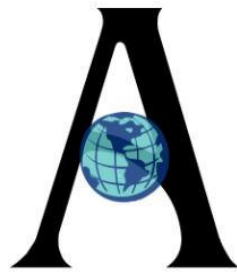


# ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL



## STUDENT HANDBOOK

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## **Eligibility For Enrollment**

To be eligible for enrollment at the Academy, a student must have completed the application process, interviewed with staff, and received a letter of acceptance.

Students who are currently enrolled in a discipline alternative education program may first have to attend a high school in a non-disciplinary setting before enrolling in the Academy.

Students within the district must apply and be accepted before the last six weeks of the school year. All others applying in the last six weeks will be accepted on an individual basis.

Any applications received after May 1<sup>st</sup> will be considered for the following school year.

## **Introduction**

The Academy staff wants this year to be an especially good one for each student, with many interesting learning experiences. For this to happen, we all have to work together: students, parents, and teachers. This Student Handbook is designed to help us do this.

The Academy High School Student Handbook contains information that you are likely to need during the school year. The handbook is divided into three sections:

- the first for parents, with information all parents will need about assisting their student and responding to school-related issues;
- the second for students, to provide information about courses to take, extracurricular and other activities, and a Quick Reference section about day-to-day questions; and
- the third, general information regarding school operations and requirements.

We have attempted to make the language as informal as possible, particularly in the first two sections; however, in parts of the handbook please be aware that the term "the student's parent" is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Both students and parents also need to be familiar with the Hays CISD Student Code of Conduct, where you will find the consequences for inappropriate behavior. The Student Code of Conduct is required by state law and is intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy and the Student Code of Conduct that is adopted by the Board. Please be aware that the handbook is updated annually, while policy adoption and revision takes place throughout the calendar year. Changes in policy that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters and other communications.

In case of conflict between Board policy or the Student Code of Conduct and any provisions of student handbooks, the provisions of Board policy or the Student Code of Conduct that were most recently adopted by the Board are to be followed.

Please note that references to alphabetical policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current policy. A copy of the District's Policy Manual is available in the central office or online at [www.hayscisid.net](http://www.hayscisid.net).

## **Nondiscrimination**

Hays CISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following District staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator for concerns regarding sex discrimination: Carolyn Hitt
- Section 504 Coordinator for concerns regarding disability discrimination: Sharon Roberts

## **SECTION I**

### **CRITICAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

This section of the Academy Student Handbook is intended to give information on procedures of particular interest to you as a parent. It includes information about working with the school in guiding your child's education, such as:

- your child's grades and progress reports;
- records pertaining to your child;
- conferences with your child's teacher;
- the District's procedure to follow if you have a concern that is not resolved by a conference; and
- school events and school-related groups that welcome your attendance or participation.

We strongly recommend that you review the entire handbook with your child and keep it as a reference during this school year. If you or your child have questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact a teacher, the counselor, or the principal. Also, please complete and return the acknowledgment form, so that we have a record of your choices listed there.

### **YOUR INVOLVEMENT AS A PARENT**

A child's education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership between home and school, a partnership that thrives on communication. Your involvement in this partnership may include:

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the District. Discuss with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child. Monitor your child's academic progress and contact teachers as needed. See Academic Counseling on page 16.
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office at 512/268-8462 for an appointment. A teacher will usually return

your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or at a mutually convenient time before or after school. See Report Cards, Progress Reports, and Conferences.

- Exercising your right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other aids, and to examine tests that have been administered to your child.

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation—funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education—that concerns:

- Political affiliations.
- Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or family.
- Sexual behavior and attitudes.
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior.
- Criticism of other individuals with whom the student or the student's family has a close family relationship.
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Income, except when the information will be used to determine the student's eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

You will be able to inspect any teaching materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation. For further information, see policy EF.

- Reviewing your child's student records when needed. You may review (1) attendance records, (2) test scores, (3) grades, (4) disciplinary records, (5) counseling records, (6) psychological records, (7) applications for admission, (8) health and immunization information, (9) other medical records, (10) teacher and counselor evaluations, (11) reports of behavioral patterns, and (12) state assessment instruments that have been administered to your child. See Student Records on page 11.
- Granting or denying any written request from the District to make a videotape or voice recording of your child. State law, however, permits the school to make a videotape or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:
  - when it is to be used for school safety;
  - when it relates to classroom instruction, co-curricular or extracurricular activity; or
  - when it relates to media coverage of the school.
- Removing your child temporarily from the classroom, if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate conflicts with your religious or moral beliefs. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. Further, your child must satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by the Texas Education Agency.

- Becoming a school volunteer. For further information, see policy GKG and contact Academy Secretary.
- Participating in campus parent organizations.
- Offering to serve as a parent representative on the District-level or campus-level planning committees assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB, and contact Academy Secretary.
- Attending Board meetings to learn more about District operations, including the procedure for addressing the Board when appropriate. See policies BE and BED for more information.
- Becoming a tutor. Parents or guardians interested in tutoring must attend a Tutor Orientation Session and sign a *Tutor For Success* contract.

## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

A student may be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter of the course or grade level. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive at least a grade of 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

For further information, see policies at EHBC, EI, and EIE.

Exit-level assessment testing for high school graduation purposes may be found at Graduation on page 18.

## **REPORT CARDS, PROGRESS REPORTS, AND CONFERENCES**

Written reports of your child's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to you at least once every 3 weeks. Those students enrolled in on-line courses may not show an accurate reflection of his/her grade(s) due to the self-paced nature of the course.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, you will be given written notice if your child's performance in any course in English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies is near or below 70, or is below the expected level of performance. If your child receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject during a grading period, it is suggested that you schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject.

### **Grading Guidelines**

The lowest possible passing grade is 70. Numbers are used in recording all grades. Attitude grades, which are given at the teachers' discretion, are as follows:

E – Excellent

S – Satisfactory

N – Needs improvement

U - Unsatisfactory



## **STUDENT FEES**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds and are at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, if uniforms are provided by the District.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books, textbooks and I.D. cards.
- Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that requires use of facilities not available on District premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit because of absences and whose parent chooses the program in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a District-provided request form.

### **Graduation Expenses**

Because you and your child will incur expenses in order to participate in the traditions of graduation, such as the purchase of invitations, senior ring, cap and gown, and senior picture, you and your child should monitor his or her progress toward completion of all requirements for graduation. These expenses will be incurred the second semester of the senior year. It is possible the company from which you bought these items will not refund your money if your child does not graduate.

### **STUDENT OR PARENT COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS**

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed simply—by a phone call or a conference with the teacher. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the District has adopted a standard complaint policy in the District's policy manual. A copy of this

policy may be obtained in the Superintendent's Office. In general, the student or parent should first discuss the complaint with the campus principal. If unresolved, a written complaint and a request for a conference should be sent to the Superintendent. If still unresolved, the District provides for the complaint to be presented to the Board of Trustees.

Some complaints require different procedures. Any campus office or the Superintendent's office can provide information regarding specific processes for the following complaints. Additional information can also be found in the designated Board policy, available in the Superintendent's offices or on the District's web site at [www.hayscisid.net](http://www.hayscisid.net).

Topics and policies include:

- Identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability: policies EHBA and FB. See Special Programs on page 19.
- Loss of credit because of nonattendance: policy FDD.
- Removal of a student by a teacher for disciplinary reasons: policy FOAA and the Student Code of Conduct.
- Removal of a student to a disciplinary alternative education program: policy FOAB and the Student Code of Conduct.
- Expulsion of a student: policy FOD and the Student Code of Conduct.
- Discrimination on the basis of sex: policy FB.
- Sexual abuse or sexual harassment of a student: policy FNCJ and the Student Code of Conduct. See Sexual Harassment / Sexual Abuse on page 24.
- Instructional materials: policy EFA.
- On-campus distribution of nonschool materials to students: policy FMA.
- Complaints against District peace officers: policy CKE.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Both federal and state law safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and "eligible" students certain rights. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older OR who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

The law specifies that certain general information about Hays CISD students is considered "directory information" and will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it. That information includes:

- A student's name, address, telephone number, and date and place of birth.
- The student's photograph, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of members of athletic teams.
- The student's dates of attendance, grade level, enrollment status, honors and awards received in school, and most recent school attended previously.
- The student's e-mail address.

Release of any or all directory information regarding a student may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days after you have been provided this notice. See the acknowledgment form.

Virtually all information pertaining to student performance, including grades, test results, and disciplinary records, is considered confidential educational records and may be released to:

- The parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—who will generally have access to the records. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights. Federal law requires that, as soon as the student becomes eligible, control of the records goes to the student. However, the parents may access the records if the student is a dependent for tax purposes.
- District staff members who have what federal law defines as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records. Such persons would include school officials (such as Board members, the Superintendent, and principals), school staff members (such as teachers, counselors, and diagnosticians), or an agent of the District (such as a medical consultant).
- Various governmental agencies or in response to a subpoena or court order.
- A school to which a student transfers or in which he or she subsequently enrolls.

Release to any other person or agency—such as a prospective employer or for a scholarship application—will occur only with parental or student permission as appropriate.

The Principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The Principal is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated.

Records may be reviewed during regular school hours. If circumstances effectively prevent a parent or eligible student from inspecting the records, the District shall either provide a copy of the requested records, or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review the requested records. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

The address of the principal's office is:

Academy High School  
4820 Jack C. Hays Trail  
Buda, TX 78610

A parent (or the student if he or she is 18 or older or is attending an institution of postsecondary education) may review and inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. If the District refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requestor has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course is handled through the general complaint process defined by policy FNG. See **Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns** on page 10 for an overview of the process.

**Please note:**

Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the District is not in compliance with the law regarding student records. The District's complete policy regarding student records is available from the principal's or Superintendent's office.

The parent's or eligible student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records—such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher and records on former students after they are no longer students in the District—do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

**TESTING**

To receive a high school diploma, students must successfully pass exit-level tests. See **Graduation** on page 18 for information regarding new exit-level tests required by state law.

Most colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. Students are encouraged to talk with the counselor during their sophomore and junior year to determine the appropriate exam to take; entrance exams are usually taken at the end of the junior year. If the student is planning to graduate in 36 months, these tests should be taken earlier. Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, students must take the Texas Academic Skill Program (TASP) test. ACT, SAT and TASP registration forms may be found in the Counseling Office. Students are responsible for their registration and registration fees. The Office administers a variety of tests including PSAT/NMSQT, TAAS, and End of Course Exams. State law mandates that all students must pass a secondary exit level assessment test (TAKS) in order to graduate.

Test results will be reported to students and parents; parents may review any assessment test that has been given to their child.

Certain students—some with disabilities and some with limited English proficiency—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, counselor, or special education director.

**VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

A student may be voluntarily withdrawn from school only by a parent. The school requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. A withdrawal form may be obtained by the parent from the principal's office. On the student's last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to each teacher for current grade averages and to the Academy Secretary for textbook clearance; to the clinic for health records; to the counselor for the last report card and course clearance; and finally, to the principal. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student and a copy placed in the student's permanent record.

A student who is 18 or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor, may withdraw without parental signature.

**INVOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

Academy High School is a school of choice. As a result, students may be withdrawn involuntarily and not allowed to return. Potential reasons for involuntary withdrawal include:

- Singular disciplinary actions that send the student to the DAEP.
- Repetitious disciplinary actions that interfere with the learning of others (i.e., repetitive classroom disruptions).
- Lack of accumulated credits. The minimum is 1.5 credits per semester or 3 credits per year. A student may be placed on academic probation if the principal deems necessary.
- Excessive absences, to be determined by administrative review.

## **SECTION II**

### **CURRICULUM-RELATED INFORMATION**

This section of the handbook contains pertinent requirements for academics and activities. Much of this information will also be of interest to your parents and should be reviewed with them—especially if you are entering 9th grade or are a transfer student. The section includes information on graduation programs and requirements; options for earning course credit; extracurricular activities and other school-related organizations; and awards, honors, and scholarships.

### **QUICK REFERENCE**

#### **What to do or where to go when you need help with . . .**

	<u>Page</u>
• Advice regarding graduation programs/courses	14
• Schedule changes	15
• Admission after absence or being tardy	19
• Permission to leave campus	20
• Illness, accident, or medication	23
• Scholarship and college entrance information	13
• Driver license/attendance verification forms	19

### **SCHOLARSHIPS AND HONORS**

Academy students are eligible for a wide array of scholarships and honors. Many students are eligible for the 36 Month Scholarship. Students who graduate in 36 months on the Recommended Plan may earn up to \$3000 to be applied to any state college or university in Texas for which the student is eligible.

### **CLASS RANK / TOP TEN PERCENT**

While the Academy does not rank our students, we do award an Honors Scholarship to the graduating senior with the highest GPA as determined at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> six weeks. The Honors Graduate will receive an Honors Scholarship, which pays for full tuition for one year at any Texas university. The top 10% of seniors at the end of the first semester are eligible to participate in the Education Foundation Reception as long as they have passed all Exit Level TAKS by the date of

the banquet. Only students who have been enrolled for 85 days at the Academy and who enrolled before the first day of the school year are eligible for the Honors Graduate and Foundation Awards.

### **Other Scholarships and Grants**

Students who have financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the Recommended High School Graduation Program may be eligible under the Texas Grant Program for tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions. For information, see the principal or counselor and see policies at EIC and FJ.

### **Schedule and Course Selections**

Course selections are handled by the Counseling Office. Any problem a student may have with his/her schedule can be discussed with the counselor. Schedule Changes are done through the Counseling Office. Schedule Change Requests can only be made during the First 3 weeks of each semester.

Reasons for Schedule Change:

The reasons to change your schedule are:

1. When a student is incorrectly placed or incorrectly scheduled into a course.
2. When a class is too large and must be balanced.
3. When a class is too small and must be deleted.

### **Dropped Classes**

Students who drop a class after four complete weeks into the semester will lose credit for the course they add unless an exception is granted by the principal. This course will count as an attempt and an "I" (Incomplete) for the semester because time requirements cannot be met.

## **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

To prepare you for an increasingly computerized society, the District has made a substantial investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. You and your parents will be asked to sign an Acceptable Use Agreement located in the District Student Code of Conduct regarding use of these resources; violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

You and your parents should be aware that electronic communications—e-mail—using District computers are not private and may be monitored by District staff.

For additional information, see policy CQ.

## **CORRESPONDENCE COURSES**

The District permits high school students to take correspondence courses—courses by mail—for credit toward high school graduation.

For further information, see policy EEJC.

## **COUNSELING**

### **Counseling Referrals**

In most cases, the Counseling Office does not meet with students without a referral from a teacher. This ensures that the student's attendance record is correct. Teachers will be provided with referral slips.

Referral slips should be filled out by the teacher and delivered to the Counseling Office by the teacher. Students will then be called out of class by the Counseling Office. Of course, if there is an emergency, the teacher may walk the student to the office immediately.

### **Academic Counseling**

You and your parents are encouraged to talk to the school academic counselor to learn about course offerings, the graduation requirements of various programs, and early graduation procedures. Students may schedule a conference with the counselor by asking a teacher for a counseling referral.

Parents may schedule a conference with the counselor through the school secretary. Twice a year the counselor will hold conferences with the students to discuss their graduation plans. Parents will be notified of this meeting and will be encouraged to attend; however, attendance is not required.

### **Other Counseling Services**

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns. The counselor may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns and may refer the student to counseling with a Hays Caldwell Youth Council counselor that serves our campus once a week. Parent permission to meet with this outside source is required for students under 18 years of age.

To plan for your future, including attendance at a college, university, or training school or pursuing some other type of advanced education, you should work closely with the counselor so that you take the high school courses that best prepare you. The counselor can also provide information about entrance examinations and deadlines for application, as well as information about automatic admission to state colleges and universities, financial aid, housing, and scholarships.

**Please note:** The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining your parent's written consent, unless required by state or federal law for special education purposes. For more information, refer to policy FFE.

### **Peer Groups**

Peer groups are arranged through the Counseling Office and are "By Invitation Only". Peer groups are held one class period a week. Students who are invited should be allowed to attend group whenever possible. Parent permission is required for students under 18 years old.

### **CREDIT BY EXAMINATION—If You Have Taken the Course**

A student who has received prior instruction in a course or subject—but did not receive credit for it—may, in circumstances determined by the academic counselor and approved by the principal, be

permitted by the District to earn credit by passing an examination on the essential knowledge and skills defined for the course or subject. To receive credit, a student must score at least 70 on the examination.

The attendance review committee may offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to receive credit for a course by passing an examination. A student may not use this examination, however, to regain eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities. For further information, see policy EEJA.

### **ACCELERATION BY EXAMINATION—If You Have Not Taken the Course**

A student can be permitted to take an examination to earn credit for an academic course for which the student has no prior instruction.

The passing score required to earn credit on an examination for acceleration is 90.

The District will honor a request by a parent to administer a test purchased by the parent from a State Board-approved university. For further information, see EEJB.

### **DUAL CREDIT COURSES / COLLEGE COURSEWORK**

Dual Credit courses are courses that students take at a college which earn both college credit and satisfy high school graduation requirements. Dual Credit courses are offered through Austin Community College. Before enrolling in dual-credit courses, students must receive permission from a high school counselor and the Principal. Additionally, students need to be aware of the following conditions:

1. Students must attend Academy High School for at least 4 hours daily.
2. Students must take a course that has received prior approval by the Academy.
3. Although both high school and college credit may be earned, the course will receive no grade points toward the grade point average.
4. If students take a college course to receive dual credit and if that course is required for graduation, they must pass the course with at least a C to graduate. AHS does not recognize a grade of D. After the first three weeks of the semester, students will be unable to drop the college course and switch to the appropriate high school course.
5. AHS strongly recommends that seniors do not register for a course that they need to graduate. The Academy has no control over grades issued by the college.
6. It is the student's responsibility to gather all information about the college course, i.e. application information, registration approval, and the ability to transfer the credits from one college to another.

### **GRADE CLASSIFICATION**

Students are classified according to the number of credits they have earned and their years in high school.

Required classification credits are listed below:

#### Class of 2008, 2009, 2010

Freshman	Promotion from 8 <sup>th</sup> grade
Sophomore	5 to 10.5 credits



Junior 11 to 16.5 credits  
 Senior 17plus credits

Students entering grade 9 in 2007-2008 and thereafter

Freshman Promotion from 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
 Sophomore 6 to 11.5 credits  
 Junior 12 to 17.5 credits  
 Senior 18 plus credits

\*Class of 2011 and beyond are expected to graduate on the recommended or distinguished achievement graduation plans. Both of these plans require 26 credits. If you go into your senior year with 18 credits, you will need to take 8 classes in order to graduate. This means you will need to take 7 classes during the school day and one class outside of the school day.

**GRADUATION**

**Requirements for a Diploma**

To receive a high school diploma from the District, you must successfully complete the required number of credits and pass a statewide exit-level examination.

**Graduation Programs**

All students should plan to graduate on the Recommended or Distinguished Plan. Students should take rigorous coursework in order to be prepared for their next endeavor.

Guidance counselors will develop a four year plan with each student upon entrance into high school. This plan will be updated annually. A Four Year Planning worksheet is found in this document. Students and their parents are encouraged to utilize this tool in conjunction with graduation requirements. All Hays CISD high school students are encouraged to visit with their counselor if they have any further questions.

<b>Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program</b>	<b>Recommended Program</b>	<b>Minimum Program</b>
Hays CISD requires no additional credits for graduation under the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program beyond those mandated by the state	Hays CISD requires no additional credits for graduation under the Recommended Program beyond those mandated by the state.	Hays CISD requires completion of two credits in addition to those required by the state for graduation under the Minimum Program.

**Final Exam Exemptions**

In order to exempt a final exam, students must have no more than 3 absences in their class and must have at least an 80 average. Students must pick up Exemption slips from AHS secretary, obtain a signature from the teacher whose exam they chose to exempt, and return the slip to their Advisory teacher. Freshmen are exempt from one final, sophomores are exempt from two, juniors are exempt from 3, and senior may exempt four finals. Graduating seniors may exempt their finals from Renaissance courses upon approval from the teacher.

## **Tutoring**

All teachers will be available to offer tutoring to students on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:15 am – 8:45 am. Students who ride a bus may need to make special arrangements to arrive on campus to take advantage of this opportunity.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Upon the recommendation of the admission, review, and dismissal committee, a student with disabilities may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her individual education plan (IEP).

## **Graduation Activities**

Graduation activities to date include, but are not limited to, Senior Dinner and Graduation Ceremony.

## **Transcripts**

Transcripts may be requested through the registrar. A request form must be submitted, and a parent signature is necessary for students under 18 years of age. Transcripts may be picked up 3 school days after the request is made. You may request that a transcript be mailed if the mailing address is provided on the form.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

The District provides special programs for gifted and talented students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, 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 or by other organizations.

## **Advisory**

Advisory will be held first period every day. Students are assigned to an advisory group that will stay together through graduation. The purpose of advisory is to provide a comfortable atmosphere where students and an adult on staff can form a caring relationship.

Advisory curriculum could include the following topics: goal setting, study skills, college and career planning, safe dating, relationship skills, self esteem building, and community awareness. Guest speakers will be provided throughout the year to enhance the curriculum and provide information from professionals in their fields of expertise.

## **SECTION III**

### **OTHER GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS**

Topics in this section, while they may not be needed as frequently by students and parents, contain important information regarding school operations and requirements. Included are provisions such as health and safety issues; various aspects of attendance; the school's expectations for student conduct; textbooks; and cafeteria, library, and transportation services. For additional information or questions you may have, please see the principal.

#### **ATTENDANCE**

All Academy students must adhere to the state and local attendance policies. A student may lose credit if excessive absences result in attendance for less than 90% of the semester. A student with more than 8 absences in classes meeting on a daily basis will receive a "No Grade" from their teacher at the end of each semester. A student missing 5 or more "blocked" classes will also receive a "No Grade." Excessive absences will result in the student being removed from AHS at the end of the semester.

The state compulsory attendance law requires that:

A student between the ages of 6 and 18 must attend school and District-required tutorial sessions unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused. A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her eighteenth birthday is required to attend each school day. However, if a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the District may revoke the student's enrollment. The student's presence on school property is then unauthorized and may be considered trespassing.

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent from school without permission from any class, from required special programs, such as basic skills for ninth graders, or from required tutorials will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action. Truancy may also result in assessment of a penalty by a court of law against the student and his or her parents.

If a student is absent, he/she must submit a letter of explanation from the parent excusing the absence, unless the student is 18 years old. The absence will remain unexcused until the note is submitted.

A student absent for any reason should promptly make up specific assignments missed and/or complete additional in-depth study assigned by the teacher. A student will be allowed two days per each day absent up to ten days to make up missing assignment(s). After that time the student will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

Because class time is important, doctor's appointments should be scheduled, if possible, at times when the student will not miss instructional time.

#### **Tardies**

Students must be in class on time to avoid missing significant instruction or an important activity. If you miss a portion of class, you will have to make up that activity before school, after school, or at lunch. If you are late to the Renaissance Room, the computer lab, you are hurting your chances

of meeting your goals and completing class work. (Consequences will be imposed for tardies: first, tardy warning; second, lunch detention; third, office referral.) Students who are consistently tardy are in jeopardy of violating their contract and may be removed from the Academy at semester's end. Classes begin at 8:55 am and end at 4:05 pm. Computer clocks will be used for official class time. Teachers will be responsible for a Tardy Sign-in Sheet stationed at entry to classroom.

Tardies per week:

1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> : Warning from Staff

3<sup>rd</sup> : Lunch Detention

4<sup>th</sup> and more: Loose Final Exemption in that class; loose Incentive Field Trip Privilege; individual Teacher/Student contract will be written.

### **Driver License Attendance Verification**

To obtain a driver license, a student between the ages of 16 and 18 must annually provide to the Texas Department of Public Safety a form obtained from the school verifying that the student has met the 90 percent attendance requirement for the semester preceding the date of application. The student can obtain this form from the Attendance Secretary in the office. Requests must be made 48 hours in advance.

### **Leaving Campus**

The Academy is a closed campus. Students may **NOT** leave for lunch. Students will be able to access the Student Center and Gym during breakfast and lunch. AHS students are not allowed on Hays High School campus. Any student violating this rule will be subject to receiving a ticket for trespassing.

### **Release of Students from School**

A student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day except with permission from the principal or designee and according to the campus sign-out procedures. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

A student who will need to leave school during the day must bring a note from his or her parent that morning. A student who becomes ill during the school day should, with the teacher's permission, report to the school nurse. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent.

### **MEDICATIONS**

All prescription medications must be held in their original container and must be checked by Academy staff and the School Nurse. Students must bring all prescription medications to the Academy office. In the event of student illness, the Nurse will be contacted.

### **CONDUCT**

You are required to adhere to the campus expectations and to honor your commitment to the Academy contract.

### *Academy Student Expectations*

Be respectful of other and to yourself.

Be on time to class/attend class regularly.

Be prepared for class.

Be compliant, no food, juice or sodas in class – only bottled water.

Be dressed appropriately.

In the event that an Academy High School student is habitually noncompliant they will be involuntarily withdrawn from Academy High School.

The district discipline policy details infractions that require removal to the IMPACT center including the possession and/or consumption of drugs, alcohol, or any weapon on campus. Any student who engages in this conduct **will** be suspended pending a removal conference and will be removed to the IMPACT center. In addition, any student who engages in any physically violent or abusive behavior will be suspended pending a removal conference and will be placed at the IMPACT center. IMPACT placements may cause the student to be involuntarily withdrawn from Academy High School.

Students must also adhere to the Hays and Lehman High School Discipline Policy/Code of Student Conduct while attending classes or activities on the Hays and Lehman High School campus.

### **Parking**

Students may park in the Academy High School parking spaces in the gravel parking area south of campus. Students may not park at Hays High School. Parking permits are required and can be obtained in the Academy High School office. The fee is \$30/semester or \$50/year.

### **The Student Center**

The Student Center is a unique privilege granted to Academy students. It is your responsibility to keep the center clean and orderly. Any artwork, painting, or decorations must be approved by the campus administrator. Breakfast and lunch will be served in the Student Center.

### **Disruptions**

In order to protect student safety and sustain an educational program free from disruption, state law permits the District to take action against any person—student or nonstudent—who:

- Interferes with the movement of people in an exit, an entrance, or a hallway of a District building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interferes with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Uses force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interferes with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to District property.
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving District property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disrupts classes while on District property or on public property that is within 500 feet of District property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; entering a classroom without authorization, and disrupting the activity with profane language or any

misconduct. Chronic class disruptions may cause the student to be involuntarily withdrawn from The Academy.

- Interferes with the transportation of students in District vehicles.

### **Public Display of Affection:**

Public display of affection shall be limited to hand holding only. Disciplinary action will be assigned for violation of this rule.

### **Cell Phones, MP3 Players, IPODs and Other Electronic Devices and Games**

Music players are allowed for students to use when working independently in the Renaissance Lab only. Students using electronic devices during unauthorized times will be required to relinquish device to staff. The principal will determine whether to return the item at the end of the day for the student to take home or whether the parent will be contacted to pick up the item. Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The school is NOT responsible for lost, stolen or confiscated electronic devices. A \$15 cash return fee will be charged for returning an electronic device.

Music players will be allowed during breakfast and lunch, not during passing periods.

Cell phones will only be allowed on campus before or after school hours. Cell phones cannot be used for any of its features during school hours. If a student displays a cell phone during school hours it will be taken up by staff and turned into the Principal. A \$15 cash return fee will be charged for returning the cell phone. Parents needing to contact students will need to call the Academy High School office to leave a message.

### **ZERO TOLERANCE**

Academy High School operates under a ZERO TOLERANCE atmosphere regarding fighting, hazing, harassment, sexual harassment or abuse of students/staff, or violence of ANY type on this campus. Measures used to prevent such occurrences are ISS, suspension, Impact Center, expulsion and filing assault charges through local law enforcement. Academy High School will always request the maximum punishment allowed by law.

It is because of these added ramifications of zero tolerance on the AHS campus that we strongly encourage possible victims or possible participants to report any kind of confrontation to the administrative or teaching staff.

### **Fighting**

Academy High School operates under a ZERO Tolerance atmosphere regarding fighting or violence of any type. Students INVOLVED in a fight or an assault will be removed to the Impact Center. Law enforcement officers will be notified and charges will be filed when possible.

### **Harassment**

Hazing, harassing or abusing other students/staff is unacceptable and guilty students will be disciplined accordingly. Harassment means 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 restraint, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety. This

includes cyber harassment. Discipline will include but is not limited to: ISS, suspension, placement in Impact, and/or possible expulsion. Law enforcement will be contacted to conduct an investigation and file charges when appropriate.

### **Sexual Harassment / Sexual Abuse**

Students must not engage in unwanted and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed toward another student or a District employee. This prohibition applies whether the conduct is by word, gesture, or any other sexual conduct, including requests for sexual favors. All students are expected to treat other students and District employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop.

The District will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by student(s) when the allegations are not minor, and will notify parents of any incident of sexual harassment or sexual abuse by an employee. To the greatest extent possible, complaints will be treated as confidential. Limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

A complaint alleging sexual harassment by another student or sexual harassment or sexual abuse by a staff member may be presented by a student and/or parent in a conference with the principal or designee or with the Title IX coordinator.

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

## **DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS**

### **School Materials**

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with prior approval by the principal and sponsor/teacher. Such items may include school posters, brochures, murals, etc.

All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal.

### **Nonschool Materials**

Unless a student (or a nonstudent) obtains specific prior approval from the principal, written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials may not be posted, sold, circulated, or distributed on any school campus. If the material is not approved within two school days of the time it was submitted to the principal, it should be considered disapproved.

Disapprovals may be appealed by submitting the disapproved material to the Superintendent; material not approved by the Superintendent within three days are considered disapproved. This disapproval may be appealed to the Board in accordance with policy FMA (LOCAL). Any student who posts material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without this approval will be removed.

## **DRESS CODE**

While the dress code at Academy High School is more flexible than other campuses, we still require appropriate attire for the learning environment. In addition, if you are attending activities at Hays or Lehman High School, you must adhere to their dress code policy. This rule will be strictly

enforced. Any Academy High School student who continues to violate the dress code policy at Hays is in jeopardy of being removed from Academy High School.

These are the guidelines:

1. All attire and accessories must be appropriate and must not distract from the educational process.
2. No midriffs, no halter tops, no tube tops and no clothing with spaghetti straps.
3. No offensive or obscene writing or graphics. No depiction of drugs, guns or alcohol on clothing or jewelry.
4. No pants that are sagging excessively.
5. No visible underwear.
6. Any clothes that are suggestive or indecent or which cause distraction are not acceptable.

## **PRAYER**

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

## **SAFETY**

### **Accident Prevention**

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

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal safety hazards, such as intruders on campus and threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other District employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

### **Accident Insurance**

Soon after school opens, parents will have the opportunity to purchase low-cost accident insurance that will help in meeting medical expenses, in the event of injury to their child. Under state law, the District cannot pay for medical expenses associated with a student's injury.



## **Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies**

From time to time, students, teachers, and other District employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

## **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school will need to have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment and information about allergies to medications, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the school nurse to update any information.

## **SCHOOL FACILITIES**

### **Use By Students Before and After School**

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place.

The Student Center and Gym are open to students before school.

Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing the activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately.

### **Conduct Before and After School**

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on District premises and at school-sponsored events off District premises, such as play rehearsal, club meetings, athletic practice, and special study groups or tutorials. Students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter code of conduct established by the sponsor in accordance with Board policy.

Loitering or standing in the halls between classes is not permitted. During class time, a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action.

### **Cafeteria Services**

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Free and reduced-price lunches are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. See Academy High School Secretary to apply.

## **Library**

The library is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure.

## **Vandalism**

The taxpayers of the community have made a sustained financial commitment for the construction and upkeep of school facilities. To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended—both this year and in the coming years—littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **SEARCHES**

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

## **Students' Desks**

Students' desks are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student.

Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of the assigned desks.

Searches of desks may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by District policy, whether or not a student is present.

The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

## **Vehicles on Campus**

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable cause to do so, with or without the presence of the student. A student has full responsibility for the security of his or her vehicle and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. See also the Student Code of Conduct.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

All textbooks purchased in accordance with Education Code Chapter 31 are the property of the State of Texas. *Education Code 31.102(a)* (See EFAA for provisions addressing Textbook Selection and Adoption)

Each student or his or her parent or guardian shall be responsible for all books not returned by the student, and any student failing to return all books shall forfeit the right to free textbooks until the books previously issued by not returned are paid for by the student, parent or guardian.

Under circumstances determined by the Board, the District may waive or reduce the payment required if the student is from a low-income family. The District shall allow students to use textbooks at school during each school day.

If a book is not returned and payment is not made, the District may withhold the student's records, but shall not prevent the student from graduating, participating in a graduation ceremony, or receiving a diploma. However, in accordance with policies FL (Legal) and GBA (Legal), students have a right to copies of any and all District records that pertain to them.

## **VISITS TO THE SCHOOL**

Parents and others are welcome to visit District schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the principal's office. Please be prepared to submit a driver's license or state photo I.D. to receive a Visitor's Badge.

Visits by parents to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and so long as the duration or frequency of visits does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

Since visitors may serve as role models to students, all visitors must adhere to the highest standards of courtesy and conduct.