issued on a case-by-case basis at the school's discretion; they are not guaranteed. If granted, the Out-of-District Transfer agreement must be completed for each subsequent year the student is enrolled at RYSS. RYSS may charge tuition under a transfer agreement to the extent permitted by the Texas Education Code. An Out-of-District Transfer Form may be obtained from the Registrar's Office. (§ 25.001(b), 25.0019(g), 25.036, 25.038)

1.6.2. Student Records

Cumulative student records shall be maintained for each student from entrance into district schools until withdrawal or graduation from the district. This record shall move with the student from school to school and be maintained at the school where the student is currently enrolled until graduation or withdrawal.

Records for non-enrolled students shall be retained for the period of time required by law. The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students. The superintendent or designee is the custodian of records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. Those records can be accessed at the school site or at the administration office.

The district shall make a student's records available to the student's parents, as permitted by law.

The records custodian or designee shall use reasonable procedures to verify the requestor's identity before disclosing student records containing personally identifiable information.

Records may be reviewed in person during regular school hours without charge upon written

request to the records custodian. For in-person viewing, the records custodian or designee shall be available to explain the record and to answer questions. The confidential nature of the student's records shall be maintained at all times, and records to be viewed shall be restricted to use only in the superintendent's, principal's, or counselor's office, or other restricted area designated by the records custodian. The original copy of the record or any document contained in the cumulative record shall not be removed from the school.

Copies of records are available at a per copy cost, payable in advance. Copies of records must be requested in writing. Parents may be denied copies of records if they fail to follow proper procedures or pay the copying charge. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written request of a parent, one copy of the record shall be provided at no charge.

A parent may continue to have access to his or her child's records under specific circumstances after the student has attained 18 years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

1.6.3. Immunization Records

Each student shall be fully immunized against diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella, mumps, tetanus, and poliomyelitis. The school nurse will review all immunization records upon student enrollment. 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.
25 TAC 97.63(2)(B)

1.7. ATTENDANCE

RYSS complies with the Texas compulsory attendance law and expects all students enrolled to attend school regularly and to be on time for classes every day. The Blackboard Connect System will be used to call parents to inform them of their child's absence. Excessive absences and/or failure to abide by RYSS and TEA guidelines could result in a final attendance review which may result in legal action through the truancy courts and or withdrawal from RYSS to return to the student's home school.

The Texas Education Code (TEC 25.094) states that failure to attend school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year or on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period may be prosecuted. Every effort will be made with the parent and the student to adhere to the attendance policy via phone calls, home visits, counseling, truancy referrals, etc.

1.7.1. Official Daily Attendance Time

Each RYSS campus determines attendance by the absences recorded at one particular point in time the campus has chosen. The official daily attendance time for each RYSS campus is:

Elite STEM Primary Academy	9:30am
Houston STEM and Early College Middle School	9:30am
Houston T-STEM and Early College High School	9:30am
Brownsville Raul Yzaguirre STEM Scholars Preparatory	9:30am

1.7.2. Excused Absences

Acceptable reasons for excused absences are:

Personal Illness - With official documentation of the visit from the medical service provided or note signed by parent/guardian.

- There can be no more than five hand-written notes per semester; others must be approved by the principal.
- The note must include student name, date of absence, reason for absence, parent's signature, parent's phone number.
- A student that is signed out early (no matter the reason) must bring a note/doctor's excuse the next school day attended.
- Notes must be turned in within five days of absence. Notes will not be accepted after this time.
- All notes must be turned in to the attendance office. Notes are NOT to be given to teachers or office staff. It will be the responsibility of the parent to make sure that the attendance office receives the excuses in a timely manner.

Religious/Holy Days – Parents of a student that needs to be absent due to a religious or holy day must turn in a written request to the attendance office prior to absence. The principal will make the determination of excusing a religious or holy day according to the TEA-approved days. One day for traveling to and one day for traveling from an observance destination will be

taken in consideration for these days.

Authorized school-sponsored activities – A student may be excused for absences resulting from participation in off-campus school-related activities; however, RYSS may not permit students to participate in activities that would result in the student’s absence from any class more than five times a semester.

Required court appearance – The principal shall require the presentation of an appropriate court document, such as a subpoena, indicating that a student is legally required to appear in court. The truancy officer, along with the principal, will consult with the parent/student to determine the best plan or assistance needed to ensure all students are at school every day.

NOTE: ANY OTHER REQUEST FOR AN EXCUSED ABSENCE MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO THE ATTENDANCE OFFICE, WHICH WILL IN TURN OBTAIN THE PRINCIPAL’S APPROVAL OF SAID ABSENCE.

1.7.3. Unexcused Absences

An absence for any reason other than those listed in Section 1.7.2 of this handbook shall be classified as UNEXCUSED.

1.7.4. Absences and Denial of Course Credit

The Texas Education Code (TEC 25.092) requires that a student be in attendance for 90% of the days a class is offered in a semester in order to be awarded credit for that class. Additionally, students with three or more excused or unexcused absences in any credit course may have their credit withheld and an asterisk (*) will appear on the student’s report card. This is a credit issue and not a pass or fail issue. A student may be passing the course, but also have three or more unexcused absences and a resulting asterisk indicating withholding of credit. Students with attendance issues or concerns will be placed on an attendance contract. Failure to correct attendance may result in denial of credit and/or a recommendation to return to the zoned school. Students must report to school on time every day.

1.7.5. Attendance Appeals Committee (Course Credit Appeal)

RYSS has a school attendance appeals committee, the composition of which shall be named by the principal of the academy where committee is convened. The committee shall review petitions for class credit for students who have excessive absences. Excused or unexcused absences, both count toward the 90% credit rule.

The committee may grant class credit in those cases where absences are due to extenuating circumstance and the committee may stipulate additional requirements, which a student must meet in order to regain credit in a course. Any student not meeting all requirements on the day of graduation proceedings shall not be allowed to participate.

1.8. STUDENT 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.

To be admitted to the clinic, a student must have a written permit from the teacher whose class the student is missing. A student may come to the clinic during lunch with a permit. Any student, who wishes to leave school because of illness, must come to the clinic and sign out in the appropriate office. The student's parent(s) will be notified before the student is dismissed from school due to illness. Parents are asked to please pick up their child as quickly as possible after being notified. Students who go home without a permit from the nurse will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action. All medical excuses for Physical Education restrictions must originate with the nurse.

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 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 parent.

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.

1.8.1. 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 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. 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.

1.8.2. Lice

Hundreds of days are missed each school year because of head lice infestation. 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 with an effective medicated shampoo.

After a student has undergone a treatment, the parent should check in with the school nurse to discuss the treatment used. The nurse can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments and how best to get rid of lice and prevent their return. The bed sheets, blankets, pillows, and the entire home environment should also be treated to prevent infestation. 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 in the student's classroom. Parents should instruct their child not to share combs, brushes, hats, or scarves with anyone.

More information on head lice can be obtained here:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm>

1.8.3. 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.

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. In order for the student to remain in school, 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. Students 13 to age 23 may complete a Baylor College of Medicine Teen Clinic consent form for access to clinic services.

1.8.4. 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 a written notice from a health care provider is received.

1.8.5. 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.

1.8.6. 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.

1.9. FOOD SERVICE

1.9.1. Nutrition Policy

The new Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards will help schools make healthy choices and the easy choice by offering students more foods and beverages that emphasize whole grains, fruits and vegetables, leaner protein, lower-fat dairy, while limiting foods with too much sugar, fat and salt.

1.9.1.1. Nutrition Standards for Foods

Any food sold in schools must be either a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, a protein food, a “whole-grain rich” grain product, or a combination of food that contains at least ¼ cup of fruit or vegetable or contain 10% of the Daily Value (DV) of a nutrient cited in the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA). (Calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber). Additionally, foods sold must meet a range of nutrient requirements, including the following:

- Calorie limits include snack items: ≤ 200 calories, entrée items: ≤ 350 calories.
- Sodium limits include: snack items: ≤ 200 mg per portion as packaged, entrée items: ≤ 480 mg per portion as packaged.
- Fat limits include: total fat: ≤35% of calories, saturated fat: < 10% of calories, trans fat: zero grams,
- Sugar limits include either: ≤35% of calories from total sugars in foods **or** ≤ 35% of weight from total sugars in foods.

1.9.1.2. Nutrition Standards for Beverages

Schools may sell: plain water, plain low fat milk, plain or flavored fat-free milk and milk alternatives, 100% fruit or vegetable juice. Elementary schools may sell up to 8-ounce portions, while middle schools and high schools may sell up to 12-ounce portions of these beverages.

Schools may offer additional beverage options outside of the meal-service period for high school students.

These are no more than 20-ounce servings of calorie-free, flavored and/or unflavored carbonated water and other “calorie-free” beverages that comply with the FDA standard of less than 5 calories per serving. Also for high schools, the rule proposes that no more than 12-ounce servings of other lower-calorie beverages may be served outside of the meal service. Two alternatives for these beverages are proposed: ≤ 40 calories per 8-ounce serving (≤ 60 calories/12-ounce serving).

1.9.1.3. Competitive Food

Nutrition standards may be reviewed by visiting the Smart Snacks/product calculator at the following website:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

Competitive food may not be sold during the school day except for those specific cases explained in Section 1.9.1.7 for fundraising activities. When fundraising activities are authorized by the principal and the Child Nutrition Director, competitive food may be sold during the school day. This food must not be part of the reimbursable meal **and must meet required nutritional standards**. Food that is sold must not be sold in or around the cafeteria area. There are no restrictions on food given away, including food at events such as field day and birthday celebrations. Food that meets the Smart Snacks criteria in the school product calculator specifications are allowed, once they are approved by the principal and the Child Nutrition Director.

Nutritional standards may be reviewed by visiting the Smart Snacks/product calculator at the following website:

https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take_action/schools/snacks_and_beverages/smart_snacks/alliance_product_calculator/

1.9.1.4. Breakfast and Lunch

Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success provides healthy and nutritious meals for every student enrolled at no charge through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Program. CEP is a federally funded program; RYSS is not required to obtain “Free and Reduced-Lunch Applications” from students. Families only need to fill out the school’s “Socio-Economic Form” in order to qualify for the CEP Program. All students must have a “Socio Economic Form” on file. This form is included in the enrollment package and is also available to the parents of new students at the orientation meetings held before the school year begins. Current students will complete the form during the first week of school.

Services provided in the school cafeteria are regular lunch, snack bar, and a variety of specialty food items. All food items meet required nutritional standards. RYSS publishes breakfast and lunch menus and posts them on the district website on a monthly basis.

1.9.1.5. Cafeteria Expectations

RYSS IS A CLOSED CAMPUS. CONSEQUENTLY, STUDENTS MAY NOT LEAVE CAMPUS DURING THE INSTRUCTIONAL DAY FOR ANY REASON WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL.

- All students must exit the building before the tardy bell rings at the beginning of each lunch period.
- Students at lunch may not re-enter the building until the end of the lunch period unless they have permission to do so.
- Outside food is not allowed on campus.
- Parents can attend lunch with their child if the parent is the legal guardian of the student.
- Food/lunch that is provided by the parent must be for their child only.
- For safety reasons, students cannot exit the campus during meals.
- The consumption of food is allowed only in the cafeteria unless the administrator or teacher requests in writing otherwise to accommodate the need for tutorials or other approved reason. No food may be consumed in other areas of the campus.
- Only bottled water may be brought to school to be consumed only at the lunch period.

Unsealed containers such as convenience-store cups may not be used at school.

- All trash must be disposed of in the containers provided in the cafeteria. After eating, students must clear their table of all food-service items and dispose these items in trashcans. Trays and flatware may not be removed from the cafeteria.

1.9.1.6. Maintaining a Pleasant Dining Environment

- The opportunity for a pleasant lunch in the cafeteria is dependent on the continued cooperation of all students to keep eating areas free of trash. Students who are careless are not respecting their fellow students. Pride in the RYSS campus begins with each student assuming the responsibility for his or her own actions.
- If students are experience any difficulty while at lunch, several teachers, and administrators will be available in the lunch areas for assistance. Students should seek their assistance and not take matters into their own hands.
- Students who participate in food fights are subject to disciplinary action.

1.9.1.7. Fundraising Activities

The RYSS School Nutrition Policy allows six days of fundraising activities per campus, per school year, to sell food or beverages on campus that do not have to meet federal nutrition standards. The six approved dates for fundraising activities are available in the School Nutrition Policy or can be obtained from the school principal.

Additional sales of food items by approved school clubs or organizations may only occur after school hours on campus. Plans for these activity sales must be submitted to the principal for approval at least two weeks in advance of the event. Fundraising activity guidelines must be followed for the proper deposit of monies made from these sales.

No food or beverages may be sold at the same time that school meals are being served in the food-service area between the hours of 10:30 am to 1:30 pm.

1.9.1.8 – Birthday Celebrations

Food for birthday celebrations that are otherwise restricted by the nutrition policy (cake, pizza, candy, etc.) is permitted only during the last 30 minutes of the school day. Parents must notify their child's teacher and obtain the principal's approval prior to the date of the party. All food items must be dropped off in the front office. This type of celebration is not permitted in the cafeteria area. Home-cooked food of any kind is NOT permitted.

1.9.1.9. Classroom Celebrations

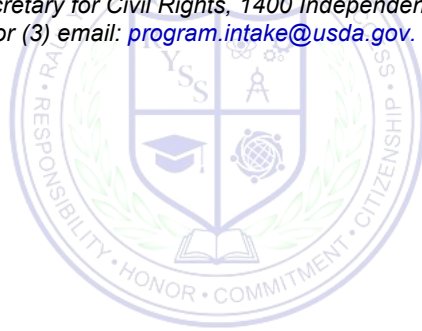
Only two classroom parties are permitted during the school year—the last day before winter break, and the last day of school. During these two days, no food can be sold (fundraising) to the students. Parties are to be scheduled after students' lunch period so that celebrations will not replace a nutritious lunch. Home-cooked food of any kind is NOT permitted.

1.9.1.10. Outside Food

Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success does not allow homemade or home-baked food items to be served to students at any school event. All foods and snacks provided to students as snacks during school hours must be store-bought and must display an ingredient label for food allergen verification.

The school may not provide access to food that does not meet the nutritional standards at any time anywhere on school premises. If parents bring their own child's lunch, students may NOT SHARE this type of food with other students. This policy does not apply to field trips.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



1.10. TRANSPORTATION

RYSS offers transportation service during school field-trip events. The transportation service (bus service) operates during scheduled events, according to the following guidelines:

- The time spent on the bus is considered an extension of the school day. All school rules apply. A student who misbehaves on the bus may lose bus-riding privileges.
- Any student causing a disruption or fails to abide by teacher or chaperone requests will result in the student's removal from field-trip opportunities.



1.11. VISITORS AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT

All visitors, including former employees of the Tejano Center for Community Concerns and/or the Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success, former students, parents, and volunteers must register in the school office and be issued a Visitor's Badge/Permit. The visitors' badge/permit must be visible at all times while the individual is on school premises.

Visitors will not be permitted to walk unaccompanied into instructional areas without a stated purpose, the notice of which would have been provided to the office prior to the visitor's arrival. Visitors not arriving for official school business will be discouraged from visiting during instructional time, but will be welcomed to return after school hours.

1.11.1. Volunteers

Volunteers are welcomed and valued educational partners. Volunteer opportunities are coordinated at each academy by the principal or designee. Community members who are interested in serving as volunteers are directed to contact the principal at the academy where they would like to volunteer. Every prospective volunteer must undergo a criminal background check. Additionally, if a volunteer will directly interact with students during the course of a regular school day, the volunteer must agree to be fingerprinted.

VIPS (Volunteers in Public Schools) clearance is processed in the RYSS Human Resources Department. For more information, please call (713) 640-3700.

1.11.2. Parent Organizations

Parents are encouraged to organize as a community and have as their focus the creation of an efficient and effective partnership with the school. Each academy has its own parent organization. Each parent organization will operate according to bylaws and procedures mutually agreed upon by its members and in collaboration with the principal. The parent organization shall coordinate all its efforts with the principal or his or her designee.

1.11.3. Parent Involvement

- RYSS is committed to the belief that parent involvement is a pivotal component to student success.
- RYSS expects all parents to be actively involved with their child(ren)'s education.
- Parents are expected to maintain regular communication with RYSS with any information that may affect the student's ability to be successful.
- Parents are encouraged to communicate with the school if they have reason to believe their child(ren) are being subjected to an unsafe school environment, are struggling in their studies, or the student's attitude toward school is being negatively impacted.
- Parents are encouraged to be in attendance at all school events to which they are invited.

1.12. PROPERTY: PERSONAL AND SCHOOL

Everyone in the RYSS community is expected to demonstrate respect for individual and school property.

RYSS IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY AT ANY TIME.

Students who disrespect property by acts of theft or vandalism, as well as fail to comply with Sections 1.13.1 and 1.13.2, below, shall be dealt with according to the guidelines and procedures outlined in the Student Misconduct section of this handbook.

1.12.1. Audio and Electronic Equipment

Audio and electronic equipment such as lasers, radios, tape or CD players, TVs, games earphones, and similar electronic devices are prohibited on campus during school hours. Such items, if found in a student's possession, will be confiscated. Some items may not necessarily be returned to students. If an item is specifically approved by the principal or is stated in the student IEP, it will be allowed.

1.12.2. Cell Phones

The use of cell phones by students during the school day is strictly prohibited. Additionally, students' cell phones shall not be visible during the school day. If RYSS discovers a cell phone in use or visible the device will be confiscated according to state law (Texas Education Code, Section 37.082). Each academy maintains its own extended cell phone procedure. Each teacher that allows for electronic device/cell phone use will have a policy, and students must follow or suffer disciplinary consequences.

1.12.3. Other Items

The use of skateboards, skates, and roller blades are strictly prohibited on campus.

If a student rides a bicycle to school, a helmet must be worn while riding. Students must make arrangements with the campus principal to designate a bicycle-secure station.

1.13. STUDENT COMPLAINTS

RYSS encourages students and parents to discuss their concerns and complaints through informal conferences with the appropriate teacher, principal, or other campus administrator. If, after a reasonable attempt, the student or parent does not believe the complaint or concern to be satisfactorily resolved, the student or parent may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint. Any student or parent filing a complaint shall be guaranteed freedom from retaliation by any RYSS employee or board member.

Even after initiating the formal complaint process, students and parents are encouraged to seek informal resolution to their concerns. A student or parent whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time.

1.13.1. Complaint Procedure

A student or parent who wishes to file a formal complaint must do so in writing. The complaint may be filed by hand delivery, e-mail, fax, or U.S. mail.

Complaints arising out of an event or a series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. A student or parent shall not bring separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint.

As regards to the complaint procedure, “days” shall mean RYSS business days. In calculating timelines under this procedure, the day a document is filed is “day zero,” and all deadlines shall be determined by counting the following business day as “day one.”

The complaint must include:

1. Complainant – the name of the person who is filing the complaint (If it is a parent, the complaint must also include the name of the student, if filed on behalf of a student).
2. Reason for complaint – a full description of the incident that is the cause for the complaint, and includes such information as
 - a) Who was involved in the incident?
 - b) What was the incident all about? What seemed to incite the incident?
 - c) When did the incident take place?
 - d) Where did the incident take place?
 - e) Why file a complaint?
3. Actions-to-date – What actions has complainant taken to resolve the issue, prior to filing formal complaint?
4. Remedy sought – What resolution does complainant desire?

The student may be represented by an adult at any level of the complaint.

1.13.2 – Levels of Complaints

Level One – Complaint forms must be filed:

- Within 15 days of the date the student or parent first knew, or with reasonable diligence,

- should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint; and
- With the lowest-level administrator who has the authority to remedy the alleged problem. In most circumstances, students and parents shall file Level One complaints with the principal or designee. Whoever received the complaint must note date and time the letter of complaint received and immediately forward to the appropriate administrator.

The appropriate administrator shall hold a conference with the student or parent within 10 days after receipt of the written complaint and he or she shall have 10 days following the conference to provide the student or parent a written response.

Level Two

If the student or parent did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may request a conference with the superintendent or designee to appeal the Level One decision. The appeal notice must be filed within 10 days of Level One response.

The appeals notice must be filed in writing as follows:

- Include a cover letter to indicate reason for appeal;
- Include copy of Level One written response;
- Include copy of original written complaint.

The superintendent or designee shall hold a conference within 10 days of receipt of appeals notice. At this conference, the superintendent or designee shall only consider issues and documents presented at Level One. The superintendent or designee shall have 10 days following Level Two conference to provide to student or parent a written response.

Level Three

If the student or parent did not receive the relief requested at Level Two or if the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may request a conference with the Board of Education. The appeal notice must be filed in writing within 10 days of receipt of Level Two response, or if no response, within 10 days of Level Two response deadline.

The appeals notice must be filed in writing as follows:

- Include a cover letter to indicate reason for appeal;
- Include copy of Level Two response notice (if no written response provided, note accordingly);
- Include copy of Level One response notice (if no written response provided, note accordingly);
- Include copy of original written complaint.

The superintendent or designee shall inform the student or parent of the date, time, and location of the board meeting at which the complaint will be reviewed.

The board will only consider documents included in Level One and Level Two conferences. The board may ask questions and set time limits on responses. The board may choose to give oral notice of its decision at time of conference, or may exercise its right to respond in writing within

10 days of conference.

If for any reason the board fails to reach a decision regarding the complaint within 10 days of the Level Three conference, the lack of a response by the board upholds the administrative decision at Level Two.



1.14. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (F.A.C.E.)

1.14.1. Framework

RYSS supports the U.S. Department of Education's Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Framework to help develop the broader communities to build capacity for student achievement and school improvement. RYSS believes that the education of a child is the result of joint efforts of parents, students, school, and community. RYSS also believes that parental engagement that is active and regular significantly increases the potential for their students to achieve academic success.

Along with community and business partners, RYSS FACE Department can make a definite impact and difference in students' lives by providing access to mentors, develop sustainable strategic partnerships, pipelines to internships, scholarships, and access to workforce development opportunities. Together with parents, teachers, staff, local communities and partners...RYSS scholars will achieve educational excellence.

- Parents are valued partners in the educational process.
- All school and district activities will give due consideration to the engagements of parents.
- In our effort to keep staff and parents safe, a variety of in-person and/or virtual meetings will be used during COVID-19 pandemic.

The Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Department is available to all parents and students for support with educational and community resources.

Contact Person for Family and Community Engagement:

The designated person to contact regarding family and community engagement:

Contact Person: Ms. Blanca Nelly Saldaña, Family and Community Engagement Director

Phone Number: (713) 640-3790

1.14.2. Parent Organization

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) on each campus is a formal organization that consists of parents, teachers and school staff. Goals include volunteerism of parents, encouragement of teachers and students, community involvement, and welfare of students and families at their home school. PTO believes that every school is unique and has individual needs and goals.

1.15. TITLE I SCHOOL

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, each RYSS school that receives federal Title I, Part A funds must develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to parents of participating children a School Parental Involvement Policy that contains information required by section 1118(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The policy establishes the school's expectations for parental involvement and describes how the school will implement a number of specific parental involvement activities. In our effort to keep staff and parents safe, a variety of in-person and/or virtual meetings will be used during COVID-19 pandemic.

1.15.1. General Expectations

The RYSS school agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- The school will jointly develop with parents, distribute to parents of participating children, a School Parental Involvement Policy that the school and parents of participating children agree on.
- The school will notify parents about the School Parental Involvement Policy in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, will distribute this policy to parents in a language the parents can understand.
- The school will periodically update the School Parental Involvement Policy to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.
- The school will adopt the school's School-Parent Compact as a component of its School Parental Involvement Policy.

RYSS encourages participation of parents in two-way, meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities. This will ensure:

- Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning.
- Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school.
- Parents are full partners in their child's education and are included in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.

1.15.2. School Parental Involvement Policy

The school will involve parents in the joint development and joint agreement of its School Parental Involvement Policy and its school wide plan, if applicable, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way under section 1118(b) of the ESEA.

RYSS annually hosts:

- Three parent-involvement meetings with parent representatives from each Title I School Wide Campus (Parents review policy, guidelines and are updated on any current changes). Representatives are encouraged to visit the school to gain information, actively volunteer and attend meetings/events.

RYSS annually hosts:

- Three parent involvement meetings throughout the year, with the first meeting to be held

- **in September**
- Annual parent survey

The school will distribute to parents of participating children and the local community the School Parental Involvement Policy.

- Posted on the website
- Title I parent meeting
- First six weeks' report card pick-up

The school will convene an annual meeting to inform parents of the following:

- Title I meeting
- Calendar of events
- Volunteer opportunities

The school will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

Types of communication utilized during the parent meetings may include, but are not limited to:

- Brochures
- PowerPoints
- Flyers
- Videos

1.15.3. Shared Responsibilities for Students of High Academic Achievement

The school will provide the parents with opportunities to build the schools' and parent's capacity for strong parental involvement. An effective partnership among the school, parents, and the community will improve students' academic achievement.

RYSS requires annual parent/teacher conferences to discuss students' progress and to participate in the School-Parent Compact, which is required by federal law. The compact outlines parent, student, and teacher responsibilities for sharing the promotion of high academic achievement.

The school will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

Parents are notified of these opportunities through the following:

- Campus/district website
- E-News

- Flyers sent home
- Email and personal contacts
- Call-out system

1.15.4. Building Capacity for Involvement

The School Parental Involvement Policy may include additional discretionary activities that the school, in consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school to support their children's academic achievement.

- Schedule pick up
- Report Card Pick Up Night
- Open house
- Parent/teacher conferences
- Volunteer
- Theatre arts performances
- School wide event
- Saturday Parent Conferences/Workshops



2.0. Elite STEM Primary Academy

2.0.1. Message from the Principal

August 24th, 2020

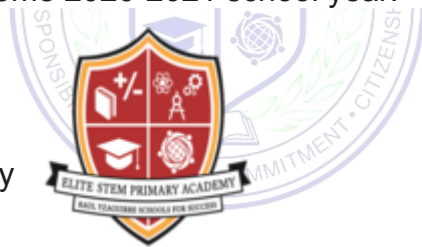
Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to our school family. We are happy and honored that you have chosen Elite STEM Primary as your school of choice for this school year and hopefully for your students' entire academic career. We have wonderful teachers and staff to support our students. We are here not only to support our students with their academic program but to also support our families in becoming our partners in education. Together we can meet the needs of our students and support them in becoming academic scholars.

This is my 25th year in education. I earned my Bachelor's and Master's in Education from Houston Baptist University. I have served as a bilingual teacher, gifted and talented teacher, English as a Second Language Specialist, Title I and Title III Coordinator and Assistant Principal.

Our wonderful faculty and staff are looking forward to an amazing school year serving our Elite STEM Primary students and school community. We thank you for your support and look forward to an awesome 2020-2021 school year.

Ellie D. Garza, Principal
Elite STEM Primary Academy



2.0.2. Program Description

The Elite STEM Primary Academy supports a transitional bilingual program. The Primary Academy has adopted a transitional language model in order to support our students acquisition of English language as they develop core academic content in Spanish. Primary is committed to the transitional model in order to foster our student's bilingualism, bi-literacy, and enhanced awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity, supporting high levels of academic achievement through instruction in both languages, Spanish and English.

2.0.3. Education Goals

Our mission and goal is to provide and support our students with an educational foundation that will support high student achievement and attainment of our student's academic goals. This means developing the academic and social skills of each student to the highest degree possible. To accomplish these goals, we need must involve our parents and school community as our partners in their student's education. Specific goals and objectives are outlined in our School Involvement Plan. Copies of Raul Yzaguirre School Improvement Plan are available upon request. Parents are highly encouraged to assist the school in developing and creating the school improvement plan.

2.0.4. Our School's Core Beliefs

1. Empower the parents and community stakeholders to become involved in the decision making process that pertains to the academic and social well-being of all of our students.
2. Hire educators and school personnel that are compassionate, caring, and committed to educational excellence for all children.
3. Academic achievement and excellence is critical to a prosperous future that will be of great benefit to our city, state, and country. Educational excellence and achieving English proficiency are the keys to attaining economic success.
4. The Bilingual Program exists to support and/or provide a holistic education in a safe, positive, and culturally relevant learning environment.
5. Collaborate with other school entities and organizations to bring additional resources and expertise to the population that we serve.

2.1. CAMPUS PROFILE

Principal	Ellie D. Garza
Mailing Address	2950 Broadway Houston, Texas 77017
Phone	713-640-3763
E-Mail Address	www.ryss-houstonprimary.org
Grades	Kindergarten-Fifth
Enrollment	345
School Uniform	Red shirt/dark pants
Educational Model/s	Transitional Bilingual Program (K-5)
Recognitions	TEA Academically Recognized School 2009, 2010, 2010-2011, 2018-2019
School Colors – Red/White/Black	School Colors – Red/White/Black
Mascot	Panther
Campus Motto	Failure is Not an Option! Everyone Can and Will Succeed!
Grade Level Team Leaders	For Team Leaders contact information, please refer to our school website www.ryss.org

2.1.1. 2020-21 Staff Directory

For Staff directory, please refer to the school website at:

www.ryss.org → *Elite STEM Primary Academy*

2.1.2. Grade Level Parent Team Leaders

At the start of new school year, the teachers select two parents that will serve as room parents throughout the school year. The parents assist the teacher with planning instructional field-trips, classroom parties and community cultures programs. They also help with the decorations for the bulletin boards and they make instructional resources, packets, and various hands-on instructional activities.

The parents also serve as an advisory to the Principal.

2.1.3. Elite STEM Primary Academy PTO/PAC

There are many opportunities for parent participation at Elite STEM Primary Academy. Parents are encouraged to join PTO (Parent- Teacher Organization), serve on our SDMC (Shared Decision Making Committee), and becomes a VIPS (Volunteers in Public Schools).

Our Parents-Teacher Organization exists to promote the education and welfare of our students. You are encouraged to join our partnership. The PTO supports many events during the school year, such as Plate Sale Fundraising. Please make an effort to the monthly meetings.

Our Shared Decision Making Committee (SDMC) is the ruling body of the school. It is governed by the board made up of the principal, teachers, non- instructional personnel, community members and parents. Every year, there are two spaces on the SDMC reserved only for parents of the ELITE Primary Academy students. Parents can also address the SDMC to resolve concerns pertaining to Primary Academy. SDMC meets on the second Thursday of each month, therefore requests must be turned in prior on these days.

2.1.4. Student Council

The Student Council members are comprised of elected representatives from third through fifth grades. Each student representative is nominated and elected by the class constituents. The SC representatives help facilitate the morning activities in the gym or library that take place Monday - Friday. They also provide the principal and teachers with advice relevant to school related issues. The SC sponsors are two teacher's/staff members. A fundraiser is held and a SC shirt is bought for every member. The shirt is worn with pride every Thursday throughout the school year.

The Student Council also assists with various athletics and community events throughout the year. The Student Council members also serve as ambassadors for our school.

2.1.5. Grade Level Team Leaders

The teachers at each grade level select a team leader. The team leader facilitates meetings, professional development activities, school programs, and community events. The Grade Level Team Leaders also serve as an advisory council to the school principal throughout the school year. The teacher-aides also have a team leader that represents the group in various meetings and events.

For a current Grade Level Team Leaders list go to: www.ryss.org

2.2. ACADEMICS

2.2.1. Instructional Program

The students start the instructional day at exactly 7:45 am on Monday-Friday! It is very important that all students arrive to school on time on a daily basis. It is likewise as important for them to be picked up on time.

2.2.2. Administration of Tests

Testing is an important part of the RYSS instructional program. The testing program includes State mandated standardized exams, norm-referenced tests, weekly exams, etc. We make it a practice to always keep the parents informed when testing is scheduled. A schedule of state mandated tests is available at the school's website and in the school office.

2.2.3. Homework Procedures

Homework is very important to the educational process. Teachers assign homework Monday-Thursday. Most of the teachers maintain a homework folder that the students take home on a daily basis. Please check with your child's teacher to obtain more information regarding the Homework Schedule and/or Plan for that particular class or grade level.

Your responsibility as a parent is to show interest and guidance if necessary, and provide an environment conducive to study. The following pointers may help you in assisting your child.

- Be a willing listener when your child talks about school and activities.
- Provide a place to study that is well lighted.
- See that your child is distracted as little as possible while studying.
- Turn off the radio or television if it is in the room where the child is studying.
- Spend time listening to your child read. Ask the teacher to suggest reading materials for use at home.
- If possible, provide your child with resources materials, such as a child's dictionary, reference books, a globe- and encouraged their use.
- Help your child locate materials that are needed in class. Remember the public library is a good resource.

2.2.4. Progress Reports to Parents

Teachers notify parents of academic /conduct progress on a daily if not weekly basis. All parents receive a Progress Report during the third week of each six week grading period. A calendar with all of these important dates is distributed to all parents and is posted on the Primary website.

2.2.5. Student Report Cards

Student report cards go home at the end of each six week grading period. The report card keeps parents informed of the child's academic strengths and weaknesses. It is important for parents to review and discuss the report card with their child. If there are any questions about the report card it is important to schedule a meeting with the child's teacher.

Report cards will reflect the following grading scale:

Kindergarten

E- Excellent

S- Satisfactory

NI- Needs Improvement

U- Unsatisfactory

Grades 1-5 and Enrichment Classes (e.g., P.E., Art, Computer)

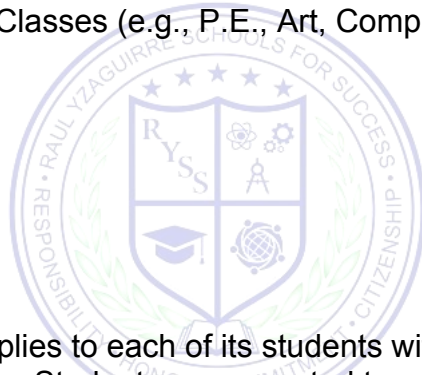
A- 90-100

B- 80-89

C- 75-79

D- 70-74

F- Below 70



2.2.6. Textbooks

The Elite STEM Primary supplies to each of its students with textbooks in order to support and enhance learning. Students are expected to use textbooks, care for them and return in good condition. Students who destroy or do not return textbooks, will not be allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities until such time as the textbooks are returned or the Elite STEM Primary Academy is reimbursed for any lost or damaged textbooks. Extra-curricular activities are defined as, but not limited to athletics, non-academic field-trips, class ceremonies, graduation ceremony, assemblies, dance, competitions, and clubs.

If a student loses or fails to return book, the parent/guardian is responsible to reimburse the schools for the replacement cost of the textbook. Replacement value shall be processed through the principal or designee of the school in which the book was originally assigned.

2.2.7. Awards

Awards for Attendance, Honor roll, and Excellent Conduct are given to students at the end of each 9 weeks grading period. The ceremony will be held in each individual classroom. Letters will be sent to notify parents in advance of the ceremony with

specific times and days. End of the year awards will take place in the Primary Gymnasium.

2.2.8. Communication to Parents

The Elite STEM Primary Academy administration and staff communicates with parents via written communication- Homework Folder, marquee, postal service (mail), monthly newsletters, emails, agenda/planner, Parent meetings and the **Blackboard Connect** System. During inclement weather and emergency early dismissals the **Blackboard Connect** is utilized to notify parents.

In order to provide the most effective and timely communication, it is imperative that parents inform the school office of any change of address or phone (cell and home) contact information, immediately. The Elite STEM Primary Academy parents are encouraged to schedule a conference with teachers during their conference period. Please schedule the conference in advance.

2.2.9. Special Education and Special Needs Services

Elite STEM Primary Academy complies with all federal and state regulations regarding special education and special needs services. If a child experiencing learning difficulties, the parents may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links student to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in their regular classrooms should be considered for tutorial, interventions, and other academic behavior support services that are available to all students. Information regarding special education or special needs services may be obtained by contacting the following staff:

Maria Salinas, Special Populations Manager	(713) 640-3733
Ellie D. Garza, Principal	(713) 640-3763

2.2.10. Field Trips

Students must have permission from parent/guardian to attend field trip. Student(s) must adhere to the code of conduct in the beginning, during, and after the field trip while riding the bus. Any student(s) who does not comply will be sent back to school and/or will no longer attend next field trip scheduled.

2.3. DAILY SCHOOL OPERATIONS

2.3.1. Daily Schedules

Breakfast Schedule K-5th: 7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.

Instructional Day Schedule Elite STEM Primary Academy

Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

See school calendar on the Elite STEM Primary Academy website for early release dates and details.

2.3.2. Calendar for the School Year

Each academy at Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success District will have a school calendar which is unique to their campuses. We will send out monthly calendars of our school events and holidays.

2.3.3. Attendance

Students are expected to be in school. It has always been a goal to improve student attendance. Our goal this year is to stay above 98% attendance. The attendance policy requires that students must adhere to the 90% Rule each year and have no more than 4 unexcused absences to be considered for promotion.

Regular attendance is essential to the students' success in school. Persistent absenteeism creates a genuine hardship for student and is regarded as a very serious problem. Attendance is taken daily at 9:30 a.m. each day.

The following list of circumstances will be the only recognized excuses for school absence: personal illness, family illness, death in the family, religious holiday, and inclement weather. Parents must send a note to their child's teacher explaining each absence.

2.3.4. Absences

Whenever a student is absent a dated written excuse must be sent to the teacher. This excuse is due within 3 days after the student returns after an absence. If a child is ill for more than one day, please notify the school of the nature of the illness and when the child will return to school. A written excuse from the parent or the doctor is required when the student returns to class. **A referral will be made to the Attendance Officer after a student has accumulated two unexcused absences. Excessive unexcused absences may cause retention of the students.**

Early Departures

When possible, all medical and dental appointments should be made after classroom hours. Attendance is taken daily at 9:30 a.m. If a student is taken out of school before 9:30 a.m., the student will be marked absent. The parents must come to the school for the child. No student will be allowed to walk home alone and students cannot be released by a phone call. The parents or authorized person must come to the office to pick up the child.

IF THE STUDENT IS NOT IN SCHOOL AT 9:30 A.M., HE/SHE WILL BE COUNTED ABSENT EVEN IF HE/SHE HAS AN EXCUSE.

All early departures will end at 2:45 p.m. with no exceptions. If you need to take your child out early, please do so before this time.

2.3.5. School Uniform

We require parents to dress their children in school uniform. This decision was made by the Shared Decision Making Committee based upon Texas Senate Bill 1. We feel that having uniform dress will minimize peer pressure, inappropriate dress, and teasing among our students. Students will be expected to wear the following.

Girls and Boys

Black slacks, black jeans

- Warm-ups, stretch leggings, stirrup pants, cargo pants, oversized or baggy pants are not acceptable.
- Pants must be of the correct size and worn with a belt.

Uniform Red School shirt with School Logo •

- Shirts must be worn tucked inside the pants.
- Sweaters or sweatshirts must be solid color, and may not have any type of decoration if they are going to be worn at school. Must be school appropriate size for student. Not oversized.
- Appropriate shoes and socks
- No sandals, backless shoes, high heels, or shoes with heels.

The school uniform for K – 5th is as follows:

Monday-Thursday: Red School Shirt with Logo/Black Pants/ White, Black, or Brown Tennis Shoes.

Friday: College/University Shirt or Yellow School Shirt with Logo, Black Pants and Tennis Shoes.

- Elite STEM Primary Academy sweatshirts may be worn at any time as long as the mustard collared shirt is worn underneath. College/University shirts may only be worn on Fridays.
- Jewelry and Accessories should be left at home. Students may wear inexpensive jewelry that is not distracting or dangerous including dangling earrings. Boys will not be allowed to wear earring(s).
- No haircuts or styles that be considered a distraction will be allowed.
- Uniform Black Skirts of appropriate length may be won.
- Shorts (knee length) may be worn by Kindergarten students **only**.

If your child is not wearing the proper school uniform, the following consequences will be considered:

Consequence 1 - Parents will be called and asked to bring a uniform to school for the child to wear. If this cannot be arranged, the student will have to change into something provided by the school.

Consequence 2 - Parents will be notified. Students refusing to cooperate will be given detention on the same day that they do not wear their uniform. Students will change clothes. Parents will have to make arrangements to pick up their child at 4:00 pm. following uniform detention.

Consequence 3 - Parents will be notified. Students will change clothes. Parents will conference with the principle. Possible suspension based on refusal to follow school wide mandatory dress code.

The school reserves the rights to have a child sent home to obtain a change of clothes, if the school deems the dress to be inappropriate.

2.3.6. School Backpacks

The school backpack is a clear/see through or mesh backpack. These backpacks are preferred for safety reasons. It is encouraged that all students own a clear see through or mesh plastic backpack. Students should not bring backpacks with wheels.

2.3.7. School Supplies

Students are required to bring the school supplies as listed by their teacher and/or grade level team.

2.3.8. Parent Contact

Every teacher/staff member of the Elite STEM Primary Academy contact parents of their students. Teachers will contact parents to introduce themselves and get to know their students. The purpose of the parent contact is for the teacher to learn about each student's needs as well as to discuss with parents the expectations and plans for the school year.

2.3.9. School Visitors

The state requires that each visitor on campus sign in and sign out at the main office area.

Parents will be required to wear a "visitor tag" when visiting our school. This is very

important to the safety of all students and employees. Parent cooperation and understanding are appreciated. (See Section 1.11).

2.3.10. Student Identification Cards

The Elite STEM Primary Academy students will have their picture taken during the first week of school and the photo used to create individual student identification (ID) badges. Subsequently, each student will receive an identification badge, which they are required to wear on a daily basis. There is a \$5.00 fee to replace a lost ID badge.

2.3.11. Student Safety

All of the student information on the **Emergency Card Information** must be accurate and current. We **will not allow** any child to be picked-up by someone that is not listed on the emergency information. We do ask for identification whenever necessary.

2.3.12. Clinic Procedures

All school clinic procedures are governed by state law. All types of medication must be given directly to the school nurse. Students are not allowed to carry any medication—prescribed or not—in their backpacks. Parents are asked to notify the school office immediately of any special medical issues that their child may have. Please read closely the Clinic Procedures, Immunization, and Medication Policy (See Section 1.8).

2.3.13. Transportation of Student

The students at the Primary Academy are not allowed to leave the campus without an adult or RYSS sibling. They are not allowed to walk home alone! All of our students are dismissed from the gymnasium or the temporary building classrooms to an adult/older sibling. We realize that this may be an inconvenience to some, but **the safety of all of our students** supersedes any inconvenience.

The students may be walked to the gymnasium during morning arrival. They may also be “dropped off” by the gym through the drive through entrance. The primary academy staff is assigned to key positions at arrival/dismissal time to properly supervise and keep our students safe.

2.4. STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

2.4.1. Immunizations

All immunizations shall be completed at the time of school enrollment in accordance with regulations published annually by the Texas State Department of Health. Immunizations must be updated on time or the student will be excluded from school until a written doctor's statement or an updated immunization card from the clinic is presented to the school.

A Student cannot be in school if not fully immunized. A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a notarized certificate or affidavit stating that, for medical or religious reasons, the student will not be immunized. The immunizations required are: diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles (rubella), mumps, rubella, varicella, hepatitis A&B and MCV4.

Proof of immunizations must be personal records from a licensed physicians or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation. In case of a varicella (chickenpox), a signed statement, from the parent indicating the approximate month and year in which the student had the illness should be turned in with the immunization record.

2.4.2. Medication – Administration Policies

It shall be standard procedure of the ELITE STEM Primary Academy that medications may be administered by the school nurse or designated person during school hours under the rules and guidelines of the school. The following rules will be observed by the school nurse:

Medications will be administered at school only if it cannot be administered at home.

Medications administered at school must have written request/authorization from the student's parent/legal guardian, must be in the original container and properly labeled.

Written request from a parent/guardian contain:

- The student's full name
- The name of the medication to be given
- Date of permission
- Reasons for its use
- Time of day the medication is to be given
- Signature of parent or legal guardian

The school reserves the right to limit the duration of parent prescribed medication to

five school days and/or required physician statement for continued use of any medications beyond specified time period.

Medication must be from the United States. No medication from Mexico or any other foreign county will be administered by the school nurse or personnel.

Medication must be brought and picked up by the responsible adult. It is against school rules for students to have medication in their possession.

Each case where a physician states a student can carry his own medications (such as asthma inhalers) while in school, shall be reviewed by the safety committee, which includes the nurse, the parent and an administrator.

The districts do not provide medication of any kind to students. The parent/guardian will be contacted if a student is in need of medication during school hours.

Parents and students should be aware that State Law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering any anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are physician prescribed only.

2.4.3. Contagious Diseases/Conditions

In order to protect every child and school personnel from contagious diseases, the ELITE STEM Primary Academy complies with state laws on vaccinations. Children who do not have the required immunizations must be excluded from school by law.

In addition, the Elite STEM Primary Academy has a list of approximately 20 communicable diseases that require exclusion from school until resolved or doctor's permit to return is brought to the nurse. The diseases include: *Amebiasis, Hepatitis A, Rubella (German Measles), Campylobacteriosis, Impetigo, Chicken Pox, Moniliasis, Salmonellosis, Influenza, Typhoid fever, Fifth Diseases Measles (Rubeola), Scabies, Meningitis, Bacterial Shigellosis, gastroenteritis, Viral Mumps, Streptococcal Disease.*

In general students with fever, vomiting or rashes should not come to school until well or a doctor's permit say they are no longer infectious. All sores are to be covered at all times as school. Hair nits and lice are also communicable and all students must be COMPLETELY free of both before the student can be permitted back in the classroom. These nits and lice should be completely removed as soon as the referral letter is received in order to avoid school absences. The teacher will require a nurse's permits to return to class. The student will be given this permit when his hair is COMPLETELY free of both nits and lice on the nurse recheck.

In case of illness or injury a student will be cared for temporarily by the school nurse or a member of the school staff. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents are not available, the student will be taken by ambulance to the emergency room at the hospital. Current parent and emergency contact information must be on file at school

as well as name and phone numbers of the student's family doctor.

2.4.4. Emergency Contact Information

Parent or student's guardian will receive a nurse card for each student at the beginning of the school year or at the moment of registration. Please complete form with updated information and return to school. The school must have on file emergency contact information in the event as a situation should arise where parents need to be contacted. Notify the school immediately of changes in address and phone numbers where parents/guardian can be located.



2.5. STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Elite STEM Primary Academy is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment in which the best teaching and learning may occur. Respect for self, others, and property are essential. Students who fail to demonstrate responsible, respectful, or productive behavior may be subject to consequences as described in **Sections 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6 of the District Handbook**.

2.5.1. Discipline Policy

All students are expected to obey the following rules as stated in the Raul Yzaguirre Discipline Management Plan:

Students will demonstrate respect and courtesy toward all school personnel, community patrons, and fellow students by:

- By walking in the hallways and outside corridors in an orderly fashion
- By speaking softly in the hallway and outside corridors
- By keeping their hands and feet to themselves
- By using appropriate language
- Participate in activities to the best of their ability
- By completing all classwork and homework assignments.
- By working cooperatively on class and/or team assignments
- By working cooperatively on class and/or team assignments
- Respecting school property
- By keeping the building and grounds clean
- By refraining from abuse of school property

Students are also expected to know the Zero Tolerance Policy and immediately report any infractions to the school personnel. Please refer to Section 1.4.6

Each class also has its own individual set of rules. Please check with your child's teacher for further explanation of class rules, consequences and rewards.

Students must refrain from bringing any device or toy, which causes disruption to the educational process.

2.5.2. Cafeteria Rules

The same general rules for behavior apply in the cafeteria as in the classroom. Students are to remain quiet in line and keep hands to themselves.

Classes will sit together at their assigned table. Students are allowed to talk quietly, and may leave their table only when excused. Excellent lunchroom manners will occur as students follow the following cafeteria rules:

- Walk quietly at all times when entering and leaving the cafeteria
- Maintain a low and pleasant voice level while talking
- Pass through the lunch line only once

- Classes should leave tables, seats and floor clear of paper and debris
- Remain seated until dismissed
- Empty trays and trash one time only, in a quiet and orderly manner. After emptying trash and taking trays, walk to a designated area. Those who have no trash or trays may go directly to line up
- Raise your hand if you need assistance

2.5.3. Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

The use of cell phones and other electronic devices including earphones during school hours is strictly prohibited. A student in the ELITE STEM Primary Academy who brings a cell phone to school must voluntarily surrender it to his or her homeroom teacher and may retrieve it after the last period of the day.

Sexual-texting, also called sexting, is when explicit messages or photos are sent via cell phone or email (SEE: **Section 1.6**). Any student found to be involved in such activity will be dealt with according to provisions of **Sections 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6** of this handbook.

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

Confiscation Terms/Fees:

- First offense – The electronic device will be confiscated and returned after payment of a \$15.00 administrative fee.
- Second offense – The electronic device will be confiscated and returned to parent after payment of a **\$20.00** administrative fee.
- Third offense – The electronic device will be confiscated and returned to parent only after **three school days** and payment of a **\$25.00** administrative fee.
- Fourth offense – The electronic device will be confiscated and held until the **end of the school year** and a payment of **\$30.00** administrative fee.
Should the parent decide not to pick up the confiscated device, the administrative fee will be assigned to the student as an obligation.

All administrative fees are to be paid at the Principals Administrative Assistant's office, located next to the campus Principal's office. Note: The school is not responsible for phones lost or stolen on school property, including those that have been confiscated.

The school is not responsible for phones lost or stolen on school property, including those that have been confiscated.

3.0. HOUSTON STEM AND EARLY COLLEGE MIDDLE SCHOOL and HOUSTON T-STEM AND EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

3.0.1. Message from the Principal

August 1, 2020

Dear School Community,

I am the Panther Nation Proud Principal of this wonderful school community! I feel so blessed and grateful to be surrounded by such a loving, caring and resilient community. Collectively, we came together during the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure that we provided Instructional Continuity through Distanced Learning. Thank you for your relentless partnership through it all!

My top priorities and vision for the 2020 - 2021 school year will be to create a safe, exciting, and personalized learning environment for all students. As such, our daily mission is to provide rigorous, daily learning opportunities and experiences in all courses to best prepare and equip our students to meet and exceed the ever-changing global demands to be College and Career Ready.

Our faculty and staff are truly committed to providing the best education possible to your student. We believe that a well-rounded education is meaningful and purposeful instruction from our top-notch teachers, as well as, opportunities that ignite a passion for learning, develop positive character, and explore the world outside of the classroom. We are committed to teamwork and collaboration with our parents and school community to ensure that our students are successful in all that they do.

It is with great pride and honor to serve you and look forward to working collaboratively with you and your child to continue the great successes at Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success.

Sincerely,

April Coleman



3.0.2. Program Description

The RYSS Houston STEM and Early College Middle School and the Houston T-STEM and Early College High School (referred together as ECMS/ECHS) serve students in grades 6-12. Recently, our campus was named as a U.S. News and World Report Best High School. We take great pride in providing strategic, targeted, college preparatory learning experiences to our students that prepare them to be College and Career Ready. Here at RYSS, we believe in innovative learning that includes, but not limited to, a Blended Learning approach that allows students to hone in on their skills, grow through persistency and grit. While ECMS/ECHS is a non-selective open-enrollment charter school, every student who enrolls is prepared to pursue a rigorous course of study. Our students embrace opportunities and challenges that will help them develop the skills necessary to succeed not only at RYSS, but in their everyday walk in life! Every ECMS/ECHS student maintains a winning attitude, an attitude that is focused on excellence and one that makes it obvious to all whom they encounter – Panther Nation Proud!

3.0.3. Student Organizations

At RYSS, we believe in providing enrichment experiences that foster whole child growth and development. Whether you are interested in Robotics, Chess, Drones, Photography, Environmental Defense, Dance, various Technology clubs, Community Awareness, or sports, we offer something for everyone!

Likewise, our Senior Class has The Senior Prom and Activity Club. The Senior Class and Senior Sponsors are responsible for the planning and execution of the 2020-2021 Senior Prom, Senior Lunch, and Senior Trip.



3.1. ACADEMICS

The standard course of study is designed to challenge students' higher order thinking skills. The ECMS/ECHS course of study is a *college prep* program. Beginning in the sixth grade, students are presumed to be preparing for acceptance into and completion of a postsecondary program of their choice.

3.1.1. Grades 6-8 Course of Study

The following are the standard core-subject course offerings for students in grades 6th-8th:

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Electives*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English/Language Arts & Reading - Math - Science - Social Studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English/Language Arts & Reading - Math - Science - Social Studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English/Language Arts & Reading - Math - Science/ Science Lab - Social Studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Art* - P.E.* - Music* - College and Career Advisory* - Technology Applications* -STEM Lab*

Students may be placed into advanced sections of these courses, based on criteria determined by the district/campus designee. All students are encouraged to seek the highest standard of education and may elect to take Pre-AP sections of courses when applicable.

* *Elective offerings will be provided in accordance with legislative requirements and district college- and career-readiness efforts. They are subject to change as deemed necessary by the district level designee. Elective classes serve to enrich students' educational experiences.*

3.1.2. Grades 9-12 Course of Study

All grades of ECMS/ECHS students are required to follow a graduation plan designated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The requirements for each graduation plan type are contingent upon the year the student entered high school. In addition to TEA requirements, students may be required to participate in courses designated by the district in order to ensure the optimal level of college and career readiness. All students who entered ninth grade after the 2014-2015 school year are required to adhere to the graduation plans and policies outlined in House Bill 5.

Elective course offerings can be consulted in the district's course catalog. Please see the RYSS College and Career Readiness (CCR) Department, the school advisor, or the College and Career Advisory Period Instructor for details and documentation regarding graduation plan types. The following is the standard course of study for students in Grades 9-12:

Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Required Electives*
-English 1 1.0 credit -Algebra 1 1.0 credit -Biology 1.0 credit -World Geography 1.0 credit	-English 2 1.0 credit -Geometry 1.0 credit -Chemistry 1.0 credit -World History 1.0 credit	-English 3 1.0 credit -Algebra 2 1.0 credit -Physics 1.0 credit -U.S. History 1.0 credit	-English 4 or CTE or DC English 1.0 credit -Advanced level Math or CTE Math 1.0 credit -Advanced level Science or CTE Science 1.0 credit -Government /Economics 1.0 credit	-College and Career Advisory* 1.0 credit -JROTC/PE 1.0 credit* -Fine Arts 1.0 credit* -LOTE: Spanish 2.0 credits* -Professional Communications 0.5 credit* -Endorsement Career Pathway 4.0 credits*

Students may be selected for placement into advanced academic courses in lieu of regular level courses, based on criteria determined by the principal.

The standard course offerings may be substituted upon the student's selection of graduation plan type.

The district strongly encourages students to participate in courses that will provide them with the rigor, skill set and knowledge base necessary to compete and successfully complete the post-secondary program of their choice.

* *These electives are mandated by law and/or required by the district (when applicable based on students' grade level classification). In the event that a student is lacking the appropriate credits or courses required by TEA and necessary for graduation, the district designee may waive any district requirements to ensure the completion of state-mandated graduation requirements.*

3.1.3. Schedule Changes

Schedule changes will be made only for the purposes of correcting improper course placements and leveling classes. The school's highest priority is placing each student in his or her required core-curriculum classes at the appropriate degree of difficulty.

Elective requests will be honored on availability, grade level, and prerequisites. For students who fail to attend the designated course selection sessions, the computer will randomly select students for electives, and once the class limit has been reached, the section will be closed to

other students. Parent phone calls, pages, voice mail messages and faxes will not be acted on. UNLESS AN ADVISOR SENDS FOR A STUDENT, HE OR SHE IS TO REMAIN IN CLASS AND FOLLOW THE ORIGINAL SCHEDULE UNTIL NOTIFIED OTHERWISE.

In accordance with TEA policy all schedule adjustments will be completed by the 20th day of a new semester, unless mandated by the CCR counselor and/or principal or under extenuating circumstances and approved by campus principal.

NOTE: STUDENTS WHO CHOOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN A GROUP'S REQUIRED PRACTICES OR AFTER-SCHOOL EVENTS MAY BE REMOVED FROM THAT GROUP OR RECEIVE AN ACADEMIC PENALTY (IF THAT GROUP IS A PART OF A GRADED COURSE). WHEN SELECTING COURSES, A STUDENT SHOULD INVESTIGATE AFTERSCHOOL REQUIREMENTS.

3.1.4. Course Selection and Sequence

ECHS students in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades will make course selections during the designated session in the spring semester when course-selection sheets are issued by the advisor or counselor. These sheets are to be taken home, reviewed and signed by parents, and returned to the designee listed. **STUDENTS WHO DO NOT RETURN THEIR COURSE SELECTION SHEETS OR DO NOT ATTEND MANDATORY SCHEDULING SESSIONS WILL HAVE A SCHEDULE CREATED FOR THEM BY THEIR ADVISOR.**

When RYSS students return for the following school year, they will not be permitted changes in the schedule they originally requested other than those necessary to qualify for graduation, or in the event of a scheduling oversight.

It is the student's responsibility, in collaboration with his or her school advisor, to select the appropriate career and graduation choices when planning their course selections.

In the areas of core curriculum and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, it is necessary to take courses in sequence. For example, Algebra I must be taken before Algebra II. Students should read the Course Catalog carefully to become aware of any prerequisites for particular courses. The advisor or the counselor will help students create four-year plans. Students should check with their advisor if they have questions concerning course selections.

- Students must maintain a grade average of 70 or above on a scale of 100 in order to receive credit for a course. In a two-semester course, one credit will be earned if the combined average of the two semester grades in a single academic year (not including summer school) is 70 or above. Partial credit (.5 credit) shall be earned by a student who earns a passing grade for one semester, fails the other, and the average of the two semesters in that course is lower than 70.
- Students may not be given credit for a class if they have attended fewer than the required number of days (90% of the semester).
- Students must comply with all attendance requirements for each course taken. An Appeal for Credit form may be submitted at the end of a semester during which a student has not received credit due to excessive absences. Appeals will only be considered when the student has passed the course with a final semester average of

70% or better.

3.1.5. Grade Level Classification

Grade level classification is the same for all students, regardless of graduation plan. Students are classified based on the number of academic credits they have earned at the beginning of the school year. All students who have completed eighth grade enter high school as freshmen regardless of the number of high school credits they may have already earned. Reclassification may occur at the end of the fall semester. The credits needed for each grade level are:

GRADE LEVEL CLASSIFICATIONS		
Grade & Advocacy		Credits Earned
9	Freshman	0.0 - 5.5
10	Sophomore	6.0 - 11.5
11	Junior	12.0 - 17.5
12	Senior	18.0 +

3.1.6. Advanced Academics

The ECMS/ECHS principal and faculty expect every student to aspire to academic excellence, which includes recognition and acceptance of their abilities to pursue and achieve in advanced academic courses. Being enrolled in an advanced academic course is considered an honor and a compliment to students. When a student is identified as possessing the academic abilities to succeed in advanced academic courses, students are expected to agree to enroll in the course. Advanced academic courses include, but are not limited to:

- Advanced ELA (Grades 6-8)
- Pre-AP English (Grade 9)
- AP English 2, 3, and 4 (Grades 10-12)
- Advanced Math (Grades 6-8)
- Pre-AP and AP Math (Grades 9-12)
- Advanced Science (Grades 6-8)
- Pre-AP and AP Science (Grades 9-12)
- Advanced Social Studies (Grades 6-8)
- Pre-AP and AP Social Studies (Grades 9-12)

(Courses contingent upon instructor availability)

3.1.7. Special Education Services

ECMS/ECHS 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.

3.1.7.1. Aiding Students

Aiding 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 Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI 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 parent may contact the individual(s) listed below to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links the student 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 laws prior to 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:

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

Contact Person: Ms. Maria Salinas

Phone Number: (713) 640-3778

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 Section 504 Referrals:

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

Contact Person: Ms. Maggie Salinas

Phone Number: (713) 640-3778

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](#)

3.1.8. Student Academic Progress

The ECMS/ECHS issues a progress report and report card for each student. Progress reports and report cards are issued according to dates published in the annual school calendar.

3.1.8.1. Progress Reports

Progress reports are issued six times per year, during the fourth week of each six-week grading cycle. The academic progress at the time progress reports are distributed is current as of the third week of the grading cycle. Progress reports are mailed to the student's' most current home address on file in the registrar's office.

3.1.8.2. Report Cards

Report cards are distributed at the end of each grading period. A reporting cycle is established on the RYSS calendars, and those calendars are distributed to students, published on the RYSS website, and listed in this handbook. The final report card is available for pick-up during

the first week of June if students have cleared financial and book records with the school. Final report cards will be mailed if they are not picked up.

3.1.8.3. Incomplete Grades

Teachers may elect to give students an “incomplete” grade on a report card rather than a failing one if there are extenuating circumstances explaining a student’s failure to complete assignments during a grading period. An “I” allows a student to finish his or her work, but it also makes a student ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity events and competitions. Students must complete all incomplete work before the end of the following grading cycle.

Teachers may not give “incomplete” grades during the last six-week grading period of a semester. If incomplete work is not made up, then the “I” mark becomes a “50” and is averaged with the other six-week grades to determine a semester average.

3.1.8.4. Final Exam Exemptions for Seniors

During the spring semester of their senior year only, SENIORS may earn an exemption from the final exam of a course if they meet the following conditions:

- An 85 or better semester average in the course;
- At least an “S” conduct average in the course; and
- No more than three absences (either excused or unexcused) in the course.

Students who earn an exemption will receive the average of their six-week cycles grades as their semester average. The exemption does not, however, excuse students from school attendance. Exempted seniors will be required to attend school activities on the day of their final examinations. Students with three absences already, who are absent again after exemptions are approved, are no longer exempt.

NOTE: SENIORS WHO RECEIVE IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION, OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION OR ANOTHER SERIOUS DISCIPLINARY INFRACTION HAVE LOST THEIR EXEMPTION STATUS.

3.1.9. Parent Communication with School Personnel

ECMS/ECHS 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.

Parents requesting a telephone conference, especially with their son or daughter’s teachers, should provide both a day and an evening telephone number with their message. They should give teachers at least 48 hours to respond to your message. As a rule, teachers cannot be called to the phone (or to a conference) while they are teaching. Should a parent not receive a return call from the staff member called within a reasonable amount of time, the parent should call the office again and note that he or she is making a second call.

Should parents wish to arrange a conference, they may call the school office at (713) 640-3700 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.

Parents should report to the RYSS main office upon arrival to sign in and receive a visitor's pass.

3.1.10. Grade Point Averages (GPA) and Class Rank

ECHS twelfth-grade students will receive both a final class ranking and final GPA during their senior year. At the close of the fall semester, the CCR Department along with the Data Department will work to run all reports off the student information system to calculate final class ranks for the twelfth-graders based on all grades earned through that senior-year fall semester.

3.1.11. Transcripts

Twelfth graders will be given an official transcript of their academic record after the calculations are finalized. Former students will fill out a Records Request form in the registrar's office for any previous years' records. Allow at least two days and possible fees to generate copies of records.

At certain times during the school year, the demand for transcripts is very high. PLEASE ALLOW AT LEAST ONE WEEK TO PROCESS A TRANSCRIPT REQUEST. Students may request up to three official transcripts at no charge. RYSS HAS LIMITED STAFFING DURING THE SUMMER, AND ANY TRANSCRIPTS REQUESTED DURING THAT TIME MAY TAKE ONE WEEK OR MORE TO PROCESS.

3.1.12. 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 will affect eligibility and senior-exemption status. 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.

3.1.13. Student Activities

Definitions

- Curricular – This term refers to a part of the regular school day; it constitutes the delivery of instruction.
- Co-curricular – These are an extension of classroom instruction in which participation is by the entire class or a significant portion of the class, such as field trips. Co-curricular

absences that occur in classes other than the one taking the field trip will be counted as extracurricular absences.

- Extracurricular – These are school-sponsored activities that are not directly related to instruction of the essential elements but that offer significant contributions to a student's development. Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right. Students must meet specific requirements in order to participate. Absences due to extracurricular activities will be limited to five per semester.

3.1.13.1. First Grading Cycle

All students are eligible for participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities during the first six-weeks of a new school year, as long as the student has been promoted to the next grade level.

If a student has not been promoted or does not earn enough credits by the beginning of the new school year, the student is considered ineligible for at least the first three weeks of school. If, at the end of three weeks of ineligibility, the student has achieved a passing average in all classes, he or she becomes eligible to play or perform. However, if a student's average remains below 70 in any class, the suspension continues for at least three more weeks.

3.1.13.2. Summer School Credits

Credits earned in summer school, night high school, or in approved correspondence courses may be used to determine eligibility for extracurricular activities.

3.1.13.3. Dropping a Course

A student may not drop a course after the first 15 days of the semester. However, an exception may be considered by the principal or designee. Drops will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

3.1.13.4. Subsequent Grading Cycles

Any student, whose official six-week grade, in any course, is lower than 70 shall be suspended from participation in any extracurricular or co-curricular activity or event for at least three weeks during the next grading period. The only exception involves honors-level courses, such as International Baccalaureate (IB) or Advanced Placement. A student suspended under these "no pass, no play" rules would still be eligible to practice or rehearse with the team or group. If, at the end of three weeks of ineligibility, the student has achieved a passing average, he or she once again becomes eligible to play or perform. However, if a student's average remains below 70, the suspension continues for at least three more weeks.

3.1.13.5. Incomplete Grades

A student receiving an incomplete (I) six-week grade in a course is considered ineligible seven days after the end of the grading period in which the incomplete was recorded. Such students remain ineligible during the next six-week grading period or until the incomplete grade is officially replaced with a passing grade for the grading period.

3.1.13.6. UIL Participation and Eligibility

Eligibility rules apply to all athletic teams, including freshman and junior varsity, all other U.I.L. (University Interscholastic League) and vocational competitions, marching band, drill squad, cheerleading, school-sponsored clubs and organizations, etc. Students not meeting the designated grade requirements may practice but may not compete or perform in any of these activities, even though that activity would not require them to miss any class time. Students who have failed a class are also ineligible to participate in any field trips that would require them to miss instructional class time.

3.1.13.7. Two-Period Rule

In order to participate in any extracurricular activity, the student must have attended school for at least one-half of the school day on which the activity is scheduled. Under the ECMS/ECHS block schedule, this rule would require attendance in two “block” classes. Exceptions must be approved in advance by the principal and sponsor of the activity.

3.1.13.8. Five-Day Rule

Students will not be permitted to participate in such activities that would require a student to be absent from any class more than five times during the semester. An exception to the five-day rule may be made on behalf of individual students who are competing in U.I.L.-sponsored activities. These exceptions must be based on circumstances that are unforeseen and result from the student’s earning the right to compete at post-U.I.L. district levels. Exceptions shall not exceed a total of five additional absences per year.

3.1.13.9. Conduct Requirements

Students with discipline problems of a severe nature are subject to probation. Students placed on probation are not allowed to represent the school, participate in extracurricular activities, nor seek or hold an elected position in the school. In addition, sponsors of a group may suspend a student from participating in a particular activity of that group because of a student’s misbehavior or lack of preparation.

3.1.13.10. Dress Requirements

The principal, in cooperation with the sponsor, coach, or other person in charge of an extracurricular activity, may regulate the dress and grooming of students who participate in the activity. All uniforms must be approved by campus principal.

NOTE: Students should be aware that there are additional expenses that may be required for some extracurricular activities such as dance, student council or JROTC drill team. The sponsor will provide a written estimate of required expenses.

3.1.13.11. Approval, Scheduling, and Supervision

All student-activity events must be approved in advance by the principal or designee and listed with the campus communication coordinator. The campus communication coordinator maintains a schedule for each of RYSS major facilities and venues. Timely scheduling will

minimize conflicts between competing activities and allow adequate preparation for student events. The principal or designee in charge of buildings and grounds will ensure that the physical plant is maintained and secure for all events.

An ECMS/ECHS faculty sponsor must attend and supervise all scheduled extracurricular activities. In addition, the administration may require security, additional chaperones, and/or other types of supervision for certain events. Regardless of whether an ECMS/ECHS-sponsored event is held on-campus or off-campus, the same “school-day” rules of student conduct apply.

3.1.13.12. Official Recognition

The only activities that may use the school name or “nickname” are those that are approved by the school administration. Any person or organization that uses the school name without proper permission is subject to disciplinary action. No school clubs and organizations may be affiliated with college fraternities or sororities. **NOTE: INITIATIONS AND “HAZING” ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED. ALSO, ALL CLUB AND ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES MUST BE APPROVED AND CHAPERONED BY A FACULTY SPONSOR.**

The number of fundraisers per club or group may be four per year with the duration of a specific fundraiser not to exceed a two-week period. These limitations apply to PTO fundraising as well. Students may not sell unauthorized items or services on campus at any time. Under special circumstances the district administration or campus principal may approve additional fundraisers.

3.1.13.13. School-Sponsored Trips

Student travel can be a worthwhile educational experience, but the benefits come with unique challenges for all involved. In order for the objectives of student travel to be achieved fully, school officials must have the full and complete cooperation of participating students at all times. 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.

Absences for school-sponsored travel will be counted as extracurricular or excused absences and will be subject to the limits of such absences. 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 ECMS/ECHS 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.

RYSS IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY AT ANY TIME.

3.1.13.14. Campus Distributions

No materials, circulars, advertisements, notices, or similar materials may be sold or distributed on the campus or at school-sponsored activities unless approved by the principal or designee.

3.1.13.15. Fundraising

Students may sell items as fundraisers, which have been approved by the principal or designee. Unauthorized selling or solicitation of items is prohibited on campus or at ECMS/ECMS functions. Prohibited items may be confiscated by school administration.

3.1.13.16. 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.

3.1.13.17. Hall Passes

During instructional time, a hall pass is required of any student outside the classroom. Staff members are required to request permission from administration before students are allowed to leave the classroom, at all times. Staff will ensure that all the information requested on the hall pass (including student name, destination, and date and time) is included in ink. Students in the halls without permits are in violation of school rules and may be taken to the assistant principal's office for disciplinary action. Students leaving a classroom for any reason during class time should be certain to get a permit from the teacher before entering the hallway.

3.1.13.18. Posters, Signs, and Advertisements

The district designee or campus principal must approve all posters, signs, and/or advertisements on campus. These may be posted only in the designated areas. After the advertised event or deadline has passed, the student organization or individual that posted the notice must remove the posters promptly.

3.1.13.19. Publications

The principal is responsible for all publications edited, produced, or distributed on the ECMS/ECHS campuses and, therefore, may exercise editorial control over them. All school publications must be supervised and approved by a faculty sponsor and reflect the high ideals and expectations of the citizens of the RYSS community. No unauthorized publications may be produced or distributed on campus.

3.1.14. Student Services

3.1.14.1. Student Pictures

Pictures are taken each school year for the entire student body. These pictures are taken for the school yearbook at no charge to the student. However, if students are interested, they can order a packet of pictures for personal use. There will be a charge for this packet. More information will be available at the beginning of the school year through advocacy notices.

3.1.14.2. State and District Testing

ECMS/ECHS students take several standardized tests during the school year. The school Testing Calendar will list these examinations and the dates of administration. Special schedules will be developed for the STAAR, STAAR/End of Course (EOC), or any norm-referenced exams required by the state, district, or campus.

This will allow for the best possible testing environment for these crucial assessments, while still including an abbreviated day of classroom instruction.

Students are expected to abide by all federal and state laws and district policies. This includes, but is not limited to, electronic-device policies such as the turning in of cell phones before the start of any testing.

3.1.14.3. Textbooks

Each student is responsible for all books issued to him or her.

Textbooks will be distributed directly to students at the beginning of the school year. Students will be charged a fine for textbooks that suffer excessive wear and tear. Textbooks will be “barcoded” to track distribution and return.

Textbooks that do not have the appropriate barcode when returned will not be accepted. Lost textbooks and book fines must be paid in full before any new books will be issued and before final semester report cards will be released.

3.2. DAILY OPERATIONS

3.2.1. Daily Schedules

The instructional day at the Houston STEM and Early College Middle School and the Houston T-STEM and Early College High School begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. and continues until 4:00 p.m. Students are considered tardy if they are not in their assigned place by 8:00 a.m. Subsequent to the start of the school day, the ECMS/ECHS follows a daily schedule that is posted on the school's website.

For more information, Section 5.0, of this handbook for the 2020-2021 School Year Calendar or ask the student's counselor.

3.2.2. Dress Code

The ECMS/ECHS is a place where students will learn not only for school, but also for life. Learning for life includes developing a sense of personal pride and dignity by dressing and grooming in a manner that encourages self-discipline and loyalty to things that are greater than oneself—such as the school, the state, and the nation. Learning about and developing personal pride and dignity are important characteristics to help students become valuable and contributing citizens. The dress code is intended to encourage students to focus on academic excellence and avoid distractions that may be caused by a student's concern for dress and grooming. Any student not in full uniform will be subject to in-school suspension (ISS) or sent home. A call may also be placed to the student's home to have proper uniform clothes brought to the school.

3.2.2.1. Headgear, Jewelry, and Hairstyling

- Sunglasses, hats, caps, sweat bands (except when approved for PE and dance classes) and head coverings of any kinds are not to be worn indoors during school hours. These items will be confiscated permanently. Any exceptions to this policy due to religious or medical requirements must be approved in advance by the administration in writing.
- In some laboratory settings, teachers may prohibit the wearing of dangling or protruding articles or accessories.
- Female students are allowed to wear one ear piercing on the earlobe of each ear only. Earrings may only be studs or hoops no larger than a quarter. Piercings in the cartilage, the nose, the eyebrow, the tongue, the navel or anywhere else aside from the earlobe are strictly prohibited. Male students are not allowed to wear any visible piercings of any kind.
- Jewelry depicting or making reference to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vulgar or obscene language, sexual promiscuity, the occult, death, violence, or gang-related activities may not be worn.
- Teeth grills are prohibited.
- Hair rollers, metal rakes, and combs are not to be worn.

- Hair should be clean and well kept.
- In some laboratory settings, teachers may require that long or free-flowing hair be covered or restrained.
- Hair must be neat and may not distract from the educational process. Additionally, no designs may be shaved into hair or eyebrows. If a hairstyle prevents the general

educational process or poses a safety concern, a student and parent conference will be held to resolve to come to a reasonable agreement.

- Jewelry items such as spiked dog collars, spiked bracelets, and linked chains (for wallets or necklaces) are prohibited.
- Expensive or irreplaceable jewelry should not be worn to school.

3.2.2.2. Uniform Tops

- Students **must** wear uniform polo shirts in the approved school color:
 - Burgundy (grades 6 through 8 only)
 - Black (grades 9 through 12 only)
- All outerwear (cold weather clothing) such as jackets, sweaters, hoodies, and sweatshirts must not contain any disruptive or illegal emblems or pictures.
- FRIDAYS ONLY: Students may wear a college or university shirt, or an ECMS/ECHS spirit shirt with jeans. More details on acceptable uniform bottoms, including jeans for Fridays, are detailed below.
- ALL SALES ARE FINAL ON ITEMS PURCHASED THROUGH THE SCHOOL.
- Students with tattoos and hennas must ensure that the tattoos are covered and not visible.
- T-Shirts under uniform shirts are not required; however, if a student chooses to wear a T-shirt under his or her uniform shirt, whether it is long-sleeved or short-sleeved, it may only be solid white or solid black with no other embellishments, lettering, or accent colors of any kind.
- ATHLETIC AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION PRACTICE UNIFORMS ARE REQUIRED AND MUST BE PURCHASED THROUGH THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT. NO PERSONAL CLOTHING FOR THESE ACTIVITIES IS ACCEPTABLE. THESE ITEMS ARE REQUIRED MATERIALS FOR ATHLETICS AND P.E. CLASSES. EFFECTIVE AUGUST 2013, ONLY BLACK ATHLETIC AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION SHIRTS ARE ALLOWED.
- THE DRESS CODE MAY BE ALTERED OR CHANGED AT ANY TIME TO MEET THE SAFETY AND SECURITY NEEDS OF OUR STUDENTS.

3.2.2.3. Uniform Bottoms

- Students are required to wear only KHAKI or BLACK uniform long pants.
- FRIDAYS ONLY: STUDENTS MAY WEAR JEANS ON FRIDAYS ONLY. EXCESSIVELY RIPPED JEANS THAT EXPOSE SKIN ARE NOT ALLOWED. IF JEANS EXPOSE SKIN, THE STUDENT MUST WEAR LEGGINGS UNDERNEATH TO COVER THE EXPOSED SKIN.
- Uniform bottoms may not contain contrast stitching, embellishments, lettering, or accent colors of any kind. No cargo pants or cargo shorts or clothing with excessive pockets are allowed
- All clothing must fit properly. Uniform bottoms must sit at the natural waist. No baggy pants or “hip huggers” are allowed. Pants may not be skinny jeans, leggings, tights, or other excessively tight spandex-based fabric.
- Pant cuffs may not be gathered or bound, but must remain loose as they are designed. Pants may not have any slits, tears, holes, or rips. Pants must fit at the waist. Belts are preferred.

3.2.2.4. Shoes and Socks

- Students must wear closed-toe shoes at all times. Flip-flops, sandals, slides and heels are not permitted unless the student has a doctor's note that warrants adjustments.
- Shoelaces must match the shoe (white, black, or brown).
- Socks may be white, brown, or black only, and must match one another.

ANY OTHER DRESS CODE VIOLATION DEEMED INAPPROPRIATE BY ADMINISTRATION WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION. ANY STUDENT NOT IN UNIFORM WILL BE SUBJECT TO IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS) OR SENT HOME.

3.2.3. Lockers

Lockers will be assigned to students according to grade level. Locker assignments begin with twelfth-grade students and continue to be assigned in descending grade level order until all available lockers have been assigned. Lockers remain the property of the school and do not constitute students' personal property. Students may not decorate the outside of their lockers in any way. The school is not responsible for personal items lost or stolen from lockers.

3.2.4. Personal Items, Backpacks/Book Bags

- Backpacks must be clear or mesh material.
- Purses may not be larger than a standard sheet of copy paper, 8 ½" by 11" and are subject to confiscation or search.
- Toys, games, electronic devices and items deemed dangerous or distracting ARE PROHIBITED and are subject to confiscation. This includes, but is not limited to, headphones, games devices, music devices, skateboards, roller skates and roller-blades.

3.2.5. Cellular Phones, and Electronic Devices

The use of cell phones and other electronic devices, including earphones, during school hours is strictly prohibited. A student who brings a cell phone to school must voluntarily surrender it to his or her teacher or school personnel and may retrieve it after the last period of the day.

Sexual-texting, also called sexting, is when explicit messages or photos are sent via cell phone or email (See: Section 1.6). Any student found to be involved in such activity will be dealt with according to provisions of Sections 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6 of this handbook.

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

Confiscation Terms/Fees:

- First Offense – The electronic device will be confiscated and returned to the parent only. (This will serve as the only warning notice.)
- Second Offense – The electronic device will be confiscated and returned to the parent only after THREE SCHOOL DAYS and payment of a \$20.00 administrative fee.
- Third Offense – The electronic device will be confiscated and returned to the parent only after FIVE SCHOOL DAYS and payment of a \$25.00 administrative fee.

- Fourth Offense – The electronic device will be confiscated and held until the END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR and payment of a \$30.00 administrative fee.
- Should the parent decide not to pick up the confiscated device, the administrative fee will be assigned to the student as an obligation.

ALL ADMINISTRATIVE FEES ARE PAID AT THE CAMPUS FRONT OFFICE.

THE SCHOOL IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR PHONES LOST, STOLEN, OR BROKEN ON SCHOOL PROPERTY, INCLUDING THOSE THAT HAVE BEEN CONFISCATED.

3.2.6. Parking and Transportation

3.2.6.1. Parking Permits

The student parking lot is located on the south side of the church building, adjacent to ECMS/ECHS. There will be a yearly parking fee of \$25.00 per parking sticker for students wishing to use the student parking lot. When purchasing a parking sticker, a student must furnish:

- His or her valid driver's license
- Current proof of liability insurance for the vehicle that the student will be driving, with the student listed as a covered driver

Students who are authorized to use the student parking lot must adhere to the following:

- Parking stickers must be placed on the front windshield passenger side.
- Vehicles parked illegally will be towed.
- Students are reminded that faculty parking areas and visitor parking lots are off limits before school and at all times during the school day. Student automobiles found parked there will be towed at owner's expense.

ALL ADMINISTRATIVE FEES ARE PAID AT THE CAMPUS FRONT OFFICE.

While every reasonable attempt will be made to ensure parking lot security, the school cannot guarantee that no incidents will occur. RYSS, therefore, assumes no responsibility for accidents or the loss of property in the RYSS lots. All parking on campus is at the vehicle operator's own risk. Students found in the parking lot area during the school day without authorization are subject to disciplinary action.

3.2.6.2. Parking Lot Violations

Failure to comply with RYSS parking regulations can result in a number of actions, including ticketing, the towing of one's vehicle, and disciplinary action. In addition, violations of RYSS parking regulations can result in the revocation of campus parking privileges with no refund of the parking fee.

3.2.6.3. Private Car Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Parents and others who drive students to and from school are encouraged to carpool and to

stop only at designated points. Drivers should drop off and pick up students in designated areas.

Please be advised that during the 30 minutes just before the start of school and the 30 minutes just after dismissal, congestion in all these areas can be expected. Drivers may want to plan on arriving at school a little earlier in the morning and a little later in the afternoon.



3.3. ATTENDANCE

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.

3.3.1. Daily Absences Procedure

Students have three days upon return to school from absence, to submit an excuse note to the Attendance Office.

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.

3.3.2. Arriving to School Late, Excused

Upon late arrival, the student must report directly to the attendance clerk's office and must bring an excuse note verifying the reason for the late arrival. Once admitted, the student will receive a permit to go directly to class where the student will give the permit to his or her teacher.

3.3.3. Tardy Policy

A student is counted tardy if he or she is not in the classroom when the tardy bell rings. Tardiness is unacceptable to providing a full period of instruction. As soon as the tardy bell rings, the teacher will begin the day's lesson.

3.3.4. Truancy (Cutting or Skipping Class)

Missing class is a serious matter, and disciplinary actions that can be taken include: parent contact, detention and/or community service, in-school and out-of-school suspension, and referral to the courts for violation of the mandatory school attendance law (with fines up to \$500.00 per period missed may be assessed.) The courts count missing any portion of class as an entire day of truancy.

3.3.5. Court Involvement

Students issued citations or court referrals must comply with court dates and orders. Failure to do so may result in additional legal consequences.

3.3.5.1. Failure to Attend School

The offense of "failure to attend school" will be prosecuted in Harris County, Precinct 6 Court. In instances where the student residence is not within Precinct 6, the student will be prosecuted within the proper jurisdiction. (Texas Education Code, §25.094).

3.3.5.2. Mandatory Action Against Student by School District

Under Section 25.0951 of the Texas Education Code, if a student fails to attend school without

excuse on 10 or more days or parts of days within a 6-month period in the same school year, the school district must either file a complaint against the student who is 12 years of age or older and younger than 18 years of age, for “failure to attend school,” or file a complaint against the student’s parent for “parent contributing to non-attendance,” or both, or refer the student who is 10 years of age or older to the juvenile court for conduct indicating a need for supervision.

If the school district chooses to file the charge of “failure to attend school” against the student, it must do so within 10 school days of the student’s tenth absence. Tex. Educ. Code §25.0951

3.3.5.3. Permissive Action Against Student by School District

When a student fails to attend school without excuse on three or more days or parts of days within a 4-week period, the school district may file a complaint against the student who is 12 years of age or older and younger than 18 years of age, or the student’s parent, or both, or refer the student to the juvenile court for conduct indicating a need for supervision (Tex. Educ. Code §25.0951)

The offense of “failure to attend school” is punishable by a fine not to exceed \$500.00. In addition to the fine, court costs are charged as authorized by law.

3.3.6. Absences and Course Credit

A student may be denied course credit for having too many absences. The TEA 90% attendance rule will be used to determine excessive absences from a class. A student who has been denied credit for a class may appeal for the credit if:

- The student has earned a passing semester grade in the class; AND
- Acceptable excuses for the absences are provided in a timely manner by the student’s parents or legal guardians, and are determined to be valid by the credit appeal committee. Students who desire to appeal for credit should obtain, complete and return the Credit Appeal Form to the principal or designee office. Completed appeal forms must be submitted to the committee along with proper documentations to support the absence. To avoid appeals, all students are strongly encouraged to clear any erroneously marked unexcused absence before the end of the grading cycle.

Credit may be restored if the appeal is approved and the credit recovery time assigned is completed within the timeframe determined by the Attendance Committee; OR there are extenuating circumstances that did not allow the student to attend school. The Attendance Committee will review each case.

3.3.7. Course Enrollment

Students who wish to be eligible for U.I.L. activities must be enrolled in at least five classes. Also, for a student to participate in any sport, fine art, or other team or group activity, the student must be enrolled in the course during the regular school day. EXAMPLE: If a student wishes to play on the soccer team he or she must be enrolled for the entire school day.

3.3.8. Off-Campus Activities

3.3.8.1. Field Trip Absences

Students participating in a field trip are not to be counted as absent from the class taking the field trip. Other classes missed, however, are to be counted as part of the five-day semester allowance for excused extracurricular absences. Work missed for such activities is eligible for make-up, as are days missed for U.I.L. competitions. Prior approval must be secured for all students participating in a field trip. Students should request work from their teachers PRIOR to missing a class for an extracurricular activity, if such work is available.

Field trips must be pre-approved by the campus principal. Teachers are not allowed to transport students without the principal's approval.

Students who are failing any class or who have poor or unsatisfactory conduct may not participate in a field trip that will cause them to miss a class in which they are having difficulty. It will be the responsibility of the teacher sponsoring the field trip to respond to notices of student failure or difficulty from any teacher reviewing the field trip list.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE MAY ANY STUDENT WHO IS FAILING A CLASS HAVE PERMISSION TO MISS ANY CLASS FOR A FIELD TRIP DURING SCHOOL HOURS. The only possible exception, according to state law, concerns students in advanced academic courses, who may be permitted to participate in an extracurricular activity despite a failing grade in an advanced course with the principal's approval.

3.3.8.2. College Visits

The College and Career Readiness Department and the RYSS Board of Education have agreed to allow SENIORS to take TWO college-visit days prior to May 1 and count them as extracurricular absences. All college visits MUST BE APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR OF COLLEGE READINESS PRIOR TO THE DATE OF THE ABSENCE.

If entered as extracurricular absences, the absences will be excused on the student's report card and will not count against any senior final exam exemptions that may be offered. However, students should remember that they are limited to five total extracurricular absences during any one semester. Of course, seniors may take more than two college visit days, but only two may be counted as extracurricular – and then only if requested and approved in advance and in writing by the principal.

Additional college-visit days will be counted as regular excused absences, if proper documentation of the visit is presented.

Juniors who visit a college during their spring semester may have that visit count as a regular excused absence if approved by the Director of College and Career Readiness and proper documentation of the visit is presented. Other absences to visit colleges may be authorized as excused absences if the student is passing all classes.

3.3.9. Leaving School Early

“Off-Campus” is a *privilege*. The only students who have permission to leave campus early are those participating in a business internship or a co-op work program. Early-release permits must be carried by “off-campus” students at all times and must be available for review by police officers and assistant principals. Off-campus permits for vocational students participating in an internship program will be issued in the College and Career Readiness Department. Students who have off-campus permits are expected to leave school grounds immediately after the end of their last scheduled class. Repeated offenses by students who linger on campus may result in the loss of off-campus privileges.

If a student leaves early, any classes missed after departure constitutes an absence. The student must be present in class to be in attendance.

3.3.10. Off-Campus Activities

Students must be picked up each day by 4:30 p.m. unless they are participating in extra-curricular activities or other scheduled events including but not limited to tutorials, mentoring or community service.



3.4. GENERAL GUIDELINES

3.4.1. Classroom Visits and Conferences

Any parent who would like a conference with a teacher is requested to:

- Go to the school office to schedule a conference
- Provide both a day and evening telephone number with their message
- Allow teachers at least 24 hours to respond to a phone message

Teachers will be unable to meet parents during their instructional time, but they should be able to conduct a parent conference, when arranged in advance, during their daily planning period. Parents are reminded that staff members' days are very full. Advanced notice is necessary for staff members to prepare adequately to assist parents when arriving for a conference. Parents shall report to the main office upon arrival to sign in and receive a visitor's pass.

3.4.2. Moving or Changing Phone Numbers

In order to ensure the safety of students – especially in an emergency – and to allow for timely parent and student contacts, 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.

3.4.3. Fundraisers

Students may sell items as fundraisers that have been approved by the principal or designee. Rooms/locations needed for fundraising events must be approved by the principal or designee at least five days prior to the event's taking place.

UNAUTHORIZED selling or solicitation of items is prohibited on campus or at ECMS/ECHS functions. Prohibited items may be confiscated by school administration

3.4.4. Advertising

Posters, signs, and advertisements cannot be posted on school doors, walls, windows etc. ECMS/ECHS has bulletin boards on which advertisements and announcements are posted.

3.4.5. Home Visits

ECMS/ECHS teachers make home visits to their students' homes prior to beginning of the school year. In some cases, teachers may do random or scheduled home visits throughout the school year.

The purpose of home visits is for the teacher to learn about each student's needs as well as to discuss with parents the expectations and plans for the school year.

3.4.6. Homebound Services

Any student that requires Homebound Services must inform CCR, the principal and teachers. Homebound Services will be extended once student applies and services are approved.



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4.0. BROWNSVILLE RAUL YZAGUIRRE STEM SCHOLARS PREPARATORY

4.0.1. Message from the Principal

August 17, 2020

Dear BRYSS Scholars' Families,

Greetings and welcome to school year 2020-2021! I know that I can speak for my staff in saying that we are looking forward to beginning the school year and are excited about continuing our collaborative relationship with our community. Schools are at their best when the community works together, and this is the perfect year for us to shine.

Personally, I am thankful for another year as your principal. This is a great year to start with a new outlook. This is an exciting time in which we will continue to foster an atmosphere that promotes academic success and learning for all. We have a lot of work ahead of us, but I know our students are up for the task. It is my desire to keep you informed of all that is taking place in school. If you have any questions or concerns, remember we are just a phone call away 956-574-7100.

On behalf of myself and the staff, thank you for entrusting your child to us. It's going to be a fantastic school year!

We are BRYSS Eagles!!

Sincerely,



Maria Knosel
Principal



4.0.2. Program Description

The Brownsville Raul Yzaguirre STEM Scholars Preparatory (BRYSS) is a Kindergarten – grade 8th campus. Our school provides multiple educational programs and opportunities to ALL students essential to succeed. BRYSS programs are infused with the most current, best research-based teaching and learning practices. Fundamental to the school’s academic program is a robust core curriculum, which is supported by the Transitional Bilingual Program, Kagan Program, Gifted and Talented, TLI, Special Education, RTI, and STEM. Each of these specialized programs adds a unique dimension to the BRYSS program, which places the school among the leaders in innovative and effective educational opportunities. BRYSS challenges and provides academic and social support to prepare our students for high school and to be college ready to be successful in a global society.

Transitional Bilingual Program – (Kindergarten through grade 5)–The Transitional Bilingual Program is a full-time program of transitional instruction. The amount of instruction in each language (primary and secondary) shall be appropriately based on the student’s language potential in both languages. Instruction in the first language is phased out and most students are mainstreamed into English by the end of grade 2 and exited from the Bilingual Program by the end of grade 3. BRYSS values our students’ bilingualism and will provide native language maintenance classes throughout grades 4-8. Grades 4-6 will participate in a Spanish-language lab three times a week. Grades 7-8 will be offered Pre-AP Spanish as an elective for high school credit.

Gifted and Talented - All students at our campus will learn and be provided with instruction that addresses their specific needs. Our teachers have been trained to provide our G.T. students with a challenging curriculum, expand their knowledge, and develop independent learners who go beyond the regular curriculum.

The G.T. Program is designed for students who perform at a higher level and demonstrate creative and productive thinking.

Accelerated Instruction – This is an extended day, academic enrichment program designed to enrich as well as remediate students learning in the classroom and target specific skills to help students master academic standards.

Special Education and Special Needs - BRYSS will provide services to all our students who have exceptional needs. All our students will have equitable access to the general education curriculum in the least restrictive environment. Our goal is to provide our students with academic support and a variety of instructional services to meet their particular needs.

Aiding 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 *Response to Intervention (Rti)*. The implementation of Rti 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 parent may contact the individual(s) listed below to learn about the school’s overall general education referral or screening system

for support services. This system links the student 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 laws prior to 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 30th 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:

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

Contact Person: Ms. Maria Salinas

Phone Number: (713) 640-3778

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 Section 504 Referrals:

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

Contact Person: Ms. Maggie Salinas

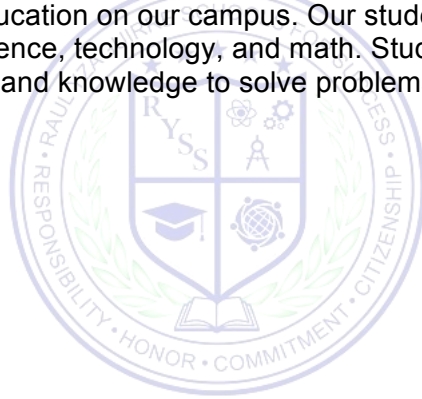
Phone Number: (713) 640-3778

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](#)

STEM (Science, Technology, Math, Engineering and Mathematics)- BRYSS is committed to support and promote STEM education on our campus. Our students will be provided with educational opportunities in science, technology, and math. Students will engage in critical thinking and will have the skills and knowledge to solve problems.



4.1. SCHOOL PROFILE

Principal	Maria Knosel
Mailing Address	2255 North Coria Street Brownsville, Texas 78520
Phone	956-574-7100 956-542-2404
Fax	956-542-2667
Email Address	maria.knosel@tejanocenter.org
Enrollment	385
Grades	K-8
Education Model	Transitional Bilingual Program
School Colors	Blue and Black
Mascot	Eagle

Core Values: Our core values are responsibility, honor, commitment, and citizenship

4.1.1. School Faculty & Staff

Employee's Name	Position	Telephone Number	Email Address
Esther Amaro	Custodian	956-574-7100	esther.amaro@tejanocenter.org
Karla Araujo	Special Ed Teacher	956-574-7108	karla.araujo@tejanocenter.org
Andrea Bernes	Math / Science Teacher	956-574-7100	andrea.bernes@tejanocenter.org
Adriana Burguete	6th & 7th Grade ELA Teacher	956-574-7100	adriana.burguete@tejanocenter.org
Irma Cantu	Teacher Interventionist	956-574-7100	irma.cantu@tejanocenter.org
Erika Clark	Receptionist (12 mo)	956-574-7100	erika.clark@tejanocenter.org
Ana Maria De la Garza	Part Time Art Teacher	956-574-7100	ana.delagarza@tejanocenter.org
Beatriz De la Garza	5th Grade Teacher	956-574-7100	beatriz.delagarza@tejanocenter.org
Sylvia De la Garza	Administrative Assistant	956-574-7102	sylvia.delagarza@tejanocenter.org
Jose Esparza	8th Grade SS & Reading Teacher	956-574-7100	jose.esparza@tejanocenter.org
Daniela Garcia	5th Grade Teacher	956-574-7100	daniela.garcia@tejanocenter.org
Juan Carlos Garcia	6th & 7th Grade Teacher	956-574-7100	juan.garcia@tejanocenter.org
Raul Garcia	Bus Driver	956-574-7100	raul.garcia@tejanocenter.org
Andrea Gonzalez	2nd Grade Teacher	956-574-7100	andrea.gonzalez2@tejanocenter.org
Anna Cristina Gonzalez	Kinder Teacher	956-574-7100	anna.gonzalez@tejanocenter.org
Monica Gonzalez	Bilingual Clerk	956-574-7105	Monica.Gonzalez@tejanocenter.org
Wellington Gonzalez	IT Support	956-574-7122	wellington.gonzalez@tejanocenter.org
Kristina Guerra	1st Grade Teacher	956-574-7100	kristina.martinez@tejanocenter.org
Cecilia Hernandez	Teacher Aide	956-574-7100	cecilia.hernandez@tejanocenter.org
Susana Hernandez	Testing Coord/Counselor	956-574-7125	susana.escamilla@tejanocenter.org
Diana Huerta	3rd Grade Teacher	956-574-7100	diana.huerta@tejanocenter.org
Yanely Jimenez	4th Grade Teacher	956-574-7100	yanely.jimenez@tejanocenter.org
Maria T. Kaun	Office Clerk	956-574-7100	maria.kaun@tejanocenter.org

Employee's Name	Position	Telephone Number	Email Address
Maria Teresita Kaun	Special Ed Teacher Aide	956-574-7100	mariat.kaun@tejanocenter.org
Maria Knosel	Principal	956-574-7101	maria.knosel@tejanocenter.org
Abelardo Lopez	Custodian	956-574-7100	abelardo.lopez@tejanocenter.org
Brenda Lopez	Kinder Teacher	956-574-7100	brenda.lopez@tejanocenter.org
Luisana Lopez	6th & 8th Grade Teacher	956-574-7100	luisana.lopez@tejanocenter.org
Angelica Masso	Cafeteria Coordinator - (11 mo)	956-574-7106	angelica.massos@tejanocenter.org
Yolanda Masso	Library Clerk	956-574-7124	yolanda.massos@tejanocenter.org
Stephanie Mendoza	7th & 8th Science Teacher	956-574-7100	stephanie.mendoza@tejanocenter.org
Guadalupe Meneses	Parent Coordinator	956-574-7109	guadalupe.meneses@tejanocenter.org
Juana Navarro	Teacher Aide	956-574-7100	juana.navarro@tejanocenter.org
Luis Olivo	Bus Driver	956-574-7100	
Isabel Petrarca	Nurse	956-574-7107	isabel.petrarca@tejanocenter.org
Eleazar Rodriguez	PE Teacher	956-574-7100	eli.rodriguez@tejanocenter.org
Lillian Sacramento	Intervention Specialist/Dyslexia	956-574-7126	lillian.sacramento@tejanocenter.org
Gerardo Salinas	Bus Driver	956-574-7100	
Saray Sarellano	Bus Driver	956-574-7100	
Nelita Silva	4th Grade Teacher	956-574-7100	nelita.silva@tejanocenter.org
Martha Teran	Custodian	956-574-7100	martha.teran@tejanocenter.org
Jose Trevino	Custodian	956-574-7100	jose.trevino@tejanocenter.org
Karla Trevino	3rd Grade Teacher	956-574-7100	karla.trevino@tejanocenter.org
Karla Alejandra Trevino	Kinder Teacher	956-574-7100	karlaa.trevino@tejanocenter.org
Maribel Varela	2nd Grade Teacher	956-574-7100	maribel.varela@tejanocenter.org
Marc Velasquez	7th & 8th (Math) Teacher	956-574-7100	marc.velasquez@tejanocenter.org

4.2. ACADEMICS

4.2.1. Homework

Homework provides a means of extending students' classroom experiences and reinforcing instruction. Homework may be assigned to students from Monday-Thursday. The amount of time spent on homework will vary but will not exceed 45 minutes. We ask students to complete homework assignments daily. Failing to do so may result in a loss of privileges (free time, study hall, extracurricular activities, etc.). Homework will be planned according to the student's grade level. If no homework is assigned, students are required to read every night in order to meet the goals established by the teacher for the Accelerated Reader (AR) Program.

4.2.2. Progress Reports and Report Cards

Progress reports will be sent on the fourth week of every grading period and report cards will be sent home at the end of every six weeks. For students who have failing grades or are at risk of a failing grade, parents will be contacted to schedule a conference with the teacher. Progress reports and report cards must be signed and returned to the teacher the following school day. The school calendar and newsletter will provide parents with dates when progress reports and report cards will be distributed.

4.2.3. Special Education and Special Needs Services

BRYSS complies with all federal and state regulations regarding special education and special needs services. If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links the student to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, interventions, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students. Information regarding special education or special needs services may be obtained by contacting the following staff:

Lillian Sacramento, Campus Interventionist	(956) 574-7103
Susana Hernandez, Counselor	(956) 574-7103
Maria Knosel, Principal	(956) 574-7101
Maria Salinas, Special Populations Manager	(713) 640-3778

4.3. DAILY OPERATIONS

4.3.1. Daily Schedules

Breakfast Schedule (All Grades): **7:30 a.m. – 8:0 a.m. Monday through Friday in the classrooms**

Instructional Day Schedule: **8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday**

Monday through Friday

7:50 a.m. – First bell

8:00 a.m. – Start of school day

8:05 a.m. -- Students will be counted tardy

3:30 p.m. – Dismissal

Physical Education Schedule/Parent Conference Times

8:15 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.

9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.

12:45 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

1:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

2:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Sixth Grade

Kindergarten

Second Grade

First Grade

Fourth Grade

Planning/Lunch

Seventh Grade

Third Grade

Fifth Grade

NOTE: SCHEDULES MAY CHANGE TO ACCOMMODATE NEEDS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

4.3.2. Dress Code

All Students:

- Khaki pants (not too tight or too baggy). Must be worn at the waist.
- Khaki shorts are allowed if worn no shorter than two inches above the knee.
- School shirt with school logo. Blue for primary school, black for middle school.
- Sport shoes may be worn for class.
- No expensive or oversized jewelry is allowed.
- No caps/hats are allowed.
- Sweaters and jackets must be button-down or have a zipper.
- Jeans (not too tight, baggy or torn) may be worn with a school uniform shirt or with a school spirit shirt on Fridays.

For Girls:

- Khaki skirts can be no shorter than knee high (not too tight).
- No oversized earrings. One small earring per ear at the lower part of the earlobe is

acceptable.

- No make-up is allowed at any grade level.
- No hair color or highlights are allowed.
- Fingernails must be short, clean, and polish-free. No acrylic or fake nails.

For Boys:

- No piercing is allowed for boys.
- No spike hair (Mohawk) or shaved designs or dyed hair is allowed.
- Boys must wear belts with their shirts tucked in at all times, except during P.E.

4.3.3. Backpacks/ Book Bags

If students carry backpacks or book bags, they must be clear so that the contents may be seen.



4.4. SCHOOL/HOME COMMUNICATION

The BRYSS administration and staff believe communication with parents is vital for students to be successful in school. BRYSS utilizes a variety of ways to maintain communication with parents – Homework Folder, Wednesday Communication Folder, website, marquee, postal service (mail), newsletters, emails, phone-out system, agenda/planner, etc. In addition, BRYSS sends a monthly newsletter home with students.

In order to provide the most effective and timely communication, it is imperative that parents inform the school office immediately of any change of address or phone (cell and home) contact information immediately. BRYSS parents are encouraged to schedule a conference with teachers during their conference period. To ensure that the meeting accommodates both the parent and the teacher, parents are asked to please schedule the conference in advance.

4.4.1. Home Visits

After notifying parents, BRYSS teachers conduct home visits to their students' homes at to the beginning of the school year. In some cases, teachers may do random or scheduled home visits throughout the school year. The purpose of home visits is for the teacher to learn about each student's needs as well as to discuss with parents the expectations and plans for the school year.



4.5. TRANSPORTATION

BRYSS provides free transportation services for many students, which includes picking up and dropping off of students at designated stops within Brownsville city limits. Students, as well as parents and relatives receiving the students, must observe good manners and adhere to BRYSS rules in order to continue receiving this transportation service. Bus drivers reserve the right and have the responsibility of denying transportation services to any student not complying with school rules or who fails to supply pending documentation previously requested by teacher, nurse, or school staff.

4.5.1. Drop Off/ Pick Up

Parent/guardians/relatives (older than 18 years of age) must be present when boarding/ exiting the school bus.

The time spent on the bus is considered an extension of the school day. All school rules apply. A student who misbehaves on the bus may lose bus-riding privileges.

Student will be returned to school if an adult is not present at the designated drop-off address. Upon the third occasion of a student not being met at the designated drop-off address by an approved adult, transportation services for the student may be discontinued.

Transportation services will also be discontinued after the third consecutive day student is not at the designated pickup address.

4.5.2. Students Riding the Bus Should:

- Stand away from the road while waiting for the bus.
- Exhibit appropriate behavior at the bus stop. Behavior that is disruptive, destructive, or unsafe for traffic will not be tolerated.
- Be on time. Buses are not required to wait for students.
- Board the bus in an orderly manner. No student should be standing up/changing seats while the bus is in motion.
- Do not distract the driver by making unusual noises, shouting, or creating a disturbance. Do not speak to the driver unless absolutely necessary.
- Keep belongings and legs out of the aisles.
- Do not throw objects out the windows.
- Do not extend arms, legs, or heads out the window.
- Smoking of any kind is prohibited on the bus.
- Drinking any illegal substance is prohibited on the bus.
- Keep bus litter-free.
- Ride only your assigned bus and get off at your assigned stop. No variations are allowed.
- Obey the driver. He or she is an employee with responsibility for your safety. If a driver experiences any disciplinary problems, he or she will inform the BRYSS administration.
- Know their bus driver's name and your bus route number.
- When crossing the street from the bus stop, use approved crosswalks. All small children must have an adult waiting for them to assist them while crossing the street.

- BRYSS provides free transportation services for the students, which includes pickup and drop-off of students (in most cases within Brownsville city limits).
- Parents, relatives, or guardians must be there to receive their children when being picked up and dropped off.
- BRYSS reserves the right to deny bus service for not complying with bus Transportation rules and regulations.

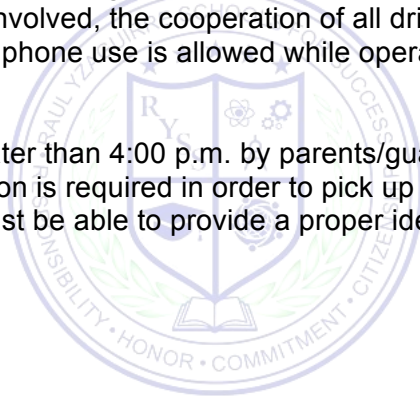
4.5.3. Field Trips

Students must have permission from parent/ guardian to attend field trip. Student(s) must adhere to the code of conduct in the beginning, during, and after the field trip while riding the bus. Any student(s) who does not comply will be sent back to school and/or will no longer attend the next field trip scheduled.

4.5.4. Private Car Drop Off and Pick Up

Parents and others who drive students to and from school are encouraged to carpool and to stop only at designated points. During the periods before and after school, the streets and driveways around BRYSS are quite congested with both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. To ensure the safety of everyone involved, the cooperation of all drivers is vital. Please drive cautiously, courteously. No cell phone use is allowed while operating a vehicle while on school property.

Students will be picked up no later than 4:00 p.m. by parents/guardians/relatives older than 18 years of age. Proper identification is required in order to pick up a student. Any other person that will pick up a student(s) must be able to provide a proper identification and be listed on the release form.



4.6. STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

BRYSS complies with all federal and state law regarding student health and wellness (See: Section 1.9, Student Health and Wellness).

4.6.1. Immunization

A student cannot be in school if he or she is not fully immunized. A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a notarized certificate or affidavit stating that, for medical or religious reasons, the student will not be immunized. The immunizations required are: diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles (rubella), mumps, rubella, varicella, hepatitis A & B series and MCV4.

Proof of immunization must be personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic, with a signature or rubber-stamp validation. In case of varicella (chicken pox), a signed statement, from the parent indicating the approximate month and year in which the student had the illness should be turned in with the immunization record.

4.6.2. Illness and Injury

In case of illness or injury, a student will be cared for temporarily by the school nurse or a member of the school staff. School personnel will render first-aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents are not available, the student will be taken by ambulance to the emergency room at the hospital. Current parent and emergency contact information must be on file at school as well as name and phone number of the student's family doctor. Parents are asked to please complete a nurse's card and return it to school at the beginning of the year.

4.6.3. Medication – Administration Policies

It shall be standard procedure of BRYSS that medications brought from home may be administered by the school nurse or designated person during school hours under the rules and guidelines of the school. The school nurse will observe the following rules:

- Medications will be administered at school only if it cannot be administered at home.
- Medication administered at school must have a written request/authorization from the student's parent/guardian, must be in the original container and properly labeled.
- Written request from a parent or guardian shall contain:
 - The student's name
 - The name of the medication to be given
 - Date of permission
 - Reason for its use
 - Time of day the medication is to be given and
 - Signature of parent or legal guardian

The school reserves the right to limit the duration of parent-prescribed medication to five school days and/or requires a physician statement for continued use of any medication beyond a specified time period.

Medication must be from the U.S. No medication from Mexico or foreign countries will be administered by school nurses or school personnel.

Medication must be brought and picked up by responsible adult. It is against school rules for students to have medication in their possession. Each case where a physician states a student can carry his own medications (Asthma inhalers) while in school shall be reviewed for safety and decision making with doctor's order, nurse, parent and administration.

The district does not provide medication of any kind to students. The parent/guardian will be contacted if a student is in need of medication during school hours.

Parents and students should be aware that state law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering any anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are physician-prescribed only.

4.6.4. Contagious Diseases/Conditions

To protect students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases or conditions are not allowed to attend school while contagious. In the event or suspicion of a contagious disease, parents should inform the school nurse or principal. These diseases include: *Amebiasis, Hepatitis A Rubella (German Measles) Campylobacteriosis, Impetigo, Chicken Pox, Mononucleosis, Salmonellosis, Influenza, Typhoid Fever, Fifth Disease Measles (Rubeola), Scabies, Meningitis, Bacterial Shigellosis, Gastroenteritis, Viral Mumps, Streptococcal Disease.*

In case of illness or injury, a student will be cared for temporarily by the school nurse or a member of the school staff. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents are not available, the student will be taken by ambulance to the emergency room at the hospital. Current parent and emergency contact information must be on file at school as well as name and phone number of the student's family doctor.

4.6.5. Emergency Contact Information

Parents will receive a nurse card for each student at the beginning of the school year or at the moment of registration. Parents are asked to please complete this form with updated information and return it to school.

It is imperative that the school has on file emergency contact information in the event a situation should arise where parents need to be contacted.

Notify the school immediately of any changes in address and phone numbers where parents or guardians can be located.

4.7. SCHOOL SAFETY

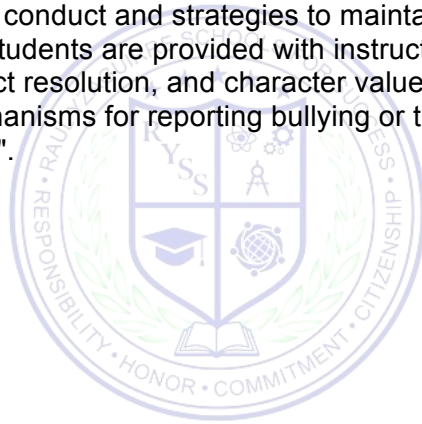
For increased safety of our students, a security officer is assigned to our campus on a daily basis. The officer assists administration in keeping our campus safe. Our gates will remain locked between 9:00 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. with the exception of one front gate. Visitors must provide an identification when they check-in at the office before walking on campus. Parent support is greatly appreciated as we strive to keep our students safe.

4.8. STUDENT BEHAVIOR

BRYSS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment in which the best teaching and learning may occur. Respect for self, others, and property are essential. Students who fail to demonstrate responsible, respectful, or productive behavior may be subject to consequences as described in Sections 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6 of the district handbook.

4.9. BULLYING PREVENTION

C2BK (Cool to Be Kind) Club has been established at BRYSS to focus on the prevention of bullying. Clear rules on student conduct and strategies to maintain a positive, collaborative school climate are promoted. Students are provided with instruction and trainings that promote effective communication, conflict resolution, and character values education. All students at BRYSS are provided with mechanisms for reporting bullying or threats. BRYSS is committed to being a "Bullying Free Campus".



5.0. 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDARS



ELITE STEM PRIMARY ACADEMY RAUL YZAGUIRRE SCHOOLS FOR SUCCESS



Semester 1 - 2020																													
August 2020							September 2020							October 2020							November 2020								
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
						1		1	2	3	4	5							1	2	3		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28		
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30										
30	31																												

December 2020							Student Holidays - Semester 1							Report Card Dates																				
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																												
						1																												
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Labor Day							September 7, 2020							1st nine weeks							October 23, 2020						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	Fall Holiday							September 28, 2020							2nd nine weeks							January 8, 2021						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	Thanksgiving							November 23-27, 2020							3rd nine weeks							March 26, 2021						
27	28	29	30	31	Winter Break							Dec. 21, 2020 - Jan 1, 2021							4th nine weeks							May 28, 2021								

Students do not attend school on Staff Development or Teacher Preparation Days

Semester 2 - 2021																													
January 2021							February 2021							March 2021							April 2021								
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6																
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	28	29	30	31	25	26	27	28	29	30												
31																													

May 2021							June 2021							Student Holidays - Semester 2															
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S																
						1																							
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Winter Break							January 1, 2021								
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	Martin Luther King Day							January 18, 2021								
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	Spring Break							March 15 - 19, 2021								
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	Chavez-Huerta Day							March 29, 2021											
30	31								Spring Holiday							April 2, 2021													

SIGNIFICANT DATES		STUDENT HOLIDAYS		CALENDAR KEY	
Teachers report to work:	August 3, 2020	LABOR DAY	September 7, 2020	STUDENT HOLIDAYS	
First Day of School students	August 24, 2020	FALL HOLIDAY	September 28, 2020	TEACHER PREPARATION DAY	
Last day for students	May 28, 2021	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	November 23-27, 2020	TEACHER STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY	
Last day for teachers	June 4, 2021	WINTER BREAK	Dec. 21, 2020 - Jan. 4, 2021	EARLY DISMISSAL DAY	
Last day of first semester	December 18, 2021	MARTIN LUTHER KING	January 18, 2021	* Sept. 25 and Feb. 5-Parent Conference Days	
First Day of Second Semester	January 5, 2021	SPRING BREAK	March 15-19, 2021	2 Make Up days (if needed)	
		CHAVEZ-HUERTA DAY	March 29, 2021	January 4, 2021 ; June 1, 2021	
		SPRING HOLIDAY	April 2, 2021	SUMMER SCHOOL June 7 - 30, 2021	
		Teacher Preparation Days	October 21; January 4		



HOUSTON STEM AND EARLY COLLEGE MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8
HOUSTON T-STEM AND EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL 9-12
RAUL YZAGUIRRE SCHOOLS FOR SUCCESS



2020-2021 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Semester 1 - 2020																											
August 2020							September 2020							October 2020							November 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1	1	2	3	4	5						1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					
30	31																										

December 2020							Student Holidays - Semester 1							Report Card Dates						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S														
						1	Labor Day September 7, 2020							1st nine weeks October 23, 2020						
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Fall Holiday September 28, 2020							2nd nine weeks January 8, 2021						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	Thanksgiving November 23-27, 2020							3rd nine weeks March 26, 2021						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	Winter Break Dec. 21, 2020 - Jan 1, 2021							4th nine weeks May 28, 2021						
27	28	29	30	31			<i>Students do not attend school on Staff Development or Teacher Preparation Days</i>													

Semester 2 - 2021																											
January 2021							February 2021							March 2021							April 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6							1	2	3
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28							28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	
31																											

May 2021							June 2021							Student Holidays - Semester 2						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S							
						1	1	2	3	4	5	6	Winter Break January 1, 2021							
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Marlin Luther King Day January 18, 2021						
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	Spring Break March 15 - 19, 2021						
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	Chavez-Huerta Day March 29, 2021						
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				Spring Holiday April 2, 2021						
30	31																			

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First Day of Second Semester	January 5, 2021	SPRING BREAK	March 15-19, 2021	Nov. 20; Dec. 18 - Staff Development Days	
		CHAVEZ-HUERTA DAY	March 29, 2021	★ 2 Make Up days (if needed)	
		SPRING HOLIDAY	April 2, 2021	January 4, 2021 : June 1, 2021	
		Teacher Preparation Days		SUMMER SCHOOL June 7 - 30, 2021	
		October 21; January 4			

BROWNSVILLE RAUL YZAGUIRRE STEM SCHOLARS PREPARATORY K-8

Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success

2020-2021 ACADEMIC CALENDAR



August 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

January 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

February 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

October 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

March 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

November 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

April 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

December 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

May 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Semester 1 ends 12/18/2020
Semester 2 begins 01/06/2021

DRAFT

June 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Maria Knosel, Principal
956-574-7103

SCHOOL HOURS: 8:00 am - 3:30 pm

STUDENT HOLIDAYS

Labor Day	September 7, 2020
COLUMBUS DAY	October 12, 2020
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	November 23-27, 2020
WINTER BREAK (TEACHERS)	December 21 - January 1
WINTER BREAK (STUDENTS)	December 21 - January 5
CHARRO DAYS	February 26, 2021
SPRING BREAK	March 15-19, 2021
Good Friday	April 2, 2021

Other non-student days - see below

SIGNIFICANT DATES

First Day of School students:	August 17, 2020
Last Day for Students:	May 28, 2021
Teachers report to work:	August 3, 2020
Last day for teachers:	June 3, 2021

TEACHER SD/PREP DAYS - NO STUDENTS

Staff Development Day	Aug. 3-6, 10-13; Sept. 25; Jan. 5; June 1-3
Teachers Preparation Day	Aug. 7, 14; Jan. 4; May 31

REPORT CARD DATES - 9 WEEKS CYCLE

- I Aug. 17 - Oct. 16
- II Oct. 19 - Dec. 18
- III Jan. 6 - Mar. 12
- IV Mar. 8 - May 28

CALENDAR KEY

 	FIRST/LAST DAY OF SCHOOL - STUDENTS
 	HOLIDAY
 	EARLY DISMISSAL DAY
 	TEACHER STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY
 	TEACHER PREPARATION DAY
 	SUMMER SCHOOL - June 3 - June 30, 2020
 	STAAR TESTING

6.0. REQUIRED FORMS

2020-2021 District & Campus Parent-Student Handbook

REQUIRED FORMS

The following form is must be completed by students and parents and returned to the school by the 2020-2021 first day of school. If this form is not included with this handbook, please request a copy of it from the school office.

- **Acknowledgement of Distribution of the 2020-2021 Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success Campus and District Parent-Student Handbook Form**

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6.1 Acknowledgement of the Parent-Student Handbook Form



Acknowledgment of Distribution of the 2020-2021 RYSS District and Campus Parent-Student Handbook

My child and I have been offered the option to receive a paper copy or to electronically access at the school website www.ryss.org the 2020-2021 District & Campus Parent-Student Handbook.

I have chosen to:

Accept responsibility for accessing the Parent-Student Handbook by visiting the Web address listed above.

or

Receive a paper copy of the Parent-Student Handbook.

I understand that the Student Handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year and that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined here. If I have any questions regarding this Handbook, I should direct those questions to my child's campus principal.

Printed name of student

Signature of student

Signature of parent

Date

Grade:

K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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Campus:

RYSS Brownsville	RYSS Houston
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