



The University of Texas at Tyler
**UNIVERSITY
ACADEMY**

Student Handbook 2026-2027

Notification of Title IX Policy

The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student or employee on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, or any other basis prohibited by law.

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, UT Tyler University Academy does not and is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs or activities. The requirement not to discriminate on the basis of sex extends to the admission of students in education programs or activities and to applicants for employment.

For information on rights or grievance procedures, contact the Title IX Coordinator:

UT Tyler Title IX Coordinator: Blake Bumbard bbumbard@uttyler.edu 903-565-5760

Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of Student Handbook

During online registration each year, all guardians are provided a link to this Handbook and provide their signature acknowledging that they agree to the statement, “I/We will read the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct located on the UTTUA website, and I/We understand the terms stated on this application and agree hereto.”

Providing your signature means that you understand that the handbook contains information that your child and you 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 in the Student Code of Conduct. If you have any questions regarding this handbook or the Code of Conduct, you should direct those questions to the Superintendent at 903-730-3988.

If you would like to receive a paper copy or electronic copy of the hand, please inquire at your campus front office.

Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information

State law requires the district to give you the following information. Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows the procedures for requesting the information unless the parent or guardian objects to the release of the directory information about the student. If you do not want UT Tyler University Academy to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing within ten school days of your child's first day of instruction for this school year.

This means that the district must give certain personal information (called "directory information") about your child to any person who requests it, unless you have told the district in writing not to do so. In addition, you have the right to tell the district that it may, or may not, use certain personal information about your child for specific school-sponsored purposes. The district is providing you this form so you can communicate your wishes about these issues.

The UT Tyler University Academy has designated the following information as directory information [See **Directory Information** on page 5 for more information.]:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| • Student's name | • Degrees, honors, and awards received | • Weight and height, if a member of an athletic team |
| • Address | • Dates of attendance | • Enrollment status |
| • Telephone listing | • Grade level | • Student identification numbers or identifiers that cannot be used alone to gain access to electronic education record |
| • E-mail address | • Most recent school previously attended | |
| • Photograph | • Participation in officially recognized activities and sports | |
| • Date and place of birth | | |
| • Major field of study | | |

Directory information identified only for limited school-sponsored purposes remains otherwise confidential and will not be released to the public without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

Parent: Please circle one of the choices below:

I, parent of _____ (student's name), (**do give**) (**do not give**) the district permission to use the information in the above list for the specified school-sponsored purposes.

Parent signature _____ Date _____

Please note that if this form is not returned within the specified timeframe above, the district will assume that permission has been granted for the release of this information.

Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education

Federal law requires that the district release to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, upon request, the name, address, and phone number of secondary school students enrolled in the district, unless the parent or eligible student directs the district not to release information to these types of requesters without prior written consent. [See **Objecting to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education** on page 6 for more information.]

Parent: Please complete the following only if you **do not** want your child's information released to a military recruiter or an institution of higher education without your prior consent.

I, parent of _____ (student's name), request that the district **not** release my child's name, address, and telephone number to a military recruiter or institution of higher education without my prior written consent.

Parent signature _____ Date _____

Please note that if this form is not returned with the other materials identifying what the district considers directory information, the district will assume that permission has been granted for the release of this information.

Consent/Opt-Out Form

Dear Parent:

The district is required by federal law to notify you and obtain your consent for or denial of (opt-out) your child's participation in certain school activities. The activities include any student survey, analysis, or evaluation, known as a "protected information survey" that concerns one or more of the following eight areas:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parents;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sexual behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom the student has a close family relationship;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

This notice and consent/opt-out requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure, or use of student information for marketing purposes ("marketing surveys"), and to certain physical exams and screenings.

You will be able to inspect the survey or other instruments and any instructional material used in connection with such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

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PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together can make this a successful year for our students.

The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy Student Handbook is designed to provide basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. The handbook is divided into two sections:

Section I—PARENTAL RIGHTS—with information to assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook.

Section II—OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS—organized alphabetically by topic, and, where possible, further divided by applicability to ages and/or grade levels, for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

Please be aware that the term “parent,” unless otherwise noted, is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, any person granted some other type of lawful control of the student, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Both students and parents should become familiar with the University of Texas at Tyler University Academy Student Code of Conduct, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found on the district’s website at www.uttua.org and is available in hard copy upon request.

The Student Handbook is a general reference guide only and is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the Student Code of Conduct. Please be aware that it is not a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules that may be applicable in each circumstance.

In case of conflict between board policy (including the Student Code of Conduct) and any provisions of the Student Handbook, the current provisions of board policy and the Student Code of Conduct are to be followed.

Also, please be aware that the Student Handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed board policy changes by attending board meetings or watching the recorded versions found at www.uttua.org. Changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters or other communications. The district reserves the right to modify provisions of the Student Handbook at any time, whenever it is deemed necessary. Notice of any revision or modification will be given as is reasonably practical under the circumstances.

Although the Student Handbook may refer to rights established through law or district policy, the Student Handbook does not create any additional rights for students and parents. It does not, nor is it intended to, create contractual or legal rights between any student or parent and the district.

If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact the Superintendent at 903-730-3988.

Also, if you choose, please complete and return to your child's campus the following forms included in this handbook distributed at the beginning of the year or upon the student's enrollment:

1. Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information form;
2. Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education form, if you choose to restrict the release of information to these entities; and
3. Consent/Opt-Out Form.

The district's board policies are available for review in the Superintendent's office and an unofficial electronic copy is available at www.uttua.org.

SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS

This section of the University of Texas at Tyler University Academy Student Handbook includes information related to certain rights of parents as specified in state or federal law.

Compliance with Court Orders

At the time of enrollment, a copy of the most current signed divorce decree or other legal court order establishing each parent's rights shall be provided to the campus director. Any modifications to those orders shall be provided immediately upon issuance by the Court. Campus personnel will try to interpret and comply with the terms of the orders affecting the parent-child relationship. The district is bound by the laws of the State of Texas to honor these decrees regardless of a parent's wishes. Please do not ask school personnel to act inconsistently with a court order. It is the parent's responsibility to seek modification of existing court orders when terms and conditions warrant. While providing the district with information concerning a petition is commendable, a petition is not a legal court order and, therefore, not a controlling document. Without a signed court order, the district may not modify the rights of one or either parent based on another's wishes.

Procedures for Handling Custody Court Orders

1. Action Plan
 - a. We will meet with parents to create an action plan if an issue or concern arises. Educators educate and do not get involved in litigation and disputes adjudicated in the courthouse.
2. Communication to Staff:
 - a. School staff interacting with the student should be informed of the custody order and its specifics. This includes teachers, counselors, transportation, and administrative personnel.
 - b. Staff should be briefed on the action plan and understand their role in following any court order.
3. Initial Review by District Administrator:
 - a. In cases where the situation is more complicated, or there is a dispute between parents, the director should contact the Executive Director of Operations to request an initial review of the custody order implementation within the school.
 - b. The Executive Director of Operations will conduct a review and, if necessary, coordinate with the Superintendent or legal counsel to address any complexities or disputes.
4. Confidentiality:
 - a. All information related to custody court orders must be treated with the utmost confidentiality, following all applicable laws and regulations.

Additional Guidelines

1. Parental Rights:
 - a. As a general presumption, all parents (whether biological or adopted) and legal guardians have the rights enumerated in the Texas Family Code §153.071. The school district will recognize and honor these rights as they exist for both parents unless directed otherwise by a court order or lawful directive.
2. Enrollment:

- a. To be authorized to enroll a child, the person must be a biological or adoptive parent or the child's legal guardian. Legal guardianship must be reflected in an Order of a county or probate court.
3. Participation in School Activities:
 - a. While all parents (unless restricted by court order) have the right to participate in school activities, such participation must be consistent with school policy and procedure. The school campus will not be used as a visitation site.
4. Teacher Consultation:
 - a. Each parent (unless restricted by court order) has the right to consult with their child's teacher regarding educational issues. Teachers will respond to inquiries from both parents unless restricted by court order.
5. Access to Records:
 - a. Each parent (unless restricted by court order) has the right to access their child's educational records. The district will provide equal access to both parents unless restricted by court order.

CONSENT, OPT-OUT, AND REFUSAL RIGHTS

Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation

A district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without obtaining prior written parental consent unless the examination, test, or treatment is required under state or federal law regarding requirements for special education or by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for child abuse investigators and reports.

Consent to Display a Student's Original Works and Personal Information

Teachers may display students' work, which may include personally identifiable student information, in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement.

Unless an opt-out form is on file teachers may display students' artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, original videos or voice recordings, and other original works on the district's website, a website affiliated or sponsored by the district, such as a campus or classroom website, and in district publications, which may include printed materials, videos, or other methods of mass communication.

Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student When Not Otherwise Permitted by Law

State law permits the school to make a video 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 or a cocurricular or extracurricular activity; or
- When it relates to media coverage of the school.

The district will seek parental consent through a written request before making any video or voice recording of your child not otherwise allowed by law.

Consent to the provision of additional Google services

Consent to the provision of additional Google services including but not limited to: YouTube, Chrome Web Store, and Google Maps:

The University Academy utilizes various tools and services provided by Google including additional services that require parental consent for users under 18. These services have been reviewed and approved for use for all University Academy staff and students. Some of these services are an essential part of how the University Academy teachers deliver online and digital content to students.

The district agrees to comply with all applicable laws and regulations including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment—spanking or paddling the student—may be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with state law, although the University of Texas at Tyler University Academy will not use this form of discipline on any student.

Limiting Electronic Communications with Students by District Employees

Teachers and other approved employees are permitted by the district to communicate with students through the use of electronic media within the scope of the individual’s professional responsibilities, using the district provided platforms (Schoology or ParentSquare).

Communications with students/parents should take place via an approved UTTUA account (uttyler.edu or uttua.org email, Skyward, ParentSquare, etc.). If absolutely necessary to text a parent/student, all communications should be educational in nature and directly related to instruction. If you prefer that your child not receive any one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee or if you have questions related to the use of electronic media by district employees, please contact the Campus Director.

Directory Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act or FERPA, permits the district to disclose appropriately designated “directory information” from a child’s education records without written consent. “Directory information” is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. This “directory information” will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of a student’s directory information. This objection must be made in writing to the campus Director within ten school days of your child’s first day of instruction for this school year. [See the “Notice Regarding

Directory Information and Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information” included in this handbook.]

The district has identified the following as directory information:

- Student’s name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- E-mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Most recent school previously attended
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height, if a member of an athletic team
- Enrollment status
- Student identification numbers or identifiers that cannot be used alone to gain access to electronic education records

If you object to the release of the student information included on the directory information response form, your decision will also apply to the use of that information for school-sponsored purposes, such as the honor roll, school newspaper, the yearbook, recognition activities, news releases, and athletic programs.

Objecting to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

The district is required by federal law to comply with a request by a military recruiter or an institution of higher education for students’ names, addresses, and telephone listings, unless parents have advised the district not to release their child’s information without prior written consent. A form included in this handbook is available if you do not want the district to provide this information to military recruiters or institutions of higher education.

Participation in Third-Party Surveys

Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey,

Analysis, or Evaluation

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 or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent.
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family.
- Sexual behavior or attitudes.
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship.
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents.
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student’s eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

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

“Opting Out” of Participation in Other Types of Surveys or Screenings and the Disclosure of Personal Information

As a parent, you have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for your child’s participation in:

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing, selling, or otherwise disclosing that information. Note that this does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law.

As a parent, you may inspect a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to your child.

REMOVING A STUDENT FROM INSTRUCTION OR EXCUSING A STUDENT FROM A REQUIRED COMPONENT OF INSTRUCTION

Human Sexuality Instruction

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality.

State law requires that any instruction related to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome must:

- Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;
- Devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;
- Emphasize that abstinence is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- Direct adolescents to a standard of behavior in which abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; and
- If included in the content of the curriculum, teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates.

In accordance with state law, you will be provided with a summary of the curriculum before it is presented. The University Academy utilizes a curriculum called Excellent Teen Choice which progresses through age-appropriate lessons from grades 6 – 12. Empowering Children, an antivictimization program, is provided by UT Tyler Title IX personnel for students in grades 2 – 5.

As a parent, you are entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, you may remove your child from any part of the human sexuality instruction with no academic, disciplinary, or other penalties.

Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence in Grades 3-12

You may request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3–12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child be excused, (2) the district determines that your child has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity.

Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participating in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows.

Religious or Moral Beliefs

You may remove your child temporarily from the classroom if there is an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate in 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 state law.

Tutoring or Test Preparation

Based on informal observations, evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests, or results from diagnostic assessments, a teacher may determine that a student needs additional targeted assistance in order for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills.

The school may also offer tutorial services, which students whose grades are below 70 will be required to attend.

RIGHT OF ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS, CURRICULUM MATERIALS, AND DISTRICT RECORDS

Instructional Materials

As a parent, you have a right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered to your child.

Student Records

Accessing Student Records

You may review your child's student records. These records include:

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,
- Student evaluations,

- Reports of behavioral patterns,
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child, and
- Teaching materials and tests used in your child's classroom.

A federal law, known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older, or who is attending an instruction of postsecondary education. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.
- The right to request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA.
- The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student's records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

Both FERPA and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students with certain rights of privacy. Before disclosing any personally identifiable information from a student's records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information.

Virtually all information pertaining to student performance, including grades, test results, and disciplinary records, is considered confidential educational records.

Inspection and release of student records is primarily restricted to an eligible student or a student's parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student's education records.

Federal law requires that, as soon as a student becomes 18, is emancipated by a court, or enrolls in a postsecondary institution, control of the records goes to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes and under limited circumstances when there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records, without written consent of the parent or eligible student, in the following circumstances:

- When district school officials have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records. School officials would include board members and employees, such as the Superintendent, administrators, and campus Directors; teachers, district counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or district medical staff); a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third-party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, school resource officer, or volunteer); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties. “Legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student’s case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official’s professional responsibility to the school and the student; or investigating or evaluating programs.
- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General’s office, the U.S. Attorney General’s office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, TEA, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture’s office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, school district/system, or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or which the student has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in conjunction with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses information, it has designated as directory information for opportunities to prohibit this disclosure.

Release of personally identifiable information 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 Campus Director is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The Campus Director is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated.

A parent or eligible student who wishes to inspect the student’s records should submit a written request to the records custodian identifying the records he or she wishes to inspect. Records may

be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

A parent or eligible student who provides a written request and pays copying costs of ten cents per page may obtain copies. If circumstances prevent inspection during regular school hours and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records.

The address of the Superintendent's office is 3900 University Blvd., Tyler, Texas 75799.

Attention: University Academy Superintendent.

The addresses of the Campus Directors' offices are:

Tyler Campus: 3900 University Blvd., Tyler, Texas 75799

Longview Campus: 3201 N. Eastman Rd., Longview, Texas 75705

Palestine Campus: 100 University Blvd., Palestine, Texas 75801

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction or amendment if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the appropriate records custodian. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student 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 or on an examination is handled through the general complaint process found in policy (PG-1.205 Public Complaints). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy.

The district's policy regarding student records is available from the campus Director's or Superintendent's office or on the district's web site at www.uttua.org.

The parent's or eligible student's right of access to and copies of student records do not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records—such as a teacher's personal notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher—do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications

You may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the

certification or degree. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Children of Military Families

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

- Immunization requirements.
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement.
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.
- Graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment of at least four months will be excused by the district. The district will permit no more than five excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment.

Additional information may be found at <http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=7995>.

Service/Assistance Animal Use by Students

A parent of a student who uses a service/assistance animal because of the student's disability must submit a request in writing to the Campus Director at least ten district business days before bringing the service/assistance animal on campus.

Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education 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 students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services available to all students including a process based on Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). The implementation of MTSS has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within the timeline

prescribed by law once the district receives written consent. The district must give a copy of the evaluation report to the parent five school days prior to the initial ARD meeting.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with prior written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights, if they disagree with the district. The district is required to give parents the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*. Additional information regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is available from the school district in a companion document, *A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*. Both documents may also be found at <http://framework.esc18.net/display/Webforms/LandingPage.aspx>.

The following websites provide information to those who are seeking information and resources specific to students with disabilities and their families:

- Texas Project First, at <http://www.texasprojectfirst.org>
- Partners Resource Network, at <http://www.partnerstx.org>

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services is the Campus Director or the Director of Special Education, at 903-730-3996.

Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English. If the student qualifies for these extra services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

Students With Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504

A child 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 designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine if the child needs services and supports under Section 504 to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as defined in federal law.

The designated person to contact regarding a referral for evaluation applicable to Section 504 is the Campus Director.

[Also see Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.]

SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Topics in this section of the Student Handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Where possible, the topics are also organized to alert you to the applicability of each topic based on a student's age or grade level. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact the Superintendent at 903-730-3988.

ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day's learning on the previous days, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. **Two state laws—one dealing with the required presence of school-aged children in school, e.g., compulsory attendance, the other with how a child's attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or course credit—are of special interest to students and parents.** A student's attendance record can be reviewed in Skyward Family Access.

Compulsory Attendance

(Age 18 and Older)

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year. 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 thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing.

(Between Ages 6 and 18)

State law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 18 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

A student will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program, which may occur before or after school or during the summer, if the student does not meet the passing standards on the state assessment for his or her grade level and/or applicable subject area.

Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the student makes up all work. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student's arrival or return to campus; and
- For students in the conservatorship (custody) of the state,
 - Mental health or therapy appointments; or
 - Court-ordered family visitations or any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.
 - As listed in Section I at Children of Military Families, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments.

(Secondary Grade Levels)

In addition, a junior or senior student's absence of up to two days related to visiting a college or university will be considered an exemption, provided this has been authorized by the board under the student receives approval from the campus, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed. For verification, University Academy requires an attendance form from the institution visited. This form can usually be obtained at the enrollment office of the institution.

Absences of up to two days in a school year will also be considered an exemption for:

- A student serving as an early voting clerk, provided the district's board has authorized this, the student notifies his or her teachers, and the student receives approval from the campus Director prior to the absences, and
- A student serving as an election clerk, if the student makes up any work missed.
- An absence of a student in grades 6–12 for the purpose of sounding "Taps" at a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran will also be excused by the district.

Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance (All Grade Levels)

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. Both the child and parent are held responsible for unexcused absences. After too many unexcused absences, the school must notify the parent. A compulsory attendance notification will be sent to the parent if a student has unexcused absences on 10 or more days or parts of days

within a six-month period or three days or parts of days without an excuse during a four-week period. Notice it says, “parts of days”. That means that leaving school early, or arriving after the first bell has rung, even if the child attended for some of the day, can count as an absence. The compulsory attendance letter gives the parent notice that the student has accumulated too many unexcused absences (and should not have any future absences) and gives the parent a chance to correct the child’s attendance record.

A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction, termed “accelerated instruction” by the state; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

A court of law may also impose penalties against both the student and his or her parents if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student:

- Is absent without excuse from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, or
- Is absent without excuse on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period.

For a student younger than 12 years of age, the student’s parent could be charged with an offense based on the student’s failure to attend school.

If a student aged 12 through 17 violates the compulsory attendance law, both the parent and student could be charged with an offense.

Attendance for Credit or Final Grade

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student in kindergarten - grade 12 must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit or a final grade for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the campus Director, that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the approval of the judge presiding over the case will also be required before the student receives credit or a final grade for the class.

If a student attends less than 75 percent of the days a class is offered or has not completed the plan approved by the Campus Director, then the student will be referred to the attendance review committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences.

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

- All absences, whether excused or unexcused, must be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed above at **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance** will be

considered extenuating circumstances for purposes of attendance for credit or the award of a final grade.

- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district.
- In reaching a decision about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student's parent could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and talk about ways to earn or regain credit or a final grade.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the board by following board policy PG-3.509, Student and Parent Complaints and Grievances.

The actual number of days a student must be in attendance to receive credit or a final grade will depend on whether the class is for a full semester or a full year.

Official Attendance-Taking Time (All Grade Levels)

The district must submit attendance of its students to the TEA, reflecting attendance at a specific time each day. Official attendance is taken at a set time each morning. Please contact the appropriate campus for the exact time.

A student absent for any portion of the day, including at the official attendance-taking time, should follow the procedures below to provide documentation of the absence.

Documentation after an Absence (All Grade Levels)

When a student is absent from school, the student upon arrival or return to school must bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence; this may also be accomplished through electronic communication from the parent's email address on file. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law. Notes from parents will be accepted up to one week from the absence. Notes from physician offices will be accepted at any time.

The campus will document in the student's attendance records whether the district considers the absence to be excused or unexcused. Please note that, unless the absence is for a statutorily allowed reason under compulsory attendance laws, the district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence.

Doctor's Note after an Absence for Illness

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than 3 consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. Otherwise, the student's absence may be considered unexcused and, if so, would be in violation of compulsory attendance laws.

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the Campus Director or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's absence from school to determine whether the absence or absences will be excused or unexcused.

Certification of Absence Due to Severe Illness or Treatment

If a student is absent because of a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes a student's attendance infeasible, a parent must provide certification from a physician licensed to practice in Texas specifying the student's illness and the anticipated period of absence related to the illness or treatment on the district's form. The form is available from the campus registrar or campus nurse.

College Visits (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Students may attend college visit days (two during the junior year and two during the senior year). The absence for these visits will be counted excused when the following procedures are met:

1. Prior approval from the attendance clerk who verifies compliance of the 90% attendance mandate;
2. The date of the absence is not in conflict with a major campus testing date; and
3. Student must obtain a signed letter (on college letterhead) stating the student's name and date of visit. The student must then turn in the original signed letter to their respective attendance clerk. The absence will then be coded as "college visit". Only the date of the actual campus visit may count (no travel time).

Driver License Attendance Verification (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

For a student between the ages of 16 and 18 to obtain a driver's license, written parental permission must be provided for the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to access the student's attendance records and, in certain circumstances, for a school administrator to provide the student's attendance information to DPS. A verification of enrollment (VOE) form may be obtained from the office, which the student will need to submit to DPS upon application for a driver's license.

ACCOUNTABILITY UNDER STATE AND FEDERAL LAW (All Grade Levels)

The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy and each of its campuses are held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of the

accountability requirements is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, which include:

- The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the district, compiled by TEA, the state agency that oversees public education, based on academic factors and ratings;
- A School Report Card (SRC) for each campus in the district compiled by TEA based on academic factors and ratings;
- The district's financial management report, which will include the financial accountability rating assigned to the district by TEA;
- Information compiled by TEA for the submission of a federal report card that is required by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Information about all of these can be found on the district's website at www.uttua.org. Hard copies of any reports are available upon request from the district's administrative office. TEA also maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability>.

AWARDS AND HONORS (All Grade Levels)

An End-of-Year Awards Ceremony will be held at each campus to recognize students with specific awards and honors.

BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT

Purpose of Behavioral Threat Assessments

The purpose of the Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA) process is to identify, assess, and manage students who may pose a threat of violence to themselves or others. As required by Texas Education Code §37.115 and Senate Bill 11, all Texas school districts must establish behavioral threat assessment teams and processes to enhance school safety. This is not a disciplinary action but rather a problem-solving approach designed to provide early intervention and support services to students in crisis. Through a systematic review of concerning behaviors, the BTA team works to prevent violence, connect students with appropriate resources, and maintain a safe learning environment for all members of the school community. The goal is to address the underlying issues that may be contributing to threatening or harmful behavior before an incident occurs.

Confidentiality

Per Texas Education Code (TEC), §37.1083 (j) - "Any document or information collected, identified, developed, or produced relating to the monitoring of school district safety and security requirements under this section is confidential under Sections 418.177 and 418.181, Government Code, and not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code."

Behavioral Threat Assessment Team Required Roles

In accordance with Texas Education Code §37.115(d), University Academy shall ensure that, to the greatest extent practicable, the BTA team includes members with expertise in the following areas:

- Counseling & mental health & substance use representative (School Based Mental Health Counselors, Mental Health Coordinator, LSP)
- Campus Director
- Behavior management representative (Counselor or Campus Administrator)
- Special Education team representative (special education teacher, Special Education Director, LSP, or Special Education Teacher)
- School Safety and Security (Law Enforcement Campus Officer)
- Emergency Management representative (relevant personnel, i.e., school nurse, educator or staff)

Additional personnel, including classroom teachers, may be consulted or added to the team on a case-by-case basis to provide relevant expertise or information about specific students.

If a specific area of expertise is not available at the campus level, the district shall document the reason for the absence and identify alternative resources or personnel from the district level or community partners who can provide consultation in that area of expertise.

Threat Assessment Documentation Process

All behavioral threat assessments conducted by University Academy shall be documented in the TEA Sentinel system as required by state law. The documentation process includes:

1. **Initial Report:** All reports of concerning behavior shall be documented, including the date, time, nature of the concern, and reporting party information.
2. **Assessment Documentation:** The BTA team shall document all aspects of the threat assessment process, including:
 - Information gathered from interviews with the student, witnesses, parents/guardians, and relevant staff

- Review of student records (academic, disciplinary, attendance, special education)
 - Consultation with other professionals as needed
 - Risk level determination
 - Intervention and support plan recommendations
- 3. Records Retention:** All materials and information collected during a threat assessment must be maintained in the student's district record until the student's 24th birthday, in accordance with Texas House Bill 3.
- 4. Confidentiality:** All documentation related to threat assessments is confidential under Texas Education Code §37.1083(j) and Government Code §418.177 and §418.181, and is not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code.
- 5. Transfer of Records:** If a student transfers to another school district, University Academy shall share the student's disciplinary record and any threat assessments related to their behavior with the receiving district.

Parent/Guardian Notification Process

Before the BTA team conducts a threat assessment of a student, the team must notify the parent or guardian of their intent to conduct the assessment, except in emergency situations where immediate action is necessary to protect life. Notification shall be made in an expedient and compassionate manner and may be conducted by phone, email, or in-person contact.

The notification shall inform the parent/guardian that:

- The district is required by law to conduct a behavioral threat assessment when alerted to a student exhibiting behavior that may pose a risk of harm to self or others.
- This is not a request for permission, but a notification of the district's legal obligation.
- The parent/guardian will have an opportunity to participate in the assessment process.

During the Threat Assessment

The district shall provide an opportunity for the parent or guardian to:

- Participate in the assessment process, either in person or remotely
- Provide information regarding the student to the BTA team
- Be interviewed during the assessment process

Parents/guardians are not members of the BTA team and do not have the right to be present for all parts of the threat assessment process in order to ensure the confidentiality and safety of all students and staff.

After Completing the Threat Assessment

After completing a threat assessment, the BTA team shall provide the parent or guardian with:

- The team's findings and conclusions regarding the student
- Recommendations for interventions, support services, or safety plans
- Information about next steps and follow-up procedures

All parent/guardian communications shall be documented in the student's threat assessment record in the TEA Sentinel system.

Guidance to Students and Staff on Recognizing and Reporting Concerning Behavior

In accordance with Texas Education Code §37.115(f)(2), the BTA team shall provide guidance to students and school employees on recognizing harmful, threatening, or violent behavior that may pose a threat to the community, school, or individual.

Staff Training and Guidance

All University Academy staff members receive annual training on:

- Recognizing signs of harmful, threatening, or violent behavior
- Understanding the difference between typical adolescent behavior and behavior that warrants concern
- The responsibility to report concerning behaviors immediately
- How to report concerns through appropriate channels
- The role of the BTA team and the assessment process

Student Education and Guidance

Campus administration meets with each of the grade level groups annually to provide guidance on:

- Recognizing concerning behaviors in themselves and their peers
- Understanding the importance of reporting threats to safety
- How and where to report concerns (including anonymous reporting options)
- Understanding that reporting concerns can save lives and is not about getting someone in trouble

Students are taught that all reports made in good faith will be taken seriously and investigated, and that seeking help for themselves or others is a sign of strength and courage.

Reporting Concerning Behavior

University Academy is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment for all students and staff. Early identification and reporting of concerning behaviors is essential to preventing violence and providing support to students in need.

Who Should Report: All members of the University Academy community. Students, staff, parents, and community members are encouraged to report concerning behaviors that may indicate a potential threat to safety.

What Behaviors Should Be Reported: Concerning behaviors that warrant reporting to the BTA team include, but are not limited to:

- Threats of violence toward self or others (verbal, written, electronic, or gestured)
- Threats of suicide or self-harm
- Possession or discussion of weapons
- Significant changes in behavior, mood, or academic performance
- Evidence of planning or preparing for violent acts
- Bullying or cyberbullying behaviors
- Stalking or harassment
- Fighting or physical aggression
- Substance use or possession
- Social media posts indicating harm to self or others
- Expressions of hopelessness, desperation, or intent to harm

A district employee who reports a potential threat to a BTA team member may elect for their identity to be confidential, except as necessary for the team, the district, or law enforcement to investigate the potential threat (Texas Education Code, 37.115(c)(4)(A)).

Clear Procedure for Student Reporting

In accordance with Texas Education Code §37.115(b)(4), University Academy has established a clear procedure for students to report concerning behavior exhibited by another student:

1. **Immediate Threats:** If a student witnesses an immediate threat to safety (weapon on campus, physical violence, immediate threat of harm), they should immediately notify the nearest staff member or call 911.
2. **Non-Emergency Concerns:** Students may report concerning behaviors through:
 - Speaking directly with a trusted adult (teacher, counselor, administrator, coach)
 - Using the anonymous STOPit which is located in the managed bookmarks if the student is logged into their school google account.
 - Email or in writing
3. **Anonymous Reporting:** Students may choose to report anonymously, though providing contact information allows for follow-up questions if needed.
4. **What Happens Next:** Once a report is made, the BTA team will review the information, conduct an initial assessment, and determine appropriate next steps, which may include conducting a full threat assessment.

Students are reminded that all reports are taken seriously and that reporting a concern may prevent harm and save lives. All reports will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.

Confidentiality and Privacy

The BTA process is conducted with careful attention to student privacy and confidentiality. Information is shared only with individuals who have a legitimate educational interest and need to know in order to support the student and ensure school safety. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allow school officials to share information without parental consent when there is a health or safety emergency.

BULLYING (All Grade Levels)

Bullying refers to a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that (1) has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student; (3) materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school. Bullying includes cyberbullying.

This conduct is considered bullying if it exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator(s) and the student victim and if it interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, or ostracism. In some cases, bullying can occur through electronic methods, called "cyberbullying."

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed bullying of another student, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, campus Director, or another district employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. The district will also contact the parents of the victim and of the student who was found to have engaged in the bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to these individuals, as well as to any students who have been identified as witnesses to the bullying.

Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited.

A copy of the district's policy is available in the campus Director's office, Superintendent's office, and on the district's website, and is included at the end of this handbook in the form of an appendix. Procedures related to reporting allegations of bullying may also be found on the district's website.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation may appeal through PG-1.205 Public Complaints and/or PG-3.509 Student and Parent Complaints and Grievances.

STOPit

The district will utilize the STOPit program to provide students an anonymous safe way to report inappropriate behaviors, communicate concerns with administrators, and document all incidents. Parents and/or students who abuse the STOPit program will be disabled as users and/or face consequences in accordance with the parent/student code of conduct.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

UT Tyler University Academy offers career and technical education programs in STEM and Multidisciplinary fields. Admission to these programs is based on being on track to meet Foundation High School Program, House Bill 5, state requirements for high school graduation as well as any prerequisite courses needed depending on the chosen field.

It is the policy of UT Tyler University Academy not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

UT Tyler University Academy will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

For information about your rights and grievance procedures, contact the Title IX Coordinator and/or the Section 504 Coordinator.

CELEBRATIONS (All Grade Levels)

Although a parent, grandparent or guardian is not prohibited from providing food for a school-designated function or for children in the child's classroom for his or her birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss this with the child's teacher prior to bringing any food in this circumstance. Occasionally, the school or a class may host certain functions or celebrations tied to the curriculum that will involve food. The school or teacher will notify students and parents of any known food allergies when soliciting potential volunteers for bringing food products.

CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT, TRAFFICKING, AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN (ALL GRADE LEVELS)

According to TEC 38.0041, the district has established a plan for addressing child abuse, neglect, school staff misconduct, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children, which may be initiated by contacting the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)/Child Protective Service (CPS). Trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking.

Definition of Abuse, Neglect and Other Maltreatment of Children

Child abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional or physical welfare and a failure to reasonably prevent a child's abuse.

Neglect is defined as an act or failure to act by a person responsible for a child's care, custody, or welfare evidencing the person's blatant disregard for the consequences of the act or failure to act that results in harm to the child or that creates an immediate danger to the child's physical health or safety.

Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, to report the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or DFPS/CPS.

Possible Warning Signs of Child Abuse, Neglect, and Other Maltreatment of Children

Signs and/or symptoms of abuse and/or neglect may include the following:

Physical Abuse:

- Frequent injuries such as bruises, cuts, black eyes, or burns without adequate explanations
- Frequent complaints of pain without apparent injury
- Burns or bruises in unusual patterns that may indicate the use of an instrument or human bite; cigarette burns on any part of the body
- Lack of reaction to pain
- Extreme fear of going home or seeing parents or caregivers
- Injuries that appear after a child has not been seen for several days
- Unreasonable clothing that may hide injuries to arms and legs

Neglect:

- Obvious malnourishment
- Consistent concern for lack of personal hygiene that poses a health risk
- Stealing or begging for food
- Child unattended for long periods of time
- Unaddressed need for dental care or other medical attention

Sexual Abuse:

- Physical signs of sexually transmitted diseases
- Evidence of injury to the genital area
- Pregnancy in a young girl
- Difficulty in sitting or walking
- Extreme fear of being alone with adults of a certain sex
- Sexual comments, behaviors, or play beyond what is considered age-appropriate behavior
- Knowledge of sexual relations beyond what is expected for a child's age
- Sexual victimization of other children

Emotional Abuse:

- Over-compliance or low self-esteem caused by scapegoating or verbal abuse by caregivers
- Severe depression, anxiety, or aggression
- Lagging in physical, emotional, and intellectual development
- Caregiver who belittles the child, withholds love and seems unconcerned about the child's problems
- Significant changes to behavior, such as withdrawal or over-aggression
- Significant changes to weight, such as substantial weight gain or weight loss

School Staff Misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Inappropriate boundaries or communications with a student, including inappropriate relationships.
- Violating school or district communication policies, such as improper use of messaging apps or social media
- Showing favoritism toward certain students in a way that compromises fairness or student well-being
- Creating, using, or sharing inappropriate AI-generated images involving students or staff
- Neglecting, abusing, or physically harming a student
- Providing alcohol or drugs to a student
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on school property or during school activities
- Possessing a weapon on school property or during school activities
- Committing a felony
- Engaging in fraudulent or deceptive practices involving the school system or SBEC

Definition of Trafficking

Child trafficking of any sort is prohibited by the Penal Code. Child sex trafficking could include forcing a person, including a child, into sexual abuse, assault, indecency, prostitution, or pornography. Labor trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, to engage in forced labor or services.

Traffickers are often trusted members of a child's community, such as friends, romantic partners, family members, mentors, and coaches, although traffickers frequently contact victims online.

Possible warning signs of sex trafficking in children include:

- Changes in school attendance, habits, friend groups, vocabulary, demeanor, and attitude
- Sudden appearance of expensive items (for example, manicures, designer clothes, purses, technology)
- Tattoos or branding
- Refillable gift cards
- Frequent runaway episodes
- Multiple phones or social media accounts
- Provocative pictures posted online or stored on the phone
- Unexplained injuries
- Isolation from family, friends, and community
- Older boyfriends or girlfriends

Additional warning signs of labor trafficking in children include:

- Being unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- Being employed but not having a school-authorized work permit
- Being employed and having a work permit but clearly working outside the permitted hours for students
- Owning a large debt and being unable to pay it off
- Not being allowed breaks at work or being subjected to excessively long work hours
- Being overly concerned with pleasing an employer and/or deferring personal or education decisions to a boss
- Not being in control of his or her own money
- Living with an employer or having an employer listed as a student's caregiver
- A desire to quit a job but not being allowed to do so

Reporting and Responding to Abuse, Neglect, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING: As mandated reporters, teachers and all school personnel are required by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect. Reports must be made immediately,

and no later than 24 hours after initial suspicion to the DFPS Child Abuse Hotline or law enforcement.

To ensure immediate action is taken, when making a DFPS report, please ensure that reports are made via DFPS Hotline phone 1-800-252-5400.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING REPORTING: Human Trafficking is abuse. As mandated reporters, teachers and all school personnel are required by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect. Reports must be made immediately, and no later than 24 hours after initial suspicion to the DFPS Child Abuse Hotline or law enforcement. This includes all forms of human trafficking including labor and sexual exploitation.

To ensure immediate action is taken, when making a DFPS report, please ensure that reports are made via DFPS Hotline phone 1-800-252-5400.

Remember:

- Do not conduct your own investigation.
- A suspicion or outcry by the youth is enough to make a report.
- When making a report, teachers and school employees should let DFPS intake specialist know they are a mandated reporters.
- Teachers and school employees must not delegate the duty to report to any other person.

Call 911 if it is suspected that the child or youth is in immediate danger.

Further Resources on Abuse, Neglect, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children

- [Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas \(CACTX\)](#) and their network of children's advocacy centers (CACs) provide a safe, child-friendly environment that facilitates access to safety, justice, and healing for children impacted by crime. While access to a CAC response and service requires a referral from an investigatory partner, most CACs also provide community-based prevention education that is available to schools.
- [LOVE146](#) provides Internet Safety Tips, materials and resources.
- [UnboundNow](#) provide free training resources for parents and caregivers, school nurses, educators, bus drivers, and students in English and Spanish. Additional resources about Human Trafficking can also be accessed at [Unbound:Human Trafficking 101](#).
- [Attorney General of Texas Human Trafficking](#) provides state training and resources.
- [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Human Trafficking](#)- general information on Human Trafficking and how to report.
- [The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services \(DFPS\) Recognizing the Sign of Child Abuse](#) Webpage

- http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/talk/child_abuse.html- An accessibility friendly webpage with information about child abuse.

Reporting and Responding to School Staff Misconduct

When there is suspicion of staff misconduct, including certified and non-certified educators and service providers, involving a student, principals must report the misconduct within 48 hours of becoming aware to the superintendent and superintendents must report to the TEA and SBEC within 48 hours via the mandatory Reporting Portal.

In cases involving suspected child abuse or neglect, call DFPS at 1-800-252-5400 to report.

Remember:

- A superintendent required to submit a report of misconduct to TEA/SBEC commits a state jail felony if the superintendent fails to file a report with the intent to conceal a person's criminal record or alleged incident of misconduct.
- Do Not Hire Registry (DNHR):
 - Certified educators found guilty of misconduct may face disciplinary action up to revocation of their certificate and being placed on the DNHR.
 - Non-certified educators and service providers found guilty of misconduct may be placed on the DNHR.
 - Individuals may also be placed on the DNHR in a temporary status.

CLASS RANK / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student's class rank will not be calculated or reported except for the top 10 percent of a given class. Class rank will not appear on any student's transcript. Students in the top 10 percent will receive a Certification of Class Rank from the District.

A student who transfers in prior to the last two high school years shall receive weight for courses taken in accordance with the UTTUA grade point scales, when courses align. The student with the highest weighted GPA at the end of the final semester, after dual credit scores are received from the University, will be named Valedictorian and be provided with a Highest-Ranking Graduate Certificate to be used for tuition at a Texas public institution of higher education. The student with the second highest GPA will be named Salutatorian. Both the Valedictorian and Salutatorian must be full-time high school students and have completed four full years of academics (three-year graduates are not eligible for these honors). The Valedictorian and Salutatorian must be continuously enrolled at the University Academy during their 11th and 12th grade years. Calculations will be made to 3 decimal places. Under no circumstance will the UA award more than one Highest Ranking Graduate Certificate unless there is an exact tie. Only dual credit classes taken from an institution with a current MOU on file with University Academy are

considered honors classes and given weight on the dual credit grading scale; all other college-level coursework will be weighted on the standard 4.0 scale.

In extraordinary circumstances, such as public calamity or officially declared disaster, the Superintendent has the authority to award the local honorific “Valedictorian” to more than one student. The Superintendent’s decision to award more than one student the “Valedictorian” honorific will not affect the calculation of GPA or the awarding of the Highest-Ranking Graduate Certificate, as noted above.

CLASS SCHEDULE CHANGES

The UT Tyler University Academy supports a college going culture with the expectation of students taking math and science courses each year during high school. Requests for class schedule changes will not be processed after the first two weeks of the school year, or the first two weeks of the semester for semester courses.

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

To be eligible for automatic admission to a Texas four-year college or university, a student in the top 10% of their graduating class must be on track to graduate with the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program. This means that a student must graduate with at least one endorsement and must have taken Algebra II as one of the four required math courses.

In addition, the student must submit a completed application for admission in accordance with the deadline established by the college or university. The student is ultimately responsible for ensuring that he or she meets the admission requirements of the university or college to which the student applies.

The University of Texas at Austin may limit the number of students automatically admitted to 75 percent of the University’s enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshman. For students who are eligible to enroll in the University of Texas at Austin during the summer or Fall 2027 term, the University will be admitting the top five percent of the high school’s graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through a holistic review process.

Should a college or university adopt an admissions policy that automatically accepts the top 25 percent of a graduating class, the provisions above will also apply to a student ranked in the top 25 percent of his or her class.

Students and parents should contact the academic counselor for further information about automatic admissions, the application process, and deadlines.

COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Students in grades 9-12 have opportunities to earn college credit through the following methods:

- Certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include dual credit courses.
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with an institution of higher education in which the University Academy has a current MOU in place.

All of these methods have eligibility requirements and must be approved prior to enrollment in the course. Please see the academic counselor for more information. Depending on the student's grade level and the course, a state-mandated end-of-course assessment may be required for graduation. In order to be enrolled in dual credit courses students are expected to have a minimum 3.0 GPA, to have obtained the minimum TSIA2 scores for the course and to perform well in previous dual credit courses. If a student fails a dual credit course then they are excluded from future participation for at least the next semester. For appeals, please see the Campus Director. Additionally, course credit is subject to the 90% attendance rule, see Attendance section for details.

Students who are TSI eligible and in good standing are required to participate in all dual credit options that align with state graduation requirements. Beyond high school graduation requirements, it is the aim of University Academy that dual credit scholars achieve a "college core complete" status at the time of graduation; this privilege allows them to take additional college credits beyond what is required for high school graduation through our traditional dual credit offerings. Additional courses outside of those necessary for graduation will be considered for approval by the counselor.

It is important to keep in mind that not all colleges and universities accept credit earned in all dual credit or AP courses taken in high school for college credit. UTTUA works to ensure courses align with a student's designated degree plan at UT Tyler. Students and parents should check with their prospective college or university to determine if a particular course will count toward the student's desired degree plan at that institution.

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS (All Grade Levels)

Usually, student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed informally by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or Campus Director. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled easily, the board has adopted a standard complaint process in the district's policies (PG-1.205 Public Complaints and/or PG-3.509 Student and Parent Complaints and Grievances). A copy may be obtained in the Superintendent's office or on the School Board webpage at www.uttua.org. Should a parent or student feel the need to file a formal complaint, the parent or student should file a written complaint within the timelines established in the policies. In general, the student or parent should submit the required complaint form to the Campus Director. If the concern is not resolved, the required appeal form must be sent to the Superintendent. If still unresolved, the parent may submit a final appeal form to be presented to the Board of Trustees. The applicable forms are located on the School Board webpage under PG-1.205 Public Complaints and/or PG-3.509 Student and Parent Complaints and Grievances.

CONDUCT (All Grade Levels)

Applicability of School Rules

As required by law, the board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior—both on and off campus as well as on district vehicles—and consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules. During any periods of instruction during the summer months, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

Social Events

School rules apply to all school social events. Guests attending these events are expected to observe the same rules as students, and a student inviting a guest will share responsibility for the conduct of his or her guest.

Please contact the Campus Director if you are interested in serving as a chaperone for any school social events.

COUNSELING

Academic Counseling (Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels)

The district academic counselors are available to students and parents. By the end of the students' 8th grade year, the counselors will have met with students and families to build their Personal Graduation Plans, discuss high school endorsements and dual credit opportunities through UT Tyler University Academy, as well as career interest inventories.

Academic Counseling (High School Grade Levels)

High school students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a district academic counselor, or Campus Director to learn more about course offerings, graduation requirements, and early graduation procedures. Each year, high school students will be provided with information on anticipated course offerings for the next school year and other information that will help them make the most of academic and CTE opportunities, as well as information on the importance of postsecondary education.

The district academic counselor can also provide information about entrance exams and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission, financial aid, housing, and scholarships as these relate to state colleges and universities. The academic counselor can also provide information about workforce opportunities after graduation or technical and trade school opportunities, including opportunities to earn industry-recognized certificates and licenses.

Mental Health Counseling (All Grade Levels)

As a parent, if you are concerned about your child's mental or emotional health, please contact the Campus Director for potential services/resources that may be of assistance. The district employs School-Based Mental Health Counselors who are available to provide emotional and behavioral support through the district behavioral tiered system, as well as services in crisis situations. The mental health counselors and the school's licensed school psychologist (LSP) also provide psychological services for qualifying students through the special education and 504 programs. Written consent is required to be obtained prior to providing specific intervention.

Asesoramiento en salud mental (Todos los niveles escolares)

Como padre o tutor, si le preocupa la salud mental o emocional de su hijo, por favor comuníquese con el Director del plantel para consultar sobre posibles servicios o recursos que puedan ser de ayuda. El distrito cuenta con Asesores de Salud Mental Escolar y un Psicólogo Escolar con Licencia (LSP), quienes están disponibles para brindar apoyo emocional y conductual a través del sistema escalonado de apoyo conductual del distrito, así como servicios en situaciones de crisis. Los asesores de salud mental y el psicólogo escolar con licencia (LSP) de la escuela también proporcionan servicios psicológicos a los estudiantes que cumplen con los criterios de elegibilidad, a través de los programas de educación especial y del Programa 504. Se requiere obtener el consentimiento por escrito antes de proporcionar cualquier intervención específica.

COURSE CREDIT (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student in grades 9–12, or in a lower grade when a student is enrolled in a high school credit-bearing course, will earn credit for a course only if the final grade is 70 or above. For a two-semester (1 credit) course, the student's grades from both semesters will be averaged and credit will be awarded if the combined average is 70 or above. Should the student's combined average be less than 70, the student will be required to retake the semester in which he or she failed.

A student in grades 9-12 who is enrolled in a dual credit course with UT Tyler, will not receive high school credit for a 69% and below. If a student does not receive high school credit for a dual credit course the first semester, he/she must score high enough in an on-level course the second semester for the two semesters to average to a 70+ to earn the full-year's credit. This only applies to dual credit courses where the semester is ½ of a one-year high school credit class.

CREDIT BY EXAM

If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject (All Grade Levels)

A student who has previously taken a course or subject—but did not receive credit or a final grade for it—may, in circumstances determined by the campus Director or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam approved by the district's board of trustees on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject. Prior instruction may include,

for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a nonaccredited school. The opportunity to take an examination to earn credit for a course or to be awarded a final grade in a subject after the student has had prior instruction is sometimes referred to as “credit recovery.”

The district academic counselor would determine if the student could take an exam for this purpose. If approval is granted, the student must score at least 70 on the exam to receive credit for the course or subject. The passing indicator “P” will be recorded on the high school transcript. This indicator will not impact GPA.

The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an exam.

Any fees associated with the credit by exam for credit or attendance recovery are the responsibility of the student.

****Please also see the Attendance for Credit section.**

ADVANCEMENT/ACCELERATION—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course/Subject

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course or subject area for which the student has had no prior instruction, i.e., for advancement, or to accelerate to the next grade level. The exams offered by the district are approved by the district’s board of trustees, and state law requires the use of certain exams, such as Texas Tech K-12 CBE and UT High CBE, when applicable. The dates on which exams are scheduled during the school year will be published on the district’s website. The only exceptions to the published dates will be for any exams administered by another entity besides the district. In this case, a student and the district must comply with the testing schedule of the other entity. During each testing window provided by the district, a student may attempt a specific exam only once.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the academic counselor no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. All assessments must be completed by June 30 to be able to enroll in the appropriate grade courses for the upcoming school year.

(Students in Grades KG-5)

A student in elementary school will be eligible to accelerate to the next grade level if the student scores at least 80 on each CBE assessment in the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, a district administrator recommends that the student be accelerated, and the student’s parent gives written approval of the grade advancement.

(Students in Grades 6-12)

A student in grade 6 or above will earn course credit with a passing score of at least 80 on the CBE assessment. A student may take an exam to earn high school course credit no more than twice. If a student fails to achieve the designated score on the applicable exam before the beginning of the school year in which the student would need to enroll in the course according to the school’s high school course sequence, the student must complete the course.

CREDIT RECOVERY/GRADE REPLACEMENT

A minimum score of 70 is required for a student to receive credit for a course. A student may retake the class, choose credit by exam, or participate in a campus approved credit recovery program. On the student's transcript, courses that are repeated will receive a "P" or "F" and credit will be awarded for the "P." The previous failing grade in the course will remain on the transcript and the "P" or "F" will not impact the GPA.

Students are not allowed to repeat a class that has already been awarded credit. Grade replacement is not allowed in high school, even when the previous grade was a failing grade.

DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION (All Grade Levels)

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and that their welfare is best served when they are free from this prohibited conduct while attending school. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect, to avoid behaviors known to be offensive, and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. District employees are expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. A copy of the district's policy is available in the campus Director's office and in the Superintendent's office or on the website at www.uttua.org.

Dating Violence

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. Dating violence also occurs when a person commits these acts against a person in a marriage or dating relationship with the individual who is or was once in a marriage or dating relationship with the person committing the offense. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to, physical or sexual assaults; name-calling; put-downs; threats to hurt the student, the student's family members, or members of the student's household; destroying property belonging to the student; threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship; threats to harm a student's current dating partner; attempts to isolate the student from friends and family; stalking; or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law, that negatively affects the student.

Harassment

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to, offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening, intimidating, or humiliating conduct; offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

In addition to dating violence as described above, two other types of prohibited harassment are described below.

Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment

Sexual harassment and gender-based harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student are prohibited.

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but not be limited to, touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature, such as comforting a child with a hug or taking the child's hand. However, romantic and other inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Gender-based harassment includes harassment based on a student's gender, expression by the student of stereotypical characteristics associated with the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender.

Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include, but not be limited to, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is prohibited. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment is also prohibited. A person who makes a false claim or offers false statements or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

Reporting Procedures

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, Campus Director, or other district employee. This can be done verbally, in writing, or through the district's StopIt! app. The report may be made by the student's parent.

Title IX related offenses should be reported to:

Title IX Coordinator

Blake Bumbard
bbumbard@uttyler.edu
903-565-5760

Upon receiving a report of prohibited conduct as defined by school board policy PG-3.102 or PG-3.103, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by that policy. If not, the district will refer to school board policy PG-3.102 or PG-3.103 to determine if the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying, as defined by law and that policy. If the alleged prohibited conduct, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct and would also be considered bullying as defined by law and school board policy PG-3.103, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

The district will promptly notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district. In the event alleged prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parents of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by school board policy PG-3.102 or PG-3.103.

Investigation of Report

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law. Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated.

If a law enforcement or other regulatory agency notifies the district that it is investigating the matter and requests that the district delay its investigation, the district may delay up to 10 days.

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

If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary action, and, in some cases, corrective action, will be taken to address the conduct. The district may take disciplinary and corrective action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint was not unlawful.

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

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with PG-1.205 Public Complaints and/or PG-3.509 Student and Parent Complaints and Grievances.

If the district's investigation finds a false report was filed appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

DISCIPLINE (All Grade Levels)

Upon enrollment, a thorough review of each student's discipline history will be conducted. This review will require parents to provide 3 years of discipline records from the child's previous school. If records are not available, the parent must meet with the Campus Director to further discuss. If a student is found to have a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems under TEC Chapter 37, Subchapter A offense the students' enrollment will be revoked.

Refer to the Student Code of Conduct for more information on the district's discipline policy.

DISTANCE LEARNING (All Grade Levels)

Distance learning and correspondence courses include courses that encompass the state-required essential knowledge and skills but are taught through multiple technologies and alternative methodologies such as mail, satellite, Internet, video-conferencing, and instructional television.

If a student wishes to enroll in a correspondence course or a distance learning course that is not provided through the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN), as described below, in order to earn credit in a course or subject, the student must receive permission from the district academic counselor prior to enrolling in the course or subject. If the student does not receive prior approval, the district may not recognize and apply the course or subject toward graduation requirements or subject mastery.

Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) (Secondary Grade Levels)

The Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) has been established by the state as one method of distance learning. A student has the option, with certain limitations, to enroll in a course offered through the TxVSN to earn course credit for graduation.

Depending on the TxVSN course in which a student enrolls, the course may be subject to the “no pass, no play” rules. In addition, for a student who enrolls in a TxVSN course for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment is required, the student must still take the corresponding EOC assessment.

If you have questions or wish to make a request that your child be enrolled in a TxVSN course, please contact the district academic counselor. Unless an exception is made by the Superintendent, a student will not be allowed to enroll in a TxVSN course if the school offers the same or a similar course.

DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE, PUBLISHED MATERIALS, OR OTHER DOCUMENTS (All Grade Levels)

School Materials

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with the prior approval of the Campus Director, sponsor, or teacher. Such items may include school posters, brochures, flyers, etc.

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

Non-school Materials

(From Students)

Students must obtain prior approval from the Campus Director before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing any copies of written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization.

Any student who sells, posts, circulates, or distributes non-school material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

(From Others)

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any

district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by the Superintendent or designee.

DRESS AND GROOMING

The district's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that at the campus Director's discretion, the dress promotes the value of students as a part of a professional community of learners and that it is not distracting to others.

If the campus Director determines that a student's grooming or clothing violates the school's dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school. If not corrected, the parent or designee must bring an acceptable change of clothing to the school. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

EARLY RELEASE

11th and 12th grade students may be allowed to leave at 12:30. In order to qualify, students must meet the following eligibility requirements:

11th grade:

- Must be enrolled in dual credit courses
- Scored approaches or higher on all high school STAAR/EOC exams
- On track to graduate
- Maintain good attendance

12th grade:

- On track to graduate
- Maintain a 3.0 GPA
- Maintain good attendance
- Scored approaches or higher on all high school STAAR/EOC exams
- TSIA complete

A 12th grade student with an IEP who is not enrolled in dual credit may be recommended to leave campus at 12:30 with the approval of the Director and academic counselors, if the student is:

- Meeting all IEP goals,
- Passing all classes,
- Maintaining good attendance,
- On track to graduate,
- Enrolled in dual credit courses or has successfully completed College Bridge course(s),

- Achieved 'Approaches' or higher on all high school STAAR/EOC exams or has been awarded participation credit for STAAR by the A RD committee.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES (All Grade Levels)

Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Cell Phones

House Bill 1481 requires all Texas public schools and open-enrollment charter schools to adopt and enforce policies that prohibit the use of personal communication devices while students are on campus during school hours.

The goal of HB 1481 is to:

- Reduce distractions in the classroom
- Improve student focus and academic performance
- Support healthier social interactions and mental well-being
- Address concerns about cyberbullying and screen overuse

University Academy students will not be allowed to use personal communication devices during the school day, from 7:30 am to 2:30 pm. All devices must be **turned off and stored in backpacks** during the day. The restriction applies specifically to personal communication devices, including:

- Cell Phones (smartphones, flip phones)
- Smartwatches
- Tablets used for messaging or calls
- Radios or paging devices

Exceptions will be made for students with documented medical needs, disabilities requiring assistive technology, or other approved accommodations.

If a student needs to contact their family for a valid reason during the school day, they may request to use the school front office phone.

Consequences for Violations

Use of personal communication devices or inappropriate use of personal computing devices will result in the following:

First Offense

- Device will be confiscated and stored in the main office for the rest of the day.
- Parent/guardian will be notified.
- Only the parent/guardian may pick up the device after school.

Second Offense

- Same as first offense

- A discipline referral will be submitted.

Third Offense

- Same as second offense.
- Student will be assigned 1 day of in-school suspension (ISS).
- Additional consequences may be applied as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

If a personal communication device is not retrieved by a parent or guardian within two weeks of the school sending notice, the school shall send a second notice specifying that the device will be disposed of if not retrieved within 90 days of the second notice. The school may dispose of the device if not retrieved within 90 days of sending a second notice to the student's parent or guardian.

The use of any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in restroom areas at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal device and/or laptop may be searched by authorized personnel.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The district is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen personal devices.

Laptops for Instructional Purpose

The district encourages 9th – 12th grade students to provide a personal laptop device for approved instructional use. Devices in the student's possession that are not being used for approved instructional purposes must remain turned off and put away during the instructional day, including during all testing. Please note that students will still be required to use a school issued device for all MAPS, BOY, and EOY district exams.

Acceptable Use Policy

Students and parents will be asked to sign the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) during the online registration process, regarding use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

The district will issue a school email account that reflects the legal name of the student in Skyward.

All district issued devices that are signed into a school issued email account will be monitored and filtered by a web content filter. Even with this level of filtering, the district cannot guarantee that students will not access inappropriate content. As with any other technology resource, a student's use of the Internet is ultimately the responsibility of the student and of the student's parent or legal guardian.

Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources

Any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the district's computer security, such as illegal torrenting, will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of expulsion.

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, whether the equipment used to send such messages is district-owned or personally owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as "sexting," will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child <https://txssc.txstate.edu/tools/courses/before-you-text/>, a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology.

Texas Sexting Laws Involving Young People

Sexting is a crime in Texas even if no adult is involved. Under [Texas Penal Code Section 43.261](#), it is a crime for a minor to "intentionally or knowingly" send another minor an obscene photo/video or a photo/video of a minor engaging in sexual conduct, if they know it was a minor. First-time offenses are punishable by a Class C misdemeanor, but the statute indicates that under some circumstances a first-time offender can be charged with a Class B misdemeanor.

In 2019, the [Texas Legislature added Penal Code 21.19](#) which states that a Class C misdemeanor is committed by a person if they knowingly transmit electronic visual material that depicts any person engaging in sexual conduct or with the person's intimate parts exposed that is not sent at the request of or with the express consent of the recipient. This applies to all electronic platforms such as e-mail, texts, apps, and social media. *These laws exist to protect you. Do not allow them to discourage you from involving law enforcement if you are a victim.*

Texas Intimate Image Abuse Law

In 2015, the [Texas Legislature passed Texas Penal Code Section 21.16](#) regarding "Unlawful Disclosure or Promotion of Intimate Visual Material." In 2017 this law was amended, updating the penalty from a Class A Misdemeanor to a state jail felony for someone to reveal or disclose images of someone engaged in sexual conduct, simulating sexual conduct, or to reveal or disclose images of someone's intimate parts unless that person gives their consent. Just because someone

took an intimate picture of themselves and sent it to a partner or someone else does not mean they gave consent for it to be posted, sent, or shown to anyone else.

Texas Sextortion Laws

[Texas Penal Code 33.021](#) makes it a felony offense to solicit anyone under the age of 17 (a minor), or anyone the offender believes to be under the age of 17, online for sexual contact or have sexually explicit communication with a minor, or someone they believe to be a minor.

[Texas Penal Code 33.07](#) states that if a person “uses the name or persona of another person” without that person’s consent and with the intent to harm, threaten, defraud, or intimidate the person, then he or she has committed a felony offense.

[Texas Penal Code 21.18](#) defines sexual coercion as an act involving sexual conduct causing arousal or gratification. This section applies to a threat regardless of how that threat is communicated, including a threat transmitted through e-mail or an Internet website, social media account, or chat room and a threat made by other electronic or technological means. Such action is a felony offense.

Texas Child Pornography Law

[Texas Penal Code 43.26](#) states that it is a felony crime, up to the first degree, for an adult to knowingly or intentionally possess or access with the intent to view material that depicts a child under the age of 18 engaging in sexual conduct; this includes sexting with a minor.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS (All Grade Levels)

Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships with other students; participation, however, is a privilege, not a right.

Students participating in extracurricular or UIL activities must follow UT Tyler University Academy policies and UIL rules when under school supervision. Students are subject to the Student Code of Conduct during all school-related activities, including travel, participation, and attendance at events on or off campus.

Eligibility for initial and continuing participation in many activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)- a statewide association overseeing interdistrict competition. If a student is involved in an academic, athletic, or music activity governed by UIL, the student and parent are expected to know and follow all rules of the UIL organization. Students involved in UIL athletic activities and their parents can access the UIL Parent Information Manual at <https://www.uil texas.org/athletics/manuals>; a hard copy can be provided by the coach or sponsor of the activity on request. To report a complaint of alleged noncompliance with required safety training or an alleged violation of safety rules required by

law and the UIL, please contact the curriculum division of the TEA at (512) 463-9581 or curriculum@tea.state.tx.us.

[See <http://www.uiltexas.org> for additional information on all UIL-governed activities.]

Students at any grade level participating in an athletic activity must have on file the following UIL forms, found on the UIL webpage: <https://www.uiltexas.org/athletics/forms>. They must be signed by the student and their parent or guardian:

- Athletic and marching Band Pre-participation Physical Evaluation
- Acknowledgement of Rules

Additionally, all student-athletes must complete safety training covering symptoms of serious injuries (e.g., concussions, heatstroke, cardiac arrest) and risks of performance-enhancing supplements. Coaches must ensure students are hydrated, medication is accessible, emergency lanes are clear, and heatstroke prevention materials are available. If a student becomes unconscious during an activity, they may not return until cleared by a physician.

In the event that UT Tyler University Academy sponsors an athletic team that competes in interscholastic competitions, a Concussion Oversight Team will be maintained that includes medical professionals. If a concussion is suspected:

- The student is immediately removed from play.
- Return-to-play requires:
 - Medical evaluation by a physician
 - Completion of return-to-play protocol
 - Written clearance from the physician
 - Signed parental consent acknowledging risks
- Coaches may not authorize a student's return to play

Students receiving outpatient mental health services cannot be excluded from UIL activities solely due to treatment or related absences. Only students enrolled in UT Tyler University Academy may participate in UIL activities. Homeschool students are not eligible to represent the school in UIL competitions. Students required to undergo a physical exam before participating in UIL athletics will receive information about sudden cardiac arrest and may request an electrocardiogram (ECG) from a licensed provider. Military-connected students transitioning into UT Tyler University Academy will be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities regardless of application deadlines, if otherwise qualified. For organized water activities, parents must affirm in writing whether their child can swim. Non-swimmers must wear a Coast Guard-approved flotation device unless participating in supervised swim instruction or competition.

The district will follow the UIL guidelines regarding student eligibility and participation in extracurricular activities offered through The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy. Students who earn a grade below 70 in any non-exempt course during a grading period will be suspended from extracurricular activities for at least three weeks. Suspension decisions for students with disabilities must align with their Individualized Education Program (IEP) and be

determined by the ARD committee. Grades are reviewed every three weeks. Suspension is lifted if all grades (excluding exempt courses) are 70 or above. Suspension rules do not apply to:

- Advanced Placement (AP)
- International Baccalaureate (IB)
- Honors or dual credit courses in core subjects

Students are permitted a limited number of absences for extracurricular activities each school year. They may miss up to ten days for regular extracurricular events, up to five days for post-district competitions, and up to two days for state-level competitions. To ensure academic integrity and balance, UT Tyler University Academy limits practice and rehearsal time for extracurricular activities. Outside of school hours, students may not exceed eight hours of practice per activity per week. During the school day, students are limited to one class period of practice per day, with total weekly practice time not to exceed 300 minutes.

Offices and Elections

Certain clubs, organizations, and performing groups will hold elections for student officers.

FEES (All Grade Levels)

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, 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 to 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, when 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.
- Fees for lost or damaged textbooks and devices.

- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Fees for optional dual credit courses.
- In some cases, a fee for a course taken through the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN).
- Credit Recovery Courses

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the Superintendent.

FOOD SERVICE (All Grade Levels)

Breakfast

Each campus will have a breakfast stand open each morning; students can purchase a Brown Bag Breakfast:

- Breakfast is open from 7:30 am to 7:50 am.
- **Brown Bag Breakfast** consists of a grain, fruit, juice, and a water for \$1.50. Those who qualify can receive a Brown Bag Breakfast for free. A qualifying Income Survey must be on file for the current year.
- If your financial situation changes at any point during the year, you may submit a new Income Survey. Please contact your Front Office or visit this [FORM](#).

Each student is given a keypad code to account for purchased meals and payments. **Parents should apply funds to their student's account through Skyward Family Access; cash transactions should be limited.** If your student's balance falls under \$3.00, you will be notified by email and continue to get emails until the balance is over \$3.00. If you opt out of the daily email system, you forfeit your notifications of account balances. Students are not allowed to charge to their account.

Lunch

- Each student needs to bring a daily sack lunch. No refrigerator or microwave will be available to the students. Students should also bring their own utensils.
- Lunch deliveries by outside vendors (i.e.: Pizza Hut, Dominos, etc.) are not allowed for any reason.
- Lunch deliveries by parents are only allowed if extenuating circumstances occur and arrangements have been made with the front office.
- Due to limited seating and classroom space, parents will not be allowed to eat breakfast and/or lunch with their child.

FUND-RAISING (All Grade Levels)

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. Requests must be made to the Campus Director.

GANG-FREE ZONES (All Grade Levels)

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a location in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

GRADE LEVEL CLASSIFICATION (Grades 9-12 Only)

After the ninth grade, students are classified according to the number of credits earned toward graduation.

Credits Earned	Classification
6 minimum, 7+ expected	Sophomore
12 minimum, 14+ expected	Junior
18 minimum, 21+ expected	Senior
24 minimum, 28+ expected	Graduate

GRADE POINT AVERAGES (GPA)

Unweighted GPAs

Required for some scholarship and college/university applications. Calculated on a standard 4.0 scale. Meaning all courses, including those under the Dual Credit Grading Scale, receive no more than a 4.0 GPA.

Weighted GPAs

Used to determine class rank for Top 10 percent as well as most scholarship and college/university applications, GPA is calculated based on a 4.0 scale with additional weight being added based on the rigor of coursework. Dual credit courses earn an additional 10 GPA points calculated into the overall grade point average.

Honors Courses

When completing scholarship and college applications, UT Tyler Dual Credit courses will be considered “honors courses” when this category is the only option on the form.

Edgenuity Courses

Some high school students may complete an online course in Edgenuity. The course instruction is delivered entirely online. A UA staff member serves as the facilitator in class to assist students as needed. These courses have pacing tools built in, based on the start and end dates, and two grades published to help students stay on track. Parents can monitor their child's progress by checking the student's course dashboard, or by requesting from the home campus a weekly email progress report from Edgenuity. The student dashboard and progress reports include the following information:

- **Actual Grade: Used for Report Cards.** This is the overall grade adjusted for progress if a student is behind. This score does not assume zeros for uncompleted work but penalizes for falling behind. It makes use of a ratio that represents the student's actual progress divided by target progress.
- **Overall Grade:** This is the weighted average grade for completed activities. Its purpose is to show mastery of content and skills in the course.
- **Target Progress:** What the student's progress should be, to be considered on-track for course completion by the due date.
- **Progress:** The student's progress in the course.
- **Pacing:** The difference between the target completion percentage and the student's actual progress. Positive = student is ahead. Negative = student is behind.

GRADING GUIDELINES (All Grade Levels)

It is our belief that grades should reflect the student's knowledge of the standards. A standards-based rubric should be completed at the end of every PBL as well. Grades are weighted as follows:

Grades K-1 Standards Based

Grades 2-5 Formative 50% Summative 50%

Grades 6-7 Formative 40% Checkpoints 20% Summative 40%

Grades 8-12 Formative 25% Checkpoints 30% Summative 45%

Formative Assessments

Formative assessment is an ongoing processes teachers use during instruction to gather evidence

of student learning, provide timely feedback, and adjust teaching to better meet students' needs. Its primary purpose is to support learning *while it is happening*, not to evaluate it at the end. Examples include in-class assignments, homework, class discussions, and guided practices.

Assignments can be turned in up until the summative; however, points may be deducted for late work, and after 3 school days of the due date, a 70 is the highest possible grade unless prior documentation/approval has been granted by the teacher. One resubmission is allowed if the grade is below a 75, for points awarded back up to a 75. Assignments must be turned in on time initially to be considered for a resubmission.

Checkpoint Assessments

A checkpoint assessment is a periodic assessment administered at key points during an instructional cycle to measure student progress toward learning goals and determine whether instruction is on track. Examples include quizzes, PBL deliverables, PrBLs, and midpoint assessments. Checkpoints cannot be redone.

Summative Assessments

Summative assessment is an evaluation of student learning conducted at the end of an instructional period to measure what students have learned and how well they have met established learning goals or standards. Examples include tests, PBL and/or PrBL products, essays, performance tasks, and final exams.

Summative assessments are used to evaluate students' mastery of standards. Feedback and revisions during the **drafting process** of essays, writing projects, PBL and PrBL products, or similar assignments are encouraged as part of the learning process. However, once the final product is submitted and graded, it cannot be resubmitted or revised.

Exception for Tests:

Tests may be retaken or corrected once after attending a learning conference(s).

It is the teacher's discretion whether a student can retake a test. **Students in high school courses cannot retake tests.**

Additional Policies

- **Dual Credit Courses:** Students must follow the grading guidelines provided by the professor.
- **Semester Exams (High School Courses Only):** Semester exams will be given in each course where a student is receiving high school credit if the class is a core course (Math, Science, ELA, Social Studies) where an EOC is not given and is a non-Dual Credit course.

GRADUATION (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student must meet the following requirements to receive a high school diploma from the district:

- Complete 26 state graduation credits and 1 endorsement.
- Achieve passing scores on certain end-of-course (EOC) assessments or approved substitute assessments, unless specifically waived as permitted by state law; and
- Demonstrate proficiency, as determined by the district, in the specific communication skills required by the State Board of Education.
- Complete instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation for students in grades 7 through 12 at least once.
- Receive instruction in grades 9-12 on proper interaction with peace officers during traffic stops and other in-person encounters.

Each graduating student is required to complete and submit a free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or a Texas application for state financial aid (TASFA). Evidence of FAFSA submission requires at least one:

- A screenshot that includes the processed date field of the FAFSA
- ApplyTexas Counselor Suite
- Notification, such as a copy of an email, from the United States Department of Education verifying completion of the FAFSA
- A copy or screenshot of the FAFSA acknowledgment page
- A screenshot of the TASFA submission acknowledgment page (from those institutions that offer an electronic form)
- An acknowledgment receipt from an institution of higher education (IHE)
- A copy of a financial aid award letter from an IHE

A student is not required to complete the form if:

- The student's parents, or guardian sign a form obtained from the academic counselor. This form can be signed by the student if he/she is 18 or older.
- The academic counselor authorizes the student to decline completing the FAFSA for good cause as determined by the academic counselor.

Testing Requirements for Graduation

Students are required, with limited exceptions and regardless of graduation program, to perform satisfactorily on the following EOC assessments: English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and United States History. A student who has not achieved sufficient scores on the EOC assessments to graduate will have opportunities to retake the assessments. State law and state rules also provide for certain scores on norm-referenced national standardized assessments to substitute for

the requirement to meet satisfactory performance on an applicable EOC assessment should a student choose this option. See the academic counselor or the Campus Director for more information on the state testing requirements for graduation.

If a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an EOC assessment, the district will provide remediation to the student in the content area for which the performance standard was not met. This may require participation of the student before or after normal school hours or at times of the year outside normal school operations.

Foundation Graduation Program with Endorsements

The University Academy offers two endorsements: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and Multidisciplinary Studies. Endorsements earned by students will be noted on the student's transcript and diploma. The foundation graduation program also involves the term "distinguished level of achievement", which reflects the completion of at least one endorsement and Algebra II as one of the required advanced mathematics credits. A personal graduation plan will be completed for each high school student. State law and rules prohibit a student from graduating solely under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement unless, after the student's sophomore year, the student and student's parent are advised of the specific benefits of graduating with an endorsement and submit written permission to the academic counselor for the student to graduate without an endorsement. A student who anticipates graduating under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement and who wishes to attend a four-year university or college after graduation must carefully consider whether this will satisfy the admission requirements of the student's desired college or university. Graduating under the foundation graduation program will also provide opportunities to earn "performance acknowledgments" that will be acknowledged on a student's diploma and transcript. Performance acknowledgments are available for outstanding performance in bilingualism and biliteracy; in a dual credit course; on an AP exam; on the PSAT, ACT-Aspire, SAT, or ACT exam, which are national exams; or for earning a nationally or internationally recognized license or certificate. The criteria for earning these performance acknowledgments are prescribed by state rules, and the academic counselor can provide more information about these acknowledgments.

In order to obtain the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program, which will be denoted on a student's transcript and diploma and is a requirement to be considered for automatic admission purposes to a Texas four-year college or university, a student must complete an endorsement and take Algebra II as one of the four mathematics credits.

As a STEM school, it is the practice of University Academy that every high school student is enrolled in math and science courses each year of high school. This prepares the student for a successful postsecondary experience.

The parent of a student who wishes to graduate in less than four years, should contact the academic counselor no later than the end of 10th grade. Students graduating in less than four years:

- graduate at the Distinguished Level of the Foundation Graduation Plan with an Endorsement OR the Texas First Graduation Plan
- Pay tuition and fees for course work outside of the regularly scheduled school day (including dual credit courses) necessary to fulfill graduation requirements early
- complete the FAFSA requirement for graduation

Personal Graduation Plans for Students Under The Foundation Graduation Program

A personal graduation plan will be developed for each high school student who is subject to the requirements of the foundation graduation program. The district encourages all students to pursue a personal graduation plan that includes the completion of at least one endorsement and to graduate with the distinguished level of achievement. Attainment of the distinguished level of achievement entitles a student to be considered for automatic admission to a public four-year college or university in Texas, depending on his or her rank in class. The school will review personal graduation plan options with each student entering grade 9 and his or her parent. Before the end of grade 9, a student and his or her parent will be required to sign off on a personal graduation plan that includes a course of study that promotes college and workforce readiness and career placement and advancement, as well as facilitates the transition from secondary to postsecondary education. The student's personal graduation plan will denote an appropriate course sequence based on the student's choice of endorsement.

Please also review TEA's Graduation Toolkit, available here:

<http://tea.texas.gov/communications/brochures.aspx>.

Texas First Diploma Program

At the beginning of each school year, a flyer about the Texas First Diploma Program will be distributed via campus communication systems to all 9th – 11th grade students and their families. More information about the Texas First Diploma Program can be found at:

<https://www.highered.texas.gov/the-texas-first-program/>.

Requirements:

- _____ Earn 22 credits, by allowed methods
- _____ Final grade point average of 3.0 on 4.0 scale
- _____ Scale score of at least the 80th percentile on one college entrance test (ACT, SAT, PSAT/NMSQT, TSIA/TSIA2, or GED-or top 10% of class**)

And

- _____ Passing STAAR EOC in Alg. 1, English 1, English 2 and Biology, with minimum score required by the state 19 TAC §21.52(a)(2)(C)
- _____ or DC course with a C or better

The student graduating under the Early High School Completion Program will not receive an endorsement, due to not achieving 26 credits. They can graduate with the distinguished level of achievement.

Students can also qualify for additional funding under the Texas First Diploma. Contact the district academic counselor for more information about Texas First program eligibility and scholarships. Graduating under the Texas First Diploma does not guarantee automatic admission.

** top 10% is calculated during the current semester or prior semester of counselor verification

Graduation Ceremony/Senior Recognition

Each campus individually hosts a senior recognition evening where their high school seniors will be awarded with any earned cords, stoles, and other awards/scholarships. The salutatorian prepares a speech for this event. Items that may be received:

- Valedictorians and Salutatorians receive medallions to wear at graduation
- National Honor Society members receive an NHS collar
- Honor Scholar status (final GPA of 3.75+) is signified with an orange stole
- Dual Credit Scholar (earned 36+ hours of college credit) is signified with a blue/orange/white cord
- Dual Credit Participant (earned at least 9 hours of college credit) is signified with a blue/white cord

All University Academy graduating seniors may walk in a combined campus Graduation Ceremony on the UT Tyler main campus at the conclusion of the school year. Only students earning all of their graduation credits by the graduation ceremony will participate. Students graduating in the summer will be offered the opportunity to walk with the next graduating class.

- Each campus Valedictorian prepares a speech for the ceremony.
- UA students purchase their regalia earlier in the year from a district selected provider. The gown and mortar board are blue, and the tassel is white/orange. They will wear any cords/stoles received at their senior banquet.
- Other cords/stoles may be worn by the graduate to signify various other achievements and recognitions, such as the child of a military parent, blood donor, or member of a student organization
- If a student had a summer graduation, but would like to participate in the ceremony the following May, it is incumbent upon the student or their parents to stay in touch with the school to follow up on all graduation requirements: gown orders, rehearsal, etc.

Please note: Students who have completed early graduation and are no longer enrolled at UA, but have not yet participated in their class's graduation ceremony (ie: summer or winter graduates), may not attend school-sponsored events. An exception applies to events that allow outside guests, provided the student is invited by an eligible UA student and all campus guidelines are followed.

HAZING (All Grade Levels)

Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off campus directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated to, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include other students.

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

HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS

Student Illness (All Grade Levels)

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she won't be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools are required to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods of time as identified in state rules. For example, if your child has a fever over 100.4 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. In addition, students with stomach illnesses such as diarrhea and/or vomiting, must stay home until they are diarrhea and/or vomit free for 24 hours without diarrhea/vomiting suppressing medications. A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.

In accordance with our no phone policy, students should not be contacting parents from their own device. If a student feels they should contact their parent for health related/illness matters, they should request to speak with the school nurse, or school nurse designee, who will assist in contacting the parents.

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

Contact the school nurse or Director if you have questions or if you are concerned about whether or not your child should stay home.

Bacterial Meningitis (All Grade Levels)

State law requires the district to provide information about bacterial meningitis:

- What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is common, and most people recover fully. Parasitic and fungal meningitis are very rare. Bacterial meningitis is very serious and may involve complicated medical, surgical, pharmaceutical, and life support management.

- What are the symptoms?

Someone with meningitis will become very ill. The illness may develop over one or two days, but it can also rapidly progress in a matter of hours. Not everyone with meningitis will have the same symptoms.

Children (over 2 years old) and adults with bacterial meningitis commonly have a severe headache, high fever, and neck stiffness. Other symptoms might include nausea, vomiting, discomfort looking into bright lights, confusion, and sleepiness. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body.

The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results.

- How serious is bacterial meningitis?

If it is diagnosed early and treated promptly, most people make a complete recovery. In some cases, it can be fatal, or a person may be left with a permanent disability.

- How is bacterial meningitis spread?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. They are spread when people exchange respiratory or throat secretions (such as by kissing, coughing, or sneezing).

The germ does not cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become carriers of the germ for days, weeks, or even months. The bacteria rarely overcome the body's immune system and cause meningitis or another serious illness.

- How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

Maintaining healthy habits, like getting plenty of rest, can help prevent infection. Using good health practices such as covering your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing and washing your hands frequently with soap and water can also help stop the spread of the bacteria. It's a good idea not to share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of people you kiss.

There are vaccines available to offer protection from some of the bacteria that can cause bacterial meningitis. * The vaccines are safe and effective (85–90 percent). They can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven to ten days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five years.

- What should you do if you think you or a friend might have bacterial meningitis?

You should seek prompt medical attention.

- Where can you get more information?

Your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Department of State Health Services office to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the websites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/meningitis, and the Department of State Health Service www.dshs.texas.gov/meningitis.

* Please note that the DSHS requires at least one meningococcal vaccination when entering the 7th grade, and state guidelines recommend this vaccination be administered between age 11 and 12, with a booster dose at 16 years of age. Also note that entering college students must show, with limited exception, evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five-year period prior to enrolling in and taking courses at an institution of higher education. **Please see the district nurse for more information, as this may affect a student who wishes to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus.**

Concussion Response Policy

Concussion Protocol: If a student is suspected of having sustained a concussion during a school-sponsored activity, they will be immediately removed from participation. Parent/guardians will be notified, and the student may only return to activities after meeting medical clearance requirements as outlined by their physician.

Food Allergies (All Grade Levels)

The district requests to be notified when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially those allergies that could result in dangerous or possibly life-threatening reactions either by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact with the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic, as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the School Nurse or Campus Director if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, which addresses employee training, dealing with common food allergens, and specific strategies for dealing with students diagnosed with severe food allergies. When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, individual care plans will be developed to assist the student in safely accessing the school environment. The district's food allergy management plan can be accessed at www.uttua.org.

Head Lice (All Grade Levels)

Head lice, although not an illness or a disease, is very common among children and is spread very easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, or nap time and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones. Senate Bill 1566 states "Notice of Lice"

requires school boards to adopt a policy requiring an elementary school nurse who determines or otherwise becomes aware that a student enrolled in the school has lice, to provide written or electronic notice of that fact to the parent of the child with lice as soon as practicable but not later than 48 hours. The “Notice of Lice” must also be given to the parent of each child assigned to the same classroom as the child with lice not later than the fifth school day, but the notice cannot identify the child who has lice.

If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student’s parent to determine whether the child will need to be picked up from school and to discuss a plan for treatment with an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student has undergone one 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.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm>.

Physical Activity Requirements

(Elementary School)

The district will ensure that students in kindergarten through grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week.

For additional information on the district’s requirements and programs regarding elementary school student physical activity requirements, please see the Director.

(Junior High/Middle School)

The district will ensure that students in middle or junior high school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters or at least 225 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity within each two-week period for at least four semesters.

For additional information on the district’s requirements and programs regarding junior high and middle school student physical activity requirements, please see the Director.

Student Health Advisory Council (SHAC)

UT Tyler University Academy maintains a SHAC to advise on health education and wellness policies. The SHAC meets quarterly and includes parents, educators, students, and community members. The council makes recommendations on physical and mental health education, substance abuse prevention, and child safety topics. Parents may request meeting minutes and recordings, which are posted on the school website.

Student Health Curriculum Policy

Health Curriculum and Parental Rights:

UT Tyler University Academy provides health instruction in accordance with state law and SHAC recommendations. Parents will receive an annual written notice if human sexuality or child safety instruction is offered. This notice will include:

- Curriculum content and schedule
- Opt-out rights without penalty
- Access to curriculum materials
- Opportunities for parental involvement

Instruction on child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking will only be provided with prior written parental consent. Consent forms will be sent at least 14 days before instruction begins. Parents may review or purchase curriculum materials. UT Tyler University Academy does not provide instruction or programming on sexual orientation or gender identity for students in grades PK–12.

Other Health-Related Matters

Physical Fitness Assessment (Grades 3-12)

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to the Director to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

Tobacco Prohibited (All Grade Levels and All Others on School Property)

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, including electronic cigarettes or any other electronic vaporizing device, while on school property at any time or while attending an off-campus school-related activity.

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of all tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes or any other electronic vaporizing device, by students and others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the Student Code of Conduct]

Asbestos Management Plan (All Grade Levels)

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's Asbestos Management Plan is available in the Superintendent's office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact the Superintendent, the district's designated asbestos coordinator, at 903-730-3988.

HOMELESS STUDENTS (All Grade Levels)

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's homeless education liaison at 903-663-8121.

HOMEWORK (All Grade Levels)

Students are expected to engage in home assignments each school day. For more information regarding the expectations of home assignments, please contact your child's teacher.

IMMUNIZATION (All Grade Levels)

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunizations/school/exemptions>.

The form must be filled out correctly and in its entirety. Please note, adding additional items to the form after it is received from DSHS will void the form and it will not be accepted. The District Nurse can assist with filling the form out correctly. The form must be notarized by a Texas Public Notary and submitted to the Director or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are: diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis; measles, mumps, and rubella; polio; hepatitis A; hepatitis B; varicella (chicken pox); and meningococcal. Additionally, TDSHS recommends the influenza vaccine. The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the DSHS. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

A list of vaccine providers can be searched for at this website:

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunizations/school/back-to-school>

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. registered and licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or a member of the student's family or household. **This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition.**

As noted at **Bacterial Meningitis**, entering college students must also, with limited exception, furnish evidence of having received a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five years prior to enrolling in and attending classes at an institution of higher education. A student wanting to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus may be subject to this requirement.

[For further information, see [Texas Department of State Health Services Website](#).]

Inmunizaciones

Todo estudiante debe estar completamente inmunizado contra ciertas enfermedades o debe presentar un certificado o declaración que indique que, por razones médicas o de conciencia —incluyendo creencias religiosas—, el estudiante no será inmunizado. Para las exenciones basadas en razones de conciencia, el distrito solo podrá aceptar los formularios oficiales emitidos por la División de Inmunizaciones del Departamento de Servicios de Salud del Estado de Texas (DSHS). Este formulario puede obtenerse enviando una solicitud por escrito a la División de Inmunizaciones del DSHS (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; o a través de Internet en <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunizations/school/exemptions>.

El formulario debe completarse de manera correcta y en su totalidad. Tenga en cuenta que añadir elementos adicionales al formulario después de haberlo recibido del DSHS anulará su validez y este no será aceptado. El enfermero escolar del distrito puede brindar asistencia para completar el formulario correctamente. El formulario debe ser notariado por un notario público de Texas y entregado al director o al enfermero escolar en un plazo de 90 días a partir de la fecha de su notariación. Si el padre o tutor solicita una exención para más de un estudiante de la familia, se deberá presentar un formulario independiente para cada estudiante.

Las inmunizaciones requeridas son: difteria, tétanos y tos ferina; sarampión, paperas y rubéola; poliomielitis; hepatitis A; hepatitis B; varicela (viruela loca); y enfermedad meningocócica. Adicionalmente, el DSHS recomienda la vacuna contra la influenza. El enfermero escolar puede proporcionar información sobre las dosis apropiadas para cada edad o sobre el historial de la enfermedad —validado por un médico— que el DSHS considera aceptable. La prueba de inmunización puede acreditarse mediante registros personales emitidos por un médico con licencia o por una clínica de salud pública, los cuales deben contar con una firma o un sello de validación.

Puede consultar la lista de proveedores de vacunas en este sitio web:

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunizations/school/back-to-school>

Si un estudiante no debe vacunarse por razones médicas, el estudiante o sus padres deben presentar un certificado firmado por un médico registrado y con licencia en los Estados Unidos que indique que, en opinión del médico, la vacuna requerida está contraindicada médicamente o representa un riesgo significativo para la salud y el bienestar del estudiante o de un miembro de su familia o hogar. Este certificado debe renovarse anualmente, a menos que el médico especifique una condición de por vida.

Como se indica en la sección sobre meningitis bacteriana, los estudiantes que ingresan a la universidad también deben, con algunas excepciones, presentar comprobante de haber recibido la vacuna contra la meningitis bacteriana dentro de los cinco años anteriores a su inscripción y

asistencia a clases en una institución de educación superior. Un estudiante que desee inscribirse en un curso de doble crédito fuera del campus podría estar sujeto a este requisito.

[Para obtener más información, consulte el sitio web del [Texas Department of State Health Services Website](#).]

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM) NOTICE FOR STUDENTS & FAMILIES

UT Tyler University Academy is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy learning environment for all students and staff. As part of this commitment, the school follows an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program. IPM focuses on preventing pest problems and using the least-hazardous methods possible when pest control is needed.

What Is Integrated Pest Management (IMP)?

IPM is a system designed to control pests such as insects, rodents, and weeds through prevention, monitoring, and the careful use of low-risk treatments only when necessary. This includes:

- Preventing pest problems through good maintenance and sanitation
- Monitoring buildings and grounds for signs of pests
- Using non-chemical and low-risk methods as the first choice
- Only using pesticides if they are necessary and approved for school settings

Licensed and Trained Professionals

Only licensed pest control applicators may apply pesticides on school property. These trained professionals follow strict state guidelines and school procedures to ensure student and staff safety.

Notification of Pesticide Use

Families must be informed that pesticides may be used periodically inside or outside school buildings.

- Parents/guardians receive this notification at the time of student registration.
- Information about specific applications—including dates and types of pesticides used—is available upon request.
- Individuals who wish to be notified in advance of applications may request this in writing. The school may provide notification by phone, in writing, or electronically.

Posting of Treatment Notices

Before most pesticide treatments:

- A notice will be posted in a common area of the building at least 48 hours in advance of indoor treatments.
- For outdoor treatments, signs or barriers will mark treated areas until they are safe to re-enter.

Emergency Treatments

If an urgent situation arises that poses an immediate health risk (for example, a dangerous pest infestation), emergency pesticide treatments may be conducted without advance notice.

However:

- A record of the emergency and the reason for it will be kept on file.
- Required safety information will be made available after treatment.

Student and Staff Safety

To ensure safety:

- Pesticides are never mixed or stored in areas occupied by students.
- Treatments are scheduled to minimize exposure to students and staff.
- No outdoor treatments may occur when weather conditions could cause pesticide drift into student-accessed areas.

Record Keeping

The school maintains detailed records of:

- All pesticide applications
- Pest monitoring and inspection reports
- Pest-related complaints

These records are kept for at least two years and are available for review upon request.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES (All Grade Levels)

Questioning of Students

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the Director will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances:

- The Director will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.
- The Director will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents unless the interviewer raises what the Director considers to be a valid objection.
- The Director ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the Director considers to be a valid objection.

Students Taken Into Custody

State law requires the district to permit a student to be taken into legal custody:

- To comply with an order from the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.

Before a student is released to a law enforcement officer or other legally authorized person, the Director will verify the officer's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student.

The Director will immediately notify the Superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the Director considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the Director does not have the authority to prevent or delay a student's release to a law enforcement officer, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

Notification of Law Violations

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been taken into custody, arrested, or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who is thought to have committed certain offenses or who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.
- All appropriate district personnel in regard to a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

LEAVING CAMPUS (All Grade Levels)

Please remember that student attendance is crucial to learning. We ask that appointments be scheduled outside of school hours as much as reasonably possible. Also note that picking up a child early on a regular basis results in missed opportunities for learning. Unless the Director has

granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the school day.

State rules require that parental consent be obtained before any student is allowed to leave campus for any part of the school day. The district has put the following procedures in place to document parental consent:

- For students in elementary and middle school, a parent or otherwise authorized adult must come to the office and sign the student out. Please be prepared to show identification. Once an identity is verified, a campus representative will then call for the student or collect the student and bring him or her to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, we cannot allow you to go to the classroom or other area unescorted to pick up the student. If the student returns to campus the same day, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student back in through the main office upon the student's return. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required.
- For students in high school, the same process will be followed. If the student's parent will authorize the student to leave campus unaccompanied, a note provided by the parent must be submitted to the main office in advance of the absence, no later than two hours prior to the student's need to leave campus. A phone call received from the parent may be accepted, but the school may ultimately require a note to be submitted for documentation purposes. Once the office has received information that the student's parent consents to the student leaving campus, a pass will be issued to the student to hand to his or her teacher with the necessary information. The student must sign out through the main office and sign in upon his or her return, if the student returns the same day. If a student is 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor, the student may produce a note on his or her own behalf. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will be required.
- If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse or other district personnel determines that the student should go home, the nurse will contact the student's parent and document the parent's wishes regarding release from school. Unless directed by the parent to release the student unaccompanied, the parent or other authorized adult must follow the sign-out procedures as listed above. If a student is allowed to leave campus by himself or herself, as permitted by the student's parent, or if the student is age 18 or is an emancipated minor, the nurse will document the time of day the student was released. Elementary and Middle School students must be picked up by a parent authorized adult.

During Lunch

Students will not be allowed to leave campus during lunch hours. The campus is considered a closed campus.

At Any Other Time During the School Day

Students are not authorized to leave campus during regular school hours for any other reason, except with the permission of the Director.

Students who leave campus in violation of these rules will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

LETTER JACKETS

University Academy High School students have the opportunity to earn their letter jacket and letters, using the following guidelines:

Academic Letter

An Academic Letter can be earned by completing 1 year of High School course work on the A Honor roll.

STEM Letter

A STEM letter can be earned by completing 2 years in any combination of STEM activity:

- Robotics
- PLTW (completing a course with an A or scoring an Accomplish/Distinguished on the EOC exams)
- Other STEM Activity (Director Approval Required)

Extracurricular Letters

Extracurricular Letters are earned on a campus-by-campus basis, at the discretion of the Director. Examples can include:

- UIL- participate in one event for 2 years or advance to regionals/state 1 year
- STUCO- 1 year of participation
- Class Officer- 1 year as an elected officer
- NHS- inducted into NHS
- Yearbook- 1 year of service

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS (All Grade Levels)

A student with limited English proficiency (LEP), sometimes referred to as an Emergent Bilingual (EB) in certain state statutes and state rules, is entitled to receive specialized services from the district. To determine whether the student qualifies for services, a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will be formed, which will consist of both district personnel and at least one parent representative. The student's parent must consent to any services

recommended by the LPAC for an EB student. However, pending the receipt of parental consent or denial of services, an eligible student will receive the services to which the student is entitled and eligible.

In order to determine a student's level of proficiency in English, the LPAC will use information from a variety of assessments. If the student qualifies for services and once a level of proficiency has been established, the LPAC will then designate instructional accommodations or additional special programs the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Ongoing assessments will be conducted to determine a student's continued eligibility for the program.

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. For a student up to grade 5, if currently participating in a Bilingual program, a Spanish version of STAAR may be administered. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered annually to all EB students.

If a student is considered EB and receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student's ARD committee will make instructional and assessment decisions in conjunction with the LPAC.

LOST AND FOUND (All Grade Levels)

A "lost and found" collection box is located on campus, contact your front office for location. If your child has lost an item, please encourage him or her to check the lost and found box. The district discourages students from bringing to school personal items of high monetary value, as the district is not responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of each semester.

MAKEUP WORK

Makeup Work Because of Absence (All Grade Levels)

For any missed class, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner. Students will have two days for each day absent to make up the work missed during the absence(s). Once this time period has lapsed, the assignment grade(s) will be replaced with a zero.

A student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time, including absences for extracurricular activities, so that the teacher and student may plan any work that can be completed before or shortly after the absence. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school and that, even though absences may be excused or

unexcused, all absences account for the 90 percent threshold in regard to the state laws surrounding “attendance for credit or final grade.”

A student involved in an extracurricular activity must notify his or her teachers ahead of time about any absences.

A student will be permitted to make up tests and to turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with timelines approved by the Director and previously communicated to students.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL (All Grade Levels)

Parents are strongly encouraged to work with their medical provider to schedule medical appointments and the administration of medicine before school and/or after school.

The district will not purchase medication to give to a student. All medications, both prescription and non-prescription, must have a Medication Authorization Form on file with the campus nurse, that has been signed by their guardian and their physician. Medication Authorization forms can be found on the district website or in the campus front office.

- Only authorized employees may administer:
 - Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
 - Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.
 - Non-prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request from their health care provider.
 - Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student’s individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

Students whose schedules provide regular time spent outdoors, including for recess and physical education classes, should apply sunscreen before coming to school.

For students at the elementary level, the student’s teacher or other district personnel can apply sunscreen to a student’s exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and requests assistance with the application of the sunscreen. Nothing prohibits a student at this level from applying his or her own sunscreen if the student is capable of doing so.

For students at the secondary level, a student may possess and apply sunscreen when necessary. If the student needs assistance with this application, please address the need for assistance with the school nurse.

Whether a student is at the elementary or secondary level, if sunscreen needs to be administered to treat any type of medical condition, this should be handled through communication with the school nurse so that the district is made aware of any safety and medical issues.

A student with diabetes, asthma, or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may be permitted to possess and use prescribed diabetic, asthma, or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her physician or health-care provider and to the school nurse the ability to use the prescribed medication, including any device required to administer the medication.

If the student has been prescribed diabetic, asthma, or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day, the student and parents should discuss this with the school nurse or Director.

In accordance with a student's individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. See the school nurse or Director for information.

Naloxone and Epinephrine

As referenced in Texas Education Code, Section 38.223, the district will maintain the unassigned emergency medications Naloxone (name brand Narcan) and Epinephrine to use in the event of a suspected opioid overdose or exposure to an undiagnosed allergen resulting in anaphylaxis.

Psychotropic Drugs

A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication. It is intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior and is commonly described as a mood- or behavior-altering substance.

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT (All Grade Levels)

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, as required by law, The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law, in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, and provides equal access to designated youth programs.

The following district representatives have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment or gender-based harassment: Blake Bumbard, Title IX Coordinator, 3900 University Blvd., Tyler, TX 75799; 903-565-5760; bbumbard@uttyler.edu

- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: University Academy Superintendent, 3900 University Blvd. Tyler, Texas 75799, 903-730-3988.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: University Academy Superintendent, 903-730-3988.

[See Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.]

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (All Grade Levels)

Working Together

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Your involvement in this partnership may include:

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child daily to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the academic counselor or Director any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements and options for graduation with your child in middle school and again while your child is enrolled in high school.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed.
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, academic counselor, or Director, please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school.
- Becoming a school volunteer.
- Participating in campus parent organizations and committees.
- Serving 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.
- Serving on a committee to assist the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction and other wellness issues.

- Serving on a committee to determine criteria to be used to evaluate the overall performance of the district and each campus in community and student engagement. For further information, please contact the Campus Director.
- Being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child's emotional or mental well-being.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations.

Parent Involvement Coordinator

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs, may be contacted at 903-727-2326.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS

The State of Texas requires that children enrolled in any public or private school have their hearing, vision, and spines screened for proper development. These screenings will be performed by the District Nurse. The results of these screenings may indicate that your child may need to follow up with a physician. Referrals to physicians are made as needed and parents are urged to obtain appropriate medical care following a school screening referral.

Documentation of the follow up with your child's physician should be returned to the school. If you do not have insurance or cannot afford care, please contact the District Nurse as they may be able to assist you with referrals for free or affordable care. If you do not wish the District Nurse to perform the screenings on your child, you may substitute a professional examination by a health care provider of your choice. Documentation of the professional examination **must** be provided to the District Nurse.

PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE (All Grade Levels)

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the Director to excuse their child from reciting a pledge.

State law requires that one minute of silence follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others. In addition, state law requires that each campus provide for the observance of one minute of silence at the beginning of the first-class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001.

PRAYER (All Grade Levels)

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 encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

A student will be promoted only based on academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district.

If a student in grades 2-8 fails two or more core courses, they will be considered for retention, and the Grade Placement Committee will review student records to make a final determination. Additionally, course credit and grade retention are subject to the 90% attendance rule, see Attendance section for details.

If a student in grades 3–8 is enrolled in a class or course intended for students above his or her current grade level in which the student will be administered a state-mandated assessment, the student will be required to take an applicable state mandated assessment only for the course in which he or she is enrolled, unless otherwise required to do so by federal law.

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 Director or special education director.

Parents of a student at or above grade level 3 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her state-mandated exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year. Failure of a student to attend these programs may result in violations of required school attendance as well as the student not being promoted to the next grade level.

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student at the middle school or junior high level who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment or is determined by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9. The PGP will be designed and implemented by an academic counselor, teacher, or another staff member designated by the Director. The plan will, among other items, identify the student's educational goals, address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and outline an intensive instruction program for the student. [For additional information, see the Director] For a student receiving special education services, the student's IEP may serve as the student's PGP and would therefore be developed by the student's ARD committee.

(High School Grade Levels)

To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards or receive a “D” in a dual credit course from UT Tyler.

A student in grades 9-12 will advance a grade level based on the number of course credits earned.

Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments.

REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES (All Grade Levels)

Report Cards with each student’s grades or performance and absences in each class or subjects are made available through Skyward at least once every 9 weeks. Parents and students have access to weekly assignments and grades via Schoology. Parents are highly encouraged to regularly view their child’s performance or progress.

At the end of the fourth week of a nine-week grading period, parents will be given an electronic progress report accessible through Skyward Family Access. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent may be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject.

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the Superintendent pursuant to the board-adopted policy and are designed to reflect each student’s relative mastery of each assignment for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district’s grading policy.

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the Campus Director.

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will be used to determine whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in a class or subject. Parents will be notified if their student is required to attend tutorials.

SAFETY (All Grade Levels)

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

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others 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 Director, Assistant Director, teachers, or bus drivers.

- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher, staff member, director, or through the anonymous reporting application STOPit any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or 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.

Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies

From time to time, students, teachers, and other district employees will participate in preparedness drills of emergency procedures. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to 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 may have to rely on previously provided written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, 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.) in Skyward. Please contact the school nurse to update any information that the nurse or the teacher needs to know.

Emergency School-Closing Information

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that school is dismissed early or opening is delayed because of severe weather or another emergency, or if the campus must restrict access due to a security threat.

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will alert the community in the following ways:

District website, ParentSquare, email, and/or local media.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Use by Students Before and After School (All Grade Levels)

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.

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

After dismissal from school in the afternoon, unless a student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult, or unless students are granted permission to remain on campus, students must leave campus immediately.

Conduct Before and After School (All Grade Levels)

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 rehearsals, club meetings, athletic practices, 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 standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

Use of Hallways During Class Time (All Grade Levels)

Loitering or standing in the halls during class is not permitted. During class time, a student must have permission to be out of the classroom for any purpose. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Cafeteria Services

Each campus will have a breakfast stand open each morning, students can purchase a Brown Bag Breakfast. Free brown bag breakfasts are available based on qualifying through financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential; however, disclosure of a student's eligibility may be made without prior notice or consent to programs, activities, and individuals that are specifically authorized access unless the student's parent notifies the district that a student's information should not be disclosed. A parent's decision will not affect the child's eligibility for free and reduced-price meals or free water. See the campus office to apply for free breakfast services.

State and federal law, as well as board-adopted policies, define when, where, and by whom competitive foods, which are foods not sold as part of the regular meal program, can be served or sold on school premises during the school day.

Library

The University of Texas at Tyler University Academy library is online. For more information, contact the Campus Director.

Meetings of Non-Curriculum-Related Groups (Secondary Grade Levels)

Student-organized, student-led non-curriculum-related groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the Director before and after school.

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 (All Grade Levels)

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 their assigned desks.

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

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

Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices (All Grade Levels)

Use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district as well as personal devices connected to the campus server for Wifi connection.

Any searches of personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with law, and the device may be confiscated in order to perform a lawful search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed.

Vehicles on Campus (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student has full responsibility for the security and content of his or her vehicle parked on university property and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. [See also the Student Code of Conduct.]

Vehicles parked on university property are under the jurisdiction of the campus police. School, district, and university officials and/or campus police may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable suspicion to do so, with or without the permission of the student. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the student's parent will be contacted. If a search is also refused by the student's parent, the school will turn the matter over to law enforcement. The school may, in certain circumstances, contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.

Student Parking Permits (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

Students must have a permit to park on campus. Permits are \$20 per year. Students can purchase their permit online using UT Tyler University's parking portal. By parking on University property, the student is subject to all University rules/regulations. The University's Campus Police will issue citations for violations. Serious violations can result in confiscation of the permit, and a permit may not be reissued to the student. Students and Parents/Guardians should be aware of University Traffic, Parking and Safety Regulations found at:

<https://www.uttyler.edu/offices/emergency-management/parking/>.

Trained Dogs (All Grade Levels)

The campus police may use trained dogs to alert school officials to the presence of prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. At any time, trained dogs may be used around personal property and the areas around vehicles parked on university property. Searches of classrooms, common areas, or student belongings may also be conducted by trained dogs when students are not present. An item in a classroom, locker, or a vehicle to which a trained dog alerts may be searched by school, district, and university officials and/or campus police.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS (All Grade Levels)

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency or who are English language learners, students with educational eligibilities to receive special education services, including Dyslexia, and students with disabilities who are eligible for services under Section 504. 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. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the campus Director.

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 Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). The implementation of MTSS has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts and charter schools to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her 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 students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine if the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

Special Education Referrals:

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special education services or an administrative employee of the school district or open enrollment charter school, the district or charter school must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district or charter school must give the parent prior 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 prior federal 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: Director of Special Education

Phone Number: 903-730-3996

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 the Director of Special Education at (903) 730-3996.

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](#)
- [School Closure and Special Programs](#)

Based on guidance from the Department of Education *Office for Civil Rights (OCR)* and Texas Education Agency (TEA), “If schools are closed, but the district continues to provide educational opportunities to the general student population during the closure, the school must ensure that students with disabilities also have equal access to the same opportunities, including the provision of FAPE. The district must ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in the student's IEP.”

In the event of a school closure in which educational opportunities to the general education student population are provided, parents will be contacted to discuss implementation of their child’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 service plan.

Cómo ayudar a aquellos estudiantes que tienen dificultades de aprendizaje o precisan servicios de educación especial o de la Sección 504

Para aquellos estudiantes que tienen dificultades en el salón de clases normal, todos los distritos escolares y las escuelas autónomas de inscripción abierta deben contemplar servicios de tutoría y compensatorios, y otros servicios de apoyo académico o conductual que estén disponibles para todos los estudiantes, incluido un proceso basado en la Sistema de Apoyo de Múltiples Niveles (MTSS). La implementación de la MTSS tiene el potencial de impactar positivamente en la capacidad de los distritos y escuelas autónomas de satisfacer las necesidades de todos los estudiantes con problemas.

Si un estudiante está experimentando dificultades de aprendizaje, sus padres pueden comunicarse con la(s) persona(s) mencionada(s) más abajo para obtener información sobre el sistema general de remisión o control de la educación general de la escuela para los servicios de apoyo. Dicho sistema vincula a los estudiantes con una variedad de opciones de apoyo, entre las que se encuentra la remisión para que se realice una evaluación de educación especial o una evaluación de la Sección 504 con el fin de determinar si el estudiante necesita asistencia, adaptaciones o servicios específicos. Los padres pueden pedir una evaluación para los servicios de educación especial o de la Sección 504 en cualquier momento.

Remisiones de educación especial:

Si los padres solicitan, por escrito, al director de servicios de educación especial o a un empleado administrativo del distrito escolar o de la escuela autónoma de inscripción abierta que se realice una evaluación inicial para recibir servicios de educación especial, el distrito o la escuela autónoma deben responder dentro de los 15 días lectivos después de haber recibido la solicitud. En ese momento, el distrito o la escuela autónoma deben entregar a los padres notificación previa por escrito respecto de si están de acuerdo o no en evaluar al estudiante, además de enviarles una copia de la *Notificación de salvaguardas procesales*. Si el distrito escolar o la escuela autónoma están de acuerdo en evaluar al estudiante, también deben darles a los padres la oportunidad de prestar su consentimiento por escrito para la evaluación.

Por favor tenga en cuenta que una solicitud para una evaluación de educación especial puede hacerse verbalmente y no necesita hacerse por escrito. Los distritos y escuelas “chárter” deben seguir cumpliendo con todas las notificaciones previas por escrito y los requisitos sobre las salvaguardas procesales de la ley federal para identificar, localizar y evaluar a los niños que se intuya puedan ser niños con alguna discapacidad y que necesite educación especial. Sin embargo, una petición verbal no requiere que el distrito o la escuela “chárter” respondan dentro del periodo establecido de los 15 días escolares.

Si el distrito o la escuela autónoma deciden evaluar al estudiante, deben completar la evaluación inicial y el informe de la evaluación dentro de los 45 días lectivos posteriores al día en que reciban el consentimiento por escrito de los padres para evaluar al estudiante. Sin embargo, si el estudiante se ausenta de la escuela por tres días lectivos o más durante el período de evaluación, dicho período se extenderá la misma cantidad de días lectivos que el estudiante haya faltado.

Existe una excepción al plazo de 45 días lectivos. Si un distrito o una escuela autónoma reciben el consentimiento de los padres para la evaluación inicial entre los 35 y 45 días lectivos previos al último día de clases del año, deben completar el informe escrito y proporcionarles una copia del mismo a los padres, a más tardar, el 30 de junio de dicho año. No obstante, si el estudiante falta a la escuela tres días o más durante el período de evaluación, no se aplica la fecha límite del 30 de junio, sino que se aplica el plazo general de 45 días lectivos más prórrogas por ausencias de tres días o más.

Al completar la evaluación, el distrito o la escuela autónoma deben proporcionar a los padres una copia del informe de evaluación en forma gratuita.

Hay disponible información adicional sobre educación especial del distrito o la escuela autónoma en el documento complementario titulado *Guía para padres sobre el proceso de admisión, revisión y retiro*.

Persona de contacto para las remisiones de educación especial:

La persona designada para contactar en relación con las opciones para un estudiante que experimente dificultades de aprendizaje o en relación con una remisión a evaluación para recibir servicios de educación especial es:

Persona de contacto: Special Education Coordinator

Número de teléfono: (903) 730-3996

Remisiones de la Sección 504:

Cada distrito escolar o escuela autónoma debe tener estándares y procedimientos en vigor para la evaluación y colocación de estudiantes en el programa de la Sección 504 del distrito o la escuela autónoma. Además, los distritos y las escuelas autónoma deben implementar un sistema de salvaguardas procesales que incluya una notificación, una oportunidad para que los padres o tutores examinen los registros relevantes, una audiencia imparcial en la que puedan participar los padres o tutores y en la que haya representación por parte de un abogado, y un procedimiento de revisión.

Persona de contacto para las remisiones de la Sección 504:

La persona designada para contactar en relación con las opciones para un estudiante que experimente dificultades de aprendizaje o en relación con una remisión a evaluación para recibir servicios de la Sección 504 es el Director de Educación Especial al (903)730-3996:

Información adicional:

Los siguientes sitios web ofrecen información y recursos para los estudiantes con discapacidades y sus familias.

- Marco legal del proceso de educación especial centrado en el niño
- Red de colaboradores y recursos
- Centro de Información de Educación Especial
- Texas Project First

Cierre de la escuela y programas especiales

Basado en la guía del Departamento de Educación Oficina de los Derechos Civiles y la Agencia de Educación de Texas (TEA), "Si las escuelas están cerradas, pero el distrito continúa proveyendo oportunidades educativas a los estudiantes durante el cierre, la escuela deberá asegurarse que los estudiantes con discapacidades también tengan el mismo acceso a las mismas oportunidades, incluyendo la provisión de FAPE. El distrito debe asegurar, hasta lo máximo posible, cada estudiante con una discapacidad puede ser provisto de educación especial y los servicios relacionados e identificados en plan individual del estudiante (IEP)."

En el caso del cierre de las escuelas en las cuales los alumnos de educación general son provistos con oportunidades educativas, los padres serán contactados para discutir sobre la implementación del plan individual de su hijo (IEP) o el plan 504.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Secondary Grade Levels Only

SAT/ACT (Scholastic Aptitude Test and American College Test)

Many colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. Students are encouraged to talk with the academic counselor early during their junior year to determine the appropriate exam to take; these exams are usually taken at the end of the junior year. The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and Pre-ACT Secure are the corresponding preparatory and readiness assessments for the SAT and ACT, and more information can be obtained on these assessments from the academic counselor.

Note that participation in these assessments may qualify a student to receive a performance acknowledgment on his or her diploma and transcript under the foundation graduation program and may qualify as a substitute for an end-of-course testing requirement in certain circumstances. A student's performance at a certain level on the SAT or ACT also makes the student eligible for automatic admission to a Texas public institution of higher education.

TSIA2 (Texas Success Initiative Assessment)

Prior to enrolling in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test called the Texas Success Initiative Assessment 2.0 (TSIA2). The purpose of the TSIA2 is to assess the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering freshmen-level students should have if they are to perform effectively in undergraduate certificate or degree programs in Texas public colleges and universities. This assessment will be required before a student enrolls in a dual-credit course offered through the district as well. Achieving certain benchmark scores on this assessment for college readiness may also waive certain end-of-course assessment requirements in limited circumstances.

The district will provide the Accuplacer assessment for the Mathematics test in the spring of 8th grade, for students currently enrolled in Algebra I. In the fall of 9th grade, students will be given the Reading and Essay portions. If any portion is not passed, students will have the opportunity to retest in the spring of 9th grade with prep work built into an elective course, such as the College and Career Prep course. Other opportunities may be provided in 10th and 11th grade.

Grades 3–8

STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness)

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels are required to take the state assessment, called STAAR, in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8
- Reading, annually in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

For any student who does not pass the STAAR test in grades 3–8 or STAAR (EOC) end-of-course assessments, the student will be assigned a classroom teacher who is a certified master, exemplary, or recognized teacher, or the student will receive supplemental instruction (tutoring) before or after school or embedded in the school day. Students receiving supplemental instruction (tutoring) will receive:

- no less than 15 or 30 hours depending on student performance and is provided in the summer or at least once per week in the school year;
- limited to two subjects per year, prioritizing math and RLA.

STAAR Alternate 2, for students receiving special education services who meet certain state-established criteria, will be available for eligible students, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

High School Courses

End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments

STAAR end-of-course (EOC) assessments are administered for the following courses:

- Algebra I
- English I and English II,
- Biology
- United States History

Satisfactory performance on the applicable assessments will be required for graduation, unless otherwise waived or substituted as allowed by state law and rules.

There are three testing windows during the year in which a student may take an EOC assessment, which will occur during the fall, spring, and summer months. If a student does not meet satisfactory performance, the student will have additional opportunities to retake the assessment.

STAAR Alternate 2, for students receiving special education services who meet certain criteria established by the state, will be available for eligible students, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

A student's ARD committee for students receiving special education services will determine whether successful performance on the EOC assessments will be required for graduation within the parameters identified in state rules and the student's personal graduation plan.

State Testing Participation Policy

In accordance with guidance from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the state of Texas does not offer an option for parents or students to opt out of state assessments. However, students may refuse to participate in the test. TEA has provided the following clarification:

District testing personnel are required to provide testing opportunities to all students who are present on campus during the administration of a state assessment. If a student is in attendance but chooses not to participate or refuses to respond to test questions, the test will still be submitted for scoring, as both federal and state laws require all eligible students to be accounted for in the state testing process. While Texas law allows families to temporarily remove their child from a class or school activity due to an objection, this provision does not extend to statewide assessments.

What This Means for Students and Families: If your child is present on campus during the testing window, the school is required to provide the opportunity to test. Your child will be placed in a testing room each day they are in attendance during the testing window. This procedure will continue on any subsequent day your child is on campus until the testing window closes.

Once the testing window has ended, no further make-up testing will occur, and the regular school schedule will resume.

STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE (All Grade Levels)

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district strives to assist any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (temporary or permanent custody of the state) with the enrollment and registration process, as well as other educational services throughout the student's enrollment in the district.

A student who is placed in foster care and who is moved outside of the district's attendance boundaries is entitled to continue enrollment at the school he or she was attending prior to the placement until the student reaches the highest grade level at the particular school. In addition, if a student in grade 11 or 12 is transferred to another district and does not meet the graduation requirements of the transferring district, the student can request to receive a diploma from the previous district if he or she meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

Please contact the Testing/Academic Coordinator, who has been designated as the district's foster care liaison, with any questions at 903-663-8121.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION (All Grade Levels)

If you are worried that your child may be using or is in danger of experimenting, using, or abusing illegal drugs or other prohibited substances, please contact the campus Director. The campus Director can provide you with a list of community resources that may be of assistance to you. The DSHS maintains information regarding children's mental health and substance abuse intervention services on its website: <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/maternal-child-health/adolescent-health> .

SUICIDE AWARENESS (All Grade Levels)

The district is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its students. If you are concerned about your child, please access <http://www.texassuicideprevention.org> or contact the Campus Director for more information related to suicide prevention services available in your area.

TARDIES (All Grade Levels)

Students are expected to be in first period by 7:55 a.m. Parents are required to sign students in at the front office when students arrive late. The campus will track tardies using the SchoolSAFEid system. To be excused, a tardy must meet the same criteria as an excused absence. Tardies that are not excused are considered unexcused. Every 3rd unexcused tardy within the semester will count as 1 absence in relation to the 90% rule.

TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT, AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS (All Grade Levels)

Textbooks and other district-approved instructional materials are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Any books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. Electronic textbooks and technological equipment may also be provided to students, depending on the course and course objectives. A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return an item in acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided with the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day.

TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES

Philosophy and Commitment

University Academy is dedicated to implementing trauma-informed competencies throughout the district. Trauma-informed school approaches positively impact all students, regardless of trauma history. Our district recognizes that trauma can significantly affect learning, behavior, and overall student well-being, and we are committed to creating safe, supportive environments that promote healing and resilience.

Training Requirements

All district and campus staff complete mandatory Trauma-Informed Care Training provided by Percipio, specifically:

- School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
- Student Mental Health Awareness, Intervention, and Referral

Training Schedule:

- Annual training is required for all returning staff
- Mandatory training for all incoming staff within 30 days of employment

- Training certificates are recorded and maintained by the UT Tyler Human Resources Department
- Additional professional development opportunities are provided as available

Identification and Response Protocols

1. **Universal Screening:** Staff are trained to recognize signs of trauma in students
2. **Tiered Response System:** Multi-level support structure from classroom interventions to intensive services
3. **Collaboration:** Coordination between teachers, counselors, administrators, and families
4. **Documentation:** Appropriate record-keeping while maintaining student confidentiality

Resources

Student and Family Support

Mental health resources for students and families are available on the school website

at: <https://www.uttua.org/families-students/mental-health-resources/index.php>

Campus-specific lists of local community mental health services are provided upon request or following referral to the counseling center.

Professional Resources

- Trauma-informed practice guidelines for staff
- Crisis intervention protocols
- Professional development materials and ongoing training opportunities

Referral Process

Parents, teachers, administrators, and students may complete a counseling referral when concerns arise regarding a student's mental health and well-being.

Referral Procedures

1. **Submission:** Referrals are completed using the designated form and submitted to the campus counselor
2. **Initial Contact:** Campus counselors contact the parent or legal guardian within 48 hours of receiving the referral
3. **Service Coordination:** Counselors offer appropriate on-campus counseling services and coordinate with external providers when necessary
4. **Follow-up:** Regular monitoring and communication with families regarding student progress and needs

Confidentiality and Documentation

All referrals and services are provided in accordance with FERPA guidelines and district confidentiality policies. Appropriate documentation is maintained while protecting student privacy rights.

Continuous Improvement

University Academy regularly evaluates the effectiveness of trauma-informed practices through:

- Staff feedback
- Student outcome data analysis
- Family satisfaction surveys
- Collaboration with community mental health partners

This commitment to trauma-informed care is integrated into our District Improvement Plan and supported by ongoing professional development, resource allocation, and policy review.

TRANSCRIPTS

High school transcripts must be requested from the academic counselor through the transcript request form located on the district website, www.uttua.org . Students will be allowed 5 transcript requests during their senior year. Additional transcripts can be purchased for \$5.00 each. Students need to allow 5 working days for their transcript request to be filled.

TRANSPORTATION (All Grade Levels)

School-Sponsored Trips

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips may be provided transportation by the school to and from the event. All students are strongly encouraged to use this transportation. In the event that a legal guardian wants to provide transportation for their own child (children) a “Legal Guardian Request to Transport Child (Children)” form will need to be completed and submitted to the office no later than 72 hours prior to the event date. The school has the right to deny requests based on special circumstances. Parents may only transport their own students. Students may be given permission by the campus director to drive their own vehicle to an event only if going directly from home to the event, without stopping at school.

Buses and Other School Vehicles

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses and other district vehicles remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding in district vehicles, including buses, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

- Follow the driver’s directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the vehicle in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the vehicle or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the vehicle.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco on any district vehicle.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.

- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the vehicle and before crossing in front of the vehicle.
- Follow any other rules established by the operator of the vehicle.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct; the privilege to ride in a district vehicle, including a school bus, may be suspended or revoked.

VANDALISM (All Grade Levels)

To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended—both this year and for years to come—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.

VIDEO CAMERAS (All Grade Levels)

For safety purposes, video and audio recording equipment may be used to monitor student behavior, including on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used.

The Director will review the video and audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL (All Grade Levels)

General Visitors

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. Visitors are defined as any individual coming to view a presentation or attend a campus event, not performing any specific duty or service. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the main office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures. When arriving on campus, all parents and other visitors should be prepared to show identification.

All Parents/visitors to campus are expected to abide by the Visitor and Parent Code of Conduct. If you would like to receive a copy, please contact your campus front office.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the Director and teacher and only so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment. Even if the visit is approved prior to the visitor's arrival, the individual must check in at the main office first.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted. An individual that violates this expectation, depending upon the severity of the violation, may be ejected from meetings and events or otherwise banned from

campus and participation in school-sponsored events under the criminal trespass laws or prohibited from the use of telephone and electronic communication. In situations involving lesser infractions or where remediation is viable, a warning will be provided, either verbal or in writing, prior to the filing of trespass and issuance of a formal ban. Should a parent/guardian or visitor fail to heed the direction issued in the warning, a ban or other restrictions designed to deter the conduct will follow.

If a visitor will be providing any service or specific duty on campus or attending a field trip at the request of a staff member, they would be considered a volunteer and will be asked to complete a release form before the event. If they are attending an overnight trip, a background check will be required.

Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students

On certain days the district may invite representatives from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present information to interested students.

VOLUNTEERS (All Grade Levels)

Volunteers are defined as any non-staff member performing a specific duty: attending a field trip at the request of the teacher, assisting a staff member or classroom teacher, judging, presenting, guest speaking/teaching, a business professional, etc. A volunteer may or may not be related to a scholar on campus.

We appreciate the efforts of volunteers that are willing to serve our district and students. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the Campus Director for more information. -Anyone volunteering on campus will be asked to check in at the front office and complete a release form. If the volunteer is attending an overnight trip, a background check will be required.

WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL (All Grade Levels)

A student under 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent or guardian. The school requests notice at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared.

On the student's last day, the campus registrar will prepare a withdrawal form for the parent or guardian to sign, along with any accompanying paperwork about where the student will be resuming their education. The registrar will collect the student's laptop and charger, if applicable, provide most recent report cards and grades, collect any outstanding fees owed, and check with the school nurse for medications to return. The Director will sign the completed withdrawal form and a copy will be provided to the withdrawing family.

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.

GLOSSARY

Accelerated instruction is an intensive supplemental program designed to address the needs of an individual student in acquiring the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level and/or as a result of a student not meeting the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment.

ACT-Aspire refers to an assessment that took the place of ACT-Plan and is designed as a preparatory and readiness assessment for the ACT. This is usually taken by students in grade 10.

ACT refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the American College Test. The test may be a requirement for admission to certain colleges or universities.

ARD is the admission, review, and dismissal committee convened for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student and his or her parents are members of the committee.

Attendance review committee is responsible for reviewing a student's absences when the student's attendance drops below 90 percent, or in some cases 75 percent, of the days the class is offered. Under guidelines adopted by the board, the committee will determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences and whether the student needs to complete certain conditions to master the course and regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences.

DAEP stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the Student Code of Conduct. UT Tyler University Academy currently does not have a DAEP.

EOC assessments are end-of-course tests, which are state-mandated, and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments are required for graduation. These exams will be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and United States History.

FERPA refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act that grants specific privacy protections to student records. The law contains certain exceptions, such as for directory information, unless a student's parent or a student 18 or older directs the school not to release directory information.

IEP is the written record of the individualized education program prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services. The IEP contains several parts, such as a statement of the student's present educational performance; a statement of measurable annual goals, with short-term objectives; the special education and related services and supplemental aids and services to be provided, and program modifications or support by school personnel; a statement regarding how the student's progress will be measured and how the parents will be kept informed; accommodations for state or districtwide tests; whether successful completion of state-mandated assessments is required for graduation, etc.

ISS refers to in-school suspension, a disciplinary technique for misconduct found in the Student Code of Conduct. Although different from out-of-school suspension and placement in a DAEP, ISS removes the student from the regular classroom.

NCLB Act is the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

PGP stands for Personal Graduation Plan, which is required for high school students and for any student in middle school who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

PSAT is the preparatory and readiness assessment for the SAT.

SAT refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the Scholastic Aptitude Test. The test may be a requirement for admissions to certain colleges or universities.

Section 504 is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined to be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), general education with appropriate instructional accommodations will be provided.

STAAR is the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, the state's system of standardized academic achievement assessments, effective beginning with certain students for the 2011–2012 school year.

STAAR Alternate is an alternative state-mandated assessment designed for students with severe

cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

State-mandated assessments are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Successful performance sometimes is a condition of promotion and passing the STAAR EOC assessments is a condition of graduation. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests if necessary for promotion or graduation.

Student Code of Conduct is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board and identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from a classroom, campus, or district vehicle. It also sets out the conditions that authorize or require the Director or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP, if the school has one. It outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

TELPAS stands for the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System, which assesses the progress that English language learners make in learning the English language and is administered for those who meet the participation requirements in kindergarten–grade 12.

TSIA2 is the Texas Success Initiative Assessment 2.0 designed to measure the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering college-level freshmen students should have if they are to be successful in undergraduate programs in Texas public colleges and universities.

TxVSN is the Texas Virtual School Network, which provides online courses for Texas students to supplement the instructional programs of public-school districts. Courses are taught by qualified instructors, and courses are equivalent in rigor and scope to a course taught in a traditional classroom setting.

UIL refers to the University Interscholastic League, the statewide voluntary nonprofit organization that oversees educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests.

APPENDIX I:

Freedom From Bullying Policy

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Priority Statement

It is the goal of the University of Texas at Tyler University Academy to provide a learning environment free from bullying. Such an environment of civility and good manners is most conducive to learning and high academic achievement. The school will support this goal in a variety of areas, including the establishment of clear procedures for reporting and response, age-appropriate student instruction, staff development and parent or guardian involvement. The school's code of values, character education program, behavior management procedures and the current prevention plan constitute a comprehensive approach to the establishment and maintenance of such an environment.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L.c.71, 370, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's

property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyberbullying.

Definition of Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, 370, is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Scope

The bullying intervention and prevention policies apply to all sites and activities under the supervision of the University of Texas at Tyler University Academy. Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

All staff members who become aware of bullying are required to report it to the campus administration or their designee. These individuals will conduct a prompt and reasonable investigation. The requirement to report the incident does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. When appropriate, referral will be made to a law enforcement agency. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, or who is a witness to or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

The school expects students, parents or guardians who witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to campus administration or designee. Students, parents or guardians and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with the campus administration or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Anonymous reports, either regarding bullying or retaliation, may be mailed to the campus administrator.

Annual Staff Training

Annual training for all school staff on the Plan is incorporated into an extensive training period prior to the start of the school year. This training includes staff duties under the Plan, an overview of steps that the Director, Assistant Directors, or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of how bullying prevention curricula and character education will be integrated for students throughout the school.

Professional Development

Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. Such development will build on the school's character education program and include age-appropriate strategies to prevent and intervene in bullying incidents, cyber-bullying incidence and nature, internet safety, research on students at risk for bullying, and information on power differentials and interactions among witnesses, aggressors and targets of bullying. Additional areas for professional development include the use of positive behavioral interventions, applying constructive disciplinary strategies and maintaining a safe and caring community.

Access to Resources and Services

A school administrator or designee will counsel students who are targets or aggressors in a bullying situation. Targets, aggressors and appropriate family members of involved students will have access to support as needed. Counseling will be arranged in consultation with school authorities and parents. Evaluation and services will be coordinated through district administrators in consultation with parents, school nurses and others, including IEP teams and Special Education professionals as necessary.

Academic and Non-Academic Activities

Character education classes incorporate age-appropriate strategies and lessons on the necessary skills and habits required for the maintenance of respectful communication and a caring community. Friendship and healthy relationships are promoted through examples, positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior and empowering students to take action when witnessing acts of bullying or retaliation. A school-wide accountability promotes the ongoing development

of good habits along with appropriate consequences for disrespectful or negative behavior. Students are consistently presented with clear expectations and established school and classroom routines. Such routines and expectations maintain a safe environment and provide essential boundaries and encouragement of appropriately respectful behavior.

Responding and Reporting Procedures

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made electronically, orally, or in writing. The campus administrator or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying while maintaining a written record of the investigation.

Upon the reporting of an incident, steps will be taken immediately to ensure the target's safety and assess the target's need for assurance. If after investigating, the allegations are substantiated, the investigator will develop a plan to prevent recurrence and determine what disciplinary action is necessary. A range of disciplinary actions may be taken, including but not limited to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, meeting with parents and other authorities, expulsion, and revoking of enrollment. The target's safety needs will be addressed through meetings with parents, teachers, students, relevant authorities and counselors, as appropriate. These meetings will address such issues as creating a personal plan, seating, scheduling, and additional steps as needed to promote the target's safety. The campus administrator or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying a student who a) reports bullying, b) provides information during an investigation of bullying, c) witnesses or provides reliable information about an act of bullying. Parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor will be notified about the results and actions taken to address the current issue as well as to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation. Discipline will be consistent with the school's established code of conduct and behavioral expectations/procedures.

False accusations of bullying or retaliation will be addressed by the school's disciplinary procedures that include meetings with parents, detentions, suspensions, and other disciplinary action as needed. Protection of all students will be provided, regardless of their status under the law.

Notifications

The school's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be distributed in summary form to all parents each year and also posted on the school's website. Every other year the plan will be subject to updating as needed. Parents and guardians will also be notified of opportunities to learn more about the school's plan as it relates to parental responsibilities, with a particular focus on internet safety and the encouragement of good habits at home. Parent/Guardian information on the dynamics of bullying, as well as ways to reinforce the school's prevention plan at home will also be provided.

Definitions

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

Target is student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during the investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

APPENDIX II: Academic Honesty Policy

UT Tyler University Academy regards academic honesty as a cornerstone of its educational mission. It is expected that all schoolwork submitted for the purpose of meeting course or class requirements represent the original efforts of the individual student. Administration, faculty, students and their families are all important contributors to the upholding of this academic integrity in our school community. To this end, it is important that all involved understand their integral role in helping to promote this climate of academic honesty. All forms of academic dishonesty will make a student subject to disciplinary action. The following list provides examples of what a student will not do.

- Plagiarize in written, creative, or oral work. (Plagiarism is using the ideas, whether of a person or a technology application, as one's own without acknowledgment of the source.) Giving it as one's own work and re-submitting work from another person or another class are all unacceptable practices.
- Give or receive unauthorized assistance on exams.
- Alter grades or other academic records
- Submit identical work in more than one course without the prior approval of the instructor. Students may further develop previous work with prior approval of the instructor.

Violation of Academic Honesty Policy

The following rules for conduct apply to all students in grades 7-12 and violation of the rules could result in consequences as described. In most cases the teacher is granted the authority to exercise his/her good judgment in applying the range of consequences described. The principal has the authority to exercise judgment in determining an appropriate consequence but should strive to follow the procedure as outlined.

Rules for Conduct

Students shall not engage in any act of deception or falsification of work product. This includes plagiarism by copying the language structure, idea and/or thought of another and representing it as one's own work, and verbal or written statement of untruth.

Dishonesty, or cheating, is defined as:

- Copying or stealing another person's work or data
- Using ChatGPT and similar tools without instructor permission
- Allowing another person to copy one's own work;
- Doing another person's classwork;
- Creating more than one copy of one's own work for distribution;
- Providing another person with the answers on tests or quizzes; or
- Noncompliance with teachers' test taking procedures.
- Unauthorized copying or development of software

Disciplinary Actions

Any action taken with respect to cheating shall take into account: First, the rights of those students whose educational opportunity was diminished because of another student's dishonesty. Second, the rights of the student who has violated this policy and the need to provide an appropriate action.

By signing this agreement, I _____, acknowledge that I was academically dishonest. I know that I will be on probation for the remainder of the school year. If, in that time, I am to plagiarize again, a disciplinary form will be placed in my high school file. If I do not repeat the offense, the probation will be dropped at the end of the current school year.

The policy was read and explained to me, and I was given an opportunity to ask questions in order to completely understand the policy and how it may affect me. My signature shows that I have a full understanding of what is considered dishonesty or cheating and that I am fully aware of the serious penalty involved if I should choose to be dishonest in the academic work I do while I am a student at University Academy.

Student's Name: _____

Student's Signature: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Teacher's Signature: _____

Director's Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX III

UT Tyler University Academy Graduation Plan Worksheet

Student Name: _____ Campus: LV Pal T

Graduation Year: _____

*English 1 _____ End of Course Exam *English 2 _____ End of Course Exam *English 3 _____ DC _____ *English 4 _____ DC _____ *Required for graduation	*Algebra 1 _____ End of Course Exam *Geometry _____ *Algebra 2 _____ Pre-Calculus _____ DC _____ College Prep Math _____ Statistics _____ DC _____ DC Calculus _____ As a STEM focused school, students must enroll in a math course each year of high school. *Required math courses
*Biology _____ End of course Exam *Chemistry _____ *Physics _____ Earth Space Science _____ DC Science 1 _____ DC Science 2 _____ As a STEM focused school, students must enroll in a science course each year of high school. *Required science courses	*World History _____ *U.S. History _____ DC _____ End of Course Exam *U.S. Govt .5 _____ DC _____ <i>For students starting 9th grade before fall of 2026:</i> *Economics _____ DC _____ <i>For students starting 9th grade after fall of 2026:</i> *PFL _____ *Required for graduation
Foreign Language *Computer Science 1 _____ *Computer Science 2 _____ (Or two years of another foreign language, must be the same language) *Required for graduation	*Fine Art _____ DC _____ *PE _____ *Required for graduation
STEM Endorsement: <u>Engineering</u> <u>Biomedical</u> IED PBS Civil HBS POE MI EDD Bio Inn	Electives 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____

Distinguished Achievement with an Endorsement = minimum of 26 credits

All students must pursue an endorsement and the distinguished achievement plan. All students must also participate in a full-time course load.

APPENDIX IV

2026 – 2027 DUAL CREDIT DEADLINES

8/17/2026	• Last Day to submit TSIA test scores for fall 2026 • Last day to change dual credit courses for the fall • Dual credit on campus enrollment for current UA students for the fall semester 2026. All enrollment forms are due at this time • Last day for students NEW to UA to submit TSIA scores and dual credit forms
8/24/2026	Dual credit courses begin
9/7/2026	Labor Day Holiday-no classes held
10/19 – 10/29/2026	Fall TSIA administration: all 9th graders and select others
10/30/2026	Last day to withdraw for the fall semester
12/3/2026	All TSIA scores for spring dual credit courses are due
11/23 – 11/27/2026	Thanksgiving Holiday
12/3/2026	All spring dual credit forms must be signed
12/7 – 12/11/2026	Fall final exams
12/12/2026	Last day of fall dual credit semester
1/11/2027	Dual Credit courses begin- ALL STUDENTS MUST BE ENROLLED BEFORE THIS DATE
1/18/2027	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday-no classes held
3/8 – 3/12/2027	Spring Break-no classes held
3/1 – 3/5/2027	Spring TSIA Administration for fall 2027 grades 9 and 10 Math
3/29/2027	Last day to withdraw for the spring semester
4/26 – 4/30/2027	Spring Final Exam
5/17 – 5/21/2027	Spring TSIA Administration for 8th grade

