

# HOWE MIDDLE SCHOOL

*“TEACHING, LEARNING, & ACHIEVING TOGETHER”*

*RITCHIE BOWLING, PRINCIPAL  
JENNY MARTIN, ASSIST. PRINCIPAL  
KLAIN ASHLOCK, COUNSELOR*

*KEVIN WILSON, SUPERINTENDENT  
CLAY WILSON, ASSIST. SUPERINTENDENT*

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## Dear Parents and Students,

Together, we strive each day to improve upon our teaching, learning, and achieving. Our mission is to provide the most positive and effective climate for learning possible. Each day we will enable each student to achieve his or her fullest academic, emotional, physical, and social potential.

The handbook is provided as a guide for the procedures followed in the District and on the Middle School Campus. The handbook contains four major sections:

- **Forms to be signed and returned**
- **District Technology Acceptable Use Policy**
- **District Handbook**
- **District Bus Handbook**

Each section contains information that will assist you and your child. **There are forms included that require a signature and need to be returned to office.**

Thank you for your support and working together with our teachers and staff at Howe Middle School.

**Sincere Regards,**

**Ritchie Bowling, M.Ed.  
Principal**

**(Please complete and return detachable forms in the front of this handbook)**

## Acknowledgment Form

My child and I have received a copy of the Howe Middle School Student Handbook [and the Student Code of Conduct (found online) or a printed copy will be provided by request] for 2011–2012. I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year and that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. If I have any questions regarding this handbook or the Code, I should direct those questions to my student’s principal.

Printed name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN FORM**

## **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 Howe ISD to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing by September 3, 2011.

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.

Howe ISD has designated the following information 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

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 \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent: Please circle one of the choices below:**

I, parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (student's name), **(do give)** **(do not give)** the district permission to release the information in this list in response to a request **unrelated to school-sponsored** purposes.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent's Response Regarding 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 requestors without prior written consent.

**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 institutions of higher education upon their request without my prior written consent.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN FORM**

# HOWE ISD ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

## Student Agreement

I, (please print name) \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand the Howe Independent School District Acceptable Use Policy and agree to abide by its provisions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**User Signature**



## Parent or Guardian Agreement (Required if student is under the age of 18)

As the parent or guardian of the above named student, I have read the Howe I.S.D. Acceptable Use Policy. I understand that access to the HISD communications network is designed for educational purposes and that it offers my son/daughter the opportunity to become a learner of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I also understand that because of the global nature of the Internet, that it is impossible to restrict access to all controversial materials. Therefore, I will not hold HISD responsible for materials acquired on the network. I further understand that if I decline permission for my child to access the HISD network and its resources that my child may not be able to fulfill requirements for the class and there may be subsequent consequences unless arrangements are made for alternate assignments.

- I hereby give permission for the above named student to access the HISD communications network.
- I do not give permission for the above named student to access the HISD communications network.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent or Guardian Signature**

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN FORM**

## HOWE ISD ARTWORK RELEASE

Dear Parent:

Our school is a member of Artsonia.com ([www.artsonia.com](http://www.artsonia.com)), the world's largest online student art museum. Artsonia manages school art galleries in a safe and educational manner, developing students' pride and self-esteem, increasing student multicultural understanding through art, and involving parents and relatives in student arts education and accomplishments. Please visit the Artsonia website at [www.artsonia.com](http://www.artsonia.com) to see the millions of artwork already posted by students worldwide.

In accordance with our school policy, I am writing you to seek your permission for showcasing your child's artwork on our school's web gallery on Artsonia. Please sign and return this note to approve your child's participation.

### Parental Permission Form:

I give my permission to display my child's artwork on Artsonia, in accordance with Artsonia's terms and conditions of use\*\*.

I understand that Artsonia preserves students' privacy and anonymity by listing the artwork only under the student's first name and a number – last names are never revealed. I also understand that Artsonia will only display comments on student artwork with parental permission, and therefore grant Artsonia permission to email notifications to me when new comments are available for review. NOTE: This permission will cover the entire tenure of my child at this school.

\*\* Complete details on Artsonia's terms and conditions can be found at [www.artsonia.com/terms](http://www.artsonia.com/terms)

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship to student:** Father Mother Guardian (circle one)

**Parent's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN FORM**

**HOWE ISD MEDIA USAGE, PHOTO REPRODUCTION RELEASE**

(to be signed by any student in Howe ISD over 18)

I, \_\_\_\_\_ give permission to Howe Independent School District and/or its agents to use any images created digitally or traditionally of me for publication purposes. This includes photos, videos, or any other forms of image reproduction.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature



**HOWE ISD MEDIA USAGE, PHOTO REPRODUCTION RELEASE**

(to be signed by a parent or guardian of students under 18)

I give permission to Howe Independent School District and/or its agents to use any images created digitally or traditionally of \_\_\_\_\_ for publication purposes.  
(Student's Name)

This includes 35mm photos, videos, digital photos or any other forms of image reproduction.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN FORM**

**HOWE ISD AND EDNET10 VIDEOCONFERENCING PARTICIPANT WAIVER**

I understand that in a distance learning classroom my voice, physical presence, and participation in classroom activities will be transmitted to distance learning sites and will be electronically recorded. I hereby agree that my voice, presence, and participation and electronic recording of these classes will not be a violation of my personal rights and hereby release any claims for the use of such.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Participant's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Printed Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent's Signature (if participant is under 18)**

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN FORM**

## HOWE ISD SCHOOL BUS RIDER'S CONTRACT

I have read the Bus Rider's Safety Handbook and agree to abide by these rules.

I give my child permission to ride the school bus for field trips, special events, and the transportation to and from school if needed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name (Please Print)                      Parent or Guardian's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address (Please Print)                      Home Telephone                      Work Telephone

\_\_\_\_\_  
School

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Date of Birth                      Grade                      Ethnic Group  
\_\_\_\_Asian                      \_\_\_\_Hispanic

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Age                      School Bus #                      \_\_\_\_American-Indian                      \_\_\_\_Black Non-Hispanic  
\_\_\_\_White                      \_\_\_\_Other Non-Hispanic

Bus Driver \_\_\_\_\_

\*The State of Texas requires this information. Please do not change any of the wordings on this card. Thank you.

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN FORM**

## Drug Screening Parent/Student Consent Form

I acknowledge that I have the authority to consent to drug/alcohol testing of my child. I understand Howe Independent School District's policy regarding illegal substance use. I understand that it is the practice of HISD to conduct drug tests for the purpose of determining eligibility for participating in competitive extracurricular activities/UIL activities and driving privileges. This will also include driving privileges on campus.

I understand that my child cannot be compelled to give a urine sample. I understand that if he/she gives a urine sample it will be tested for drugs and/or alcohol. I understand that the giving of a urine sample, when requested by HISD, is a condition of my child's continued participation in competitive extracurricular activities, UIL activities, and driving privileges. **I understand that if a test of my child's urine sample reveals an unexplained presence of a drug or alcohol, HISD may take action against him/her up to and including termination from participating in any competitive extracurricular activities, UIL activities, and driving privileges.** An exception will be made for the use of legally prescribed medications taken under the direct supervision of a physician. Based on my understanding of the above, I hereby authorize Forward Edge Inc. and other trained personnel to collect urine samples from my child for the purpose of testing for the presence of drugs and/or alcohol.

I further authorize the officers, employees, and agents of Forward Edge Inc. and HISD to communicate my child's drug/alcohol tests both orally and in writing to each other and the child's parent/guardian to communicate such tests results at any HISD administrative or legal proceeding. I also authorize the officers, employees, and agents of Forward Edge Inc. and HISD to have continued access to my child's urine sample/test results for the purpose of any further analysis or study that may be necessary and require the results be communicated to me prior to any HISD administrative proceedings or disciplinary actions. I understand that no physician/patient relationship is established by the collection of this urine sample by Forward Edge Inc., and that no privilege of confidentiality will attach to these test results.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, a minor student  
(print name of parent/guardian) (print name of student)  
enrolled in the Howe Independent School District.

I HERBY RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS, HISD AND FORWARD EDGE INC. AND THEIR TRUSTEES, OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES, AGENTS, REPRESENTATIVES AND MEDICAL STAFF MEMBERS FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITY, CLAIMS, DAMAGES, AND COSTS THAT MAY ARISE AS A RESULT OF ANY ACTION TAKEN ON AN UNFAVORABLE OUTCOME THAT OCCURS AS A RESULT OF THIS DRUG/ALCOHOL TEST.

THIS IS A LEGAL CONSENT AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY FORM. PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY AND BE SURE YOUR QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED BEFORE SIGNING.

THIS AUTHORIZATION WILL BE VALID DURING THE STUDENT'S ENROLLMENT AT HOWE ISD.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**PRINTED NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**WITNESS SIGNATURE (School Employee or Notary)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**STUDENT SIGNATURE**

I allow my child to participate in this program as:

\_\_\_\_\_ A student involved in UIL/extra-curricular activities and/or a student driving on campus

\_\_\_\_\_ A student enrolled voluntarily

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not allow my child to participate in this program. I understand that my child will not be allowed to participate in UIL/extra-curricular activities and/or drive on any Howe ISD campuses. I further understand I must sign this form, to keep on file, that I am not allowing my child to participate in this program.

Prescription drugs and dosages my son/daughter takes regularly, as prescribed by a physician.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Drug Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dosage

\_\_\_\_\_  
Drug Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dosage

\_\_\_\_\_  
Drug Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dosage

\_\_\_\_\_  
Drug Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dosage

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN FORM**  
**HOWE ISD ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Note: Please read the following carefully before signing the attached agreement on a previous page. This is a legally binding document. Consent or denial of student usage according to this policy will be on an annual basis. Employee consent or denial will continue until policy is altered, amended, or replaced. Signed agreements will be on file on each campus.

Network services are now available to students and teachers in the Howe Independent School District (HISD). The HISD is the provider of multiple networks. These services are a vital asset and include inner school, district-wide, and worldwide access to vast, diverse, and unique resources. Our goal in providing these resources is to promote educational excellence in HISD schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

Network access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies, regional and state networks. The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users that must adhere to strict guidelines. The terms and conditions listed below are provided so that users are aware of the privileges and the responsibilities related to network use. Efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of the network resources is expected. Signatures on the attached agreement are legally binding and indicate that the parties who signed have read this Acceptable Use Policy carefully and understand its significance.

**SYSTEM ACCESS:**

- District employees will be granted access to the district's system.
- Students in grades K-4 will be granted access to the District's system by their teachers, as appropriate, after completion of instruction in the proper use of the network by a HISD staff member.
- Students in grades 5-12 will be granted access to the District's system under supervision after completion of instruction in the proper use of the network by a HISD staff member.
- If a user violates any of the provisions of network use, the user may be subject to disciplinary action as included in our student code of conduct.
- Any system user identified as a security risk or as having violated District and/or campus computer use guidelines may be denied access to the District's system.
- User's access will cease upon withdrawal from school or termination of employment.

**INDIVIDUAL USER RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The purpose of the HISD network, internet access, and access to other online services is to support research and education in HISD and among other academic institutions by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The use of the network must be in support of education and be consistent with the educational objective of the Howe Independent School District. All network access using district equipment must comply with HISD terms and conditions. The terms and conditions are not limited to, but include, the following user guidelines:

- Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.
- Use for commercial activities, for product advertisement, or political lobbying is prohibited.
- Illegal activities are strictly prohibited.
- All files and programs on the computer belong to someone. Users shall not erase, rename, or make unusable anyone else's files or programs.
- Users shall not copy, change, or transfer any software provided by HISD, teachers, or another student without permission from the Technology Director.
- Users shall not copy or place on any district system any copyrighted software from any source without a license. It is generally illegal to copy any software that has a copyright. The use of illegally copied software is considered a criminal offense and is subject to criminal prosecution.
- Users shall not intentionally write, produce, generate, copy, propagate, or attempt to introduce any computer code designed to self-replicate, damage, or otherwise hinder the performance of any computer's memory, file system, or software.
- Users shall not access or create materials, send or post messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal.
- Files and electronic mail are subject to monitoring. System administrators have access to all files, including mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the appropriate authorities.
- Users shall not waste district resources related to the electronic communications system.
- Users shall not gain unauthorized access to resources or information.
- Users shall not remove HISD property (hardware or software) without written permission of the Technology Director.
- Users shall not attempt to sabotage network systems or programs.
- Users shall not bring prohibited materials into the schools' electronic environment.
- Users shall upload or download public domain programs only with the permission of the Technology Director. Users are responsible for determining whether a program is in the public domain.
- Users shall not attempt to secure a higher level of privilege on network systems.
- Individual users will be responsible at all times for the proper use of all hardware and software.
- Development of web pages for instructional support is encouraged. Administrative approval shall be acquired before posting an educational web page for public access. Web page content shall be consistent with the guidelines of HISD policy.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF IMPROPER USE:**

The use of the HISD network is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of that privilege. Based upon the Acceptable Use Policy outlined in this document, the system administrators will deem what is inappropriate use and their decision is final. Use of the networks may be denied, revoked, or suspended as a consequence of inappropriate use. Violation of this document by any student or employee may result in any disciplinary consequence deemed appropriate by the administration.

## **NETIQUETTE:**

The user is expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These guidelines include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Be polite. Do not write or send abusive messages to others.
- Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.
- Do not reveal personal information about yourself, other students, or colleagues such as addresses or phone numbers.
- Do not use the network in such a way that would disrupt the use of the network by others (e.g. uploading and/or downloading huge files such as, but not limited to, shared music files found by sites like “Napster”; sending mass e-mail messages; indiscriminately subscribing to services or newsgroups, annoying other users electronically.)
- All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property subject to copyright regulations.
- Do not pretend to be someone else when sending/receiving mail or any other time when using the system.

## **CONSENT REQUIREMENTS:**

HISD will make every effort to enforce the following:

- No student under the age of 18 will be allowed access to the District communications network without written permission of a parent or guardian.
- No personally identifiable information about a student will be posted on a web page under HISD control unless the district has received written consent from the student’s parent or guardian.
- Any original work created by any District student or employee created on the District’s network will become the property of Howe Independent School District.

**DISCLAIMER:**

HISD offers no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied for the services provided. HISD will not be responsible for damages suffered, such as loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by the district's or user's errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the HISD network is at user's own risk. HISD has no claim for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through network services.

HISD has established user guidelines for all members of the district, students, teachers, staff, and administrators. HISD utilizes filtering software in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), however, unacceptable material or communication may be available on a global network. It is impossible to filter or control all materials and an industrious user may discover inappropriate resources. HISD believes that the valuable information and interaction available on the worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may discover material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the district. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. Howe Independent School District supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to allow access to HISD electronic resources.

Opinions, advice, services, and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers, or other third-party individuals in the system are those of the providers and not the District.

The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the District's electronic communications system.

Parents and Students of Howe ISD

Re: HB 3678 – **Religious Viewpoint Antidiscrimination Act**

During the 80<sup>th</sup> Legislative session, House Bill 3678, also called the Religious Viewpoint Antidiscrimination Act (“Act”) was passed by the Legislature. The Act is effective beginning with the 2007-2008 school year. The Act addresses four general areas: freedom of religious expression, student speakers, religious expression in class assignments, and freedom to organize religious groups and activities. The purpose of the Act is to ensure school districts treat a student’s voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint on a subject, not otherwise prohibited, in the same manner it treats a student’s voluntary expression of a secular viewpoint on a subject not otherwise prohibited.

In compliance with the Act, the District Board of Trustees approved a policy that establishes a “limited public forum” for student speakers at all school events at which a student is to publicly speak. The Act requires that the policy: 1) provide the forum in a manner that does not discriminate against a student’s voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject; 2) provide a method, based on neutral criteria, for the selection of student speakers at school events and graduation ceremonies; 3) ensure that a student speaker does not engage in obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent speech; and 4) state, in writing, orally, or both, that the student’s speech does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression of the district.

In accordance with the policy, student speakers will be given a limited public forum to introduce the following school events: Varsity Home Football Games, Designated Banquets and assemblies that include an invited guest speaker. Students are eligible to participate as introductory speakers if they are: 1) in the highest two grade levels of the school; 2) volunteer; 3) are affiliated with the organization sponsoring the event (for banquets only); and 4) are not in a disciplinary placement (ISS, OSS, DAEP, or JJAEP) at the time of the speaking event. If your child meets this neutral criteria and wishes to speak at any event during the fall semester, he/she must submit their name to their campus principal, no later than *September 10, 2010*. Shortly thereafter, you will be notified whether your child was selected to speak and the dates/events for which he/she will be speaking. If there are no student volunteers, the campus will seek volunteers again at the beginning of next semester. If no students volunteer or if the selected speaker declines or becomes ineligible, no student introduction will be made at the event.

The names of the students who volunteer to speak will be randomly drawn until all names have been selected. The students, in the order drawn, will be matched chronologically to the single event for which the student shall give the introduction. The assignment process will be repeated as needed until a student speaker is assigned for all of the events identified above. The campus will repeat the selection and assignment process at the beginning of each semester. A student may not make a particular request to speak at a particular event. Speakers will be drawn at random according to the order of the school calendar.

In addition to these speakers, students who have attained special positions of honor in the school have traditionally addressed school audiences from time-to-time as a tangential component of their achieved positions. These speakers will continue their duties in this regard and the District will treat their voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and will not discriminate against a student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

The subject of the student introductions must relate to the purpose of introducing the designated event. The selected student must stay on the subject. The selected student may not engage in speech that:

- Is obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent;
- Creates reasonable cause to believe that the speech would result in material and substantial interference with school activities or the rights of others;
- Promotes illegal drug use;
- Violates the intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or other rights of another person;
- Contains defamatory statements about public figures or others; or
- Advocates imminent lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such action.

Students that violate these restrictions will be prohibited from eligibility to speak under the policy for a defined period. As part of the speaking events, the District will provide a disclaimer in written or oral form that states the student volunteered to speak, was selected to speak based on neutral criteria, and that the student's speech does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression of the District.

Questions regarding this policy may be directed to Kevin Wilson, HISD Superintendent.

**HOWE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION**  
**105 West Tutt St., Howe, Texas 75459**  
**(903) 532-3204**

**HOWE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
**315 Roberts St., Howe, Texas 75459**  
**(903) 532-3320**

**HOWE MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**300 Beatrice St., Howe, Texas 75459**  
**(903) 532-3286**

**HOWE HIGH SCHOOL**  
**200 East Ponderosa, Howe, Texas 75459**  
**(903) 532-3236**

**Howe Independent School District**

*(Public Notification of Nondiscrimination in Career and Technology Education Programs)*

1. Howe I.S.D. offers career and technology education programs in Vocational Agriculture, Multi-Occupational Cooperative Training, Home Economics and Office Education/Computer Technology. Admission to these programs is based on interest, aptitude, age appropriateness and class space available.

2. It is the policy of Howe I.S.D. not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap in its vocational programs, services, or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

3. It is the policy of Howe I.S.D. not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; 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. Please contact 504 Coordinator, Clay Wilson at 105 W. Tutt St., Howe, TX 75459, 903-532-3204 for information regarding discrimination.

4. Howe I.S.D. will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

5. For information about your rights or grievance procedure, contact the Title IX Coordinator, Mr. Kevin Wilson at 105 W. Tutt St., Howe, Texas 75459, 903-532-3204.

This handbook is not a contract. The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a guideline only. The policies and procedures contained within this handbook can be changed at any time to serve the best interests of the district.

The following has been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements: Mr. Kevin Wilson at 105 W. Tutt St., Howe, Texas 75459, 903-532-3204.

## NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS CONCERNING STUDENT RECORDS

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, each student and/or parent has the right to file complaints concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the provisions of the Act. This Act gives the student or parent the right to ask for changes or alternations in student records. The full rights of the Act are found in the School Board Policies. This book can be viewed in each school office listed on the previous page. Telephone numbers are also listed for parent or student use.

## Howe Independent School District

### Board of Trustees

Leonard Huntsman	President	(2003)
Greg Akins	Vice-President	(2007)
Pat Stewart	Secretary	(1998)
Scott Renfro	Member	(2007)
Bruce Dawsey	Member	(2009)
Mark Abner	Member	(2009)
Brad Anderson	Member	(2011)

### Administration

Kevin Wilson	Superintendent
Clay Wilson	Assistant Superintendent
Blake Stiles	High School Principal
Shawn Martin	High School Assistant Principal
Ritchie Bowling	Middle School Principal
Jenny Martin	Middle School Assistant Principal
Darla Williams	Elementary School Principal
Clarissia Doty	Elementary School Dean of Students
Teresa Reynolds	High School Counselor
K'lain Ashlock	Middle School Counselor
Julie Snapp	Business Manager
Sally Abercrombie	Food Service
Ricky Brinlee	Maintenance Director

Greetings:

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the student body of Howe schools. We are proud of our school and its students.

On the following pages are general guidelines for students. I hope both you and your parents will become familiar with them. I believe we have the finest young ladies and gentlemen in our student body that can be found anywhere. The information found in this booklet will help us to be even better.

Best wishes for a successful year.

Kevin Wilson

Superintendent

### **FIGHT SONG**

We are the Bulldogs of Howe High and we will fight to win this game,

And we will cheer both loud and clear, our team to victory and fame.

Fight to the end, don't break or bend, until we have a Victory.

Fight for the Black, the White, and win tonight

For the Glory of Old Howe High.

**MASCOT** Bulldog

**COLORS** Black and White

**SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS** 7:40 AM – 3:40 PM

## **SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

This section of the Howe ISD Student Handbook includes information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

#### **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 on a daily basis 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 counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements of the graduation programs with your child, if your child is entering ninth grade.
- 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, counselor, or principal, 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.
- 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 the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction.
- 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 is Darla Williams, Elementary Principal.

## **PARENTAL RIGHTS**

### **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights**

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 Surveys and Activities**

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 or selling that information.
- 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.

### **Inspecting Surveys**

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

### **Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff**

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.

### **Reviewing 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.

### **Displaying a Student's Artwork and Projects**

Teachers may display students' work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement. The district will seek parental consent before displaying students' artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, and the like on the district's Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication. The release form can be found at the front of the handbook on pg. vii.

### **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,
- Teacher and counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns, and
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.

### **Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student**

As a parent, you may grant or deny any written request from the district to make a video or voice recording of your child. State law, however, 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.

## **Granting Permission to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction**

As a parent, if your child is under the age of 14, you must grant permission for your child to receive instruction in the district's parenting and paternity awareness program or your child will not be allowed to participate in the instruction. This program, developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE), is incorporated into the district's health education classes.

## **Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom**

You may remove your child temporarily from the classroom if 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 the Texas Education Agency.

## **Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction**

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) is involved with the selection of course materials for such instruction.

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.

As a parent, you are entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, you may remove your child from any part of this instruction with no academic, disciplinary, or other penalties. You may also choose to become more involved with the development of curriculum used for this purpose by becoming a member of the district's SHAC. Please see the campus principal for additional information.

## **Excusing a Student from 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 participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows.

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

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.

## **Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct**

A noncustodial parent may request in writing that he or she be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to his or her child's misconduct that may involve placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) or expulsion.

## **School Safety Transfers**

As a parent, you have a right:

- To request the transfer of your child to another classroom if your child has been determined by the board to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. See the superintendent for information.
- To request the transfer of your child to a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault.

## **Requesting Classroom Assignment for Multiple Birth Siblings**

As a parent, if your children are multiple birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets, etc.) assigned to the same grade and campus, you may request that they be placed either in the same classroom or in separate classrooms. Your written request must be submitted no later than the 14th day after the enrollment of your children.

## **Parents of Students with Disabilities**

Parents of students with learning difficulties or who may need special education services may request an evaluation for special education at any time. For more information, contact Clay Wilson, Asst. Superintendent.

## ***Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education***

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 that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of school 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 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent of his or her rights if the parent disagrees with the district. Additionally, the notice must inform the parent how to obtain a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*. Additional information regarding the IDEA is available from the school district in a companion document *A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

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

Texas Project First

Partners Resource Network

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is your child's school counselor.

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that any other student residing in the household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus.

### **Student Records**

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

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

- The 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.

- District school officials who have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records. School officials would include trustees and employees, such

as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff; a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, 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; or investigating or evaluating programs.

- Various governmental agencies.
- Individuals granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.

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

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

Records may be 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.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student’s records and request a correction 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 principal. 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 is handled through the general complaint process found in the local board policy. 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 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.

**Please note:**

Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with federal law regarding student records. The complaint may be mailed to:

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

***Directory Information***

The law permits the district to designate certain personal information about students as “directory information.” This “directory information” will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, release of a student’s directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of your child’s first day of instruction for this school year.

***Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes***

The district often needs to use student information for school-sponsored purposes. For specific school-sponsored purposes, the district may use your child’s directory information. This information will not be used for other purposes without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

Unless you object to the use of your child’s information for these limited purposes, the school will not need to ask your permission each time the district wishes to use this information for school-sponsored purposes.

***Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education***

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 has been previously attached for you to complete if you do not want the district to provide this information to military recruiters or institutions of higher education.

## **SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

Topics in this section of the 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. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact your student's principal.

### **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 day's, 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 compulsory attendance, the other with attendance for course credit—are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below.

#### **Compulsory Attendance**

State law requires that a student between the ages of six 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 who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year and is subject to compulsory attendance laws, if the student is under 21 years old. In addition, 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.

Students enrolled in prekindergarten or kindergarten are required to attend school.

State law requires attendance in an accelerated reading instruction program when kindergarten, first grade, or second grade students are assigned to such a program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program as a result of a diagnostic reading instrument.

A student in grades 3–8 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 applicable subject area.

Parents have 3 days to turn in a parental note to the office. All parental notes or calls will only be accepted at the discretion of the campus principal. A maximum of 6 parental notes will be considered for excused absences each semester.

## **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;
- Service as an election clerk; and
- Documented health-care appointments, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders.

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 the student receives approval from the campus principal, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed.

## **Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance**

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. 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 from school on ten or more days, or parts of days, within a six-month period in the same school year, or
- Is absent on three or more days, or parts of days, within a four-week period.

If the student is over age 18, the student's parents will not be subject to penalties as a result of their child's violation of state compulsory attendance law.

## **Attendance for Credit**

To receive credit in a class, a student 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 for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal 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 for the class.

If a student attends less than 75 percent of the days a class is offered or has not completed a plan approved by the principal, 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, if appropriate.

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

- All absences will 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 days of attendance for this purpose.
- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district. For a student transferring into the district after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.
- 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 to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the board of trustees by filing a written request with the superintendent in accordance with policy.

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

### **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.

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal 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.

### **Parent Notes**

Parents have 3 days to turn in a parental note to the office. All parental notes or calls will only be accepted at the discretion of the campus principal. A maximum of 6 parental notes will be considered for excused absences each semester.

### **Driver License Attendance Verification**

For a student between the ages of 16 and 18 to obtain a driver license, the Texas Department of Public Safety must be provided written parental consent to access the student's records for purposes of verifying 90 percent attendance for credit for the semester.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students directs written or verbal expressions or physical conduct against another student and the behavior results in harm to the student or the student's property, places a student in fear of physical harm or of damage to the student's property, or is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit bullying and to respond to reports of bullying.

## **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) PROGRAMS**

Howe ISD will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and CTE programs.

## **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse. As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Possible physical warning signs of sexual abuse could be difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches. Behavioral indicators may include verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior. Emotional warning signs to be aware of include withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

A child who has experienced sexual abuse should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that disclosures of sexual abuse may be more indirect than disclosures of physical abuse, and it is important to be calm and comforting if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse, the campus counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see [http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention and Early Intervention/Programs Available In Your County/default.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention%20and%20Early%20Intervention/Programs%20Available%20In%20Your%20County/default.asp).

The following Web sites might help you become more aware of child sexual abuse:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index.aspx?id=2820>

<http://sapn.nonprofitoffice.com/>

<http://www.taasa.org/member/materials2.php>

[http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG\\_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml)

[http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG\\_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml)

Reports may be made to:

The Child Protective Services (CPS) division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (1-800-252-5400 or on the Web at <http://www.txabusehotline.org>).

## **CLASS/BELL SCHEDULES**

Howe Middle School Bell Schedule:

1<sup>st</sup> Period - 8:05 a.m.-8:50 a.m.

2<sup>nd</sup> Period – 8:54 a.m.-9:47 a.m.

3<sup>rd</sup> Period - 9:51 a.m.-10:26 a.m.

4<sup>th</sup> Period – 10:30 a.m.-11:15 a.m.

5<sup>th</sup> Period – 11:19 a.m.-12:04 p.m.

6<sup>th</sup> Period Lunch A -12:08 p.m.-12:53 p.m.

Lunch B – 12:57 p.m.-1:42 p.m.

7<sup>th</sup> Period – 1:46 p.m. – 2:31 p.m.

8<sup>th</sup> Period – 2:35 p.m.-3:20 p.m.

## **COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES**

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 courses termed dual credit, or Advanced Placement (AP);
- Enrollment in an AP or dual credit course through the Texas Virtual School Network;
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with Grayson County College;
- Certain CTE courses.

All of these methods have eligibility requirements and must be approved prior to enrollment in the course. Please see the counselor for more information.

## **COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS**

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the district has adopted a standard complaint policy found in the district's policy manual. A copy of this policy may be obtained in the superintendent's office located in the Howe ISD Administrative offices.

In general, the student or parent should submit a written complaint and request a conference with the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

## **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these computer resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (found in the front of this handbook) regarding appropriate use of these resources; violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and their parents should be aware that e-mail and other electronic communications using district computers are not private and will be monitored by district staff.

### **Laptop Use Policy**

#### ***Terms***

You will pay a nonrefundable annual use and insurance fee of \$50 on or before taking possession of the property. You will comply at all times with the Howe School District's Student/Parent Laptop Handbook and Acceptable Use Policy, incorporated herein by reference and made a part hereof for all purposes. Any failure to comply may terminate your rights of possession effective immediately and the District may repossess the property.

#### ***Title***

Legal title to the property is in the District and shall at all times remain in the District. Your right of possession and use is limited to and conditioned upon your full and complete compliance with this Agreement and the Parent/Student Laptop Handbook.

#### ***Loss or Damage***

Parents/Guardians are required to pay a non-refundable use and insurance fee to cover the cost of replacement/repair fees and agree to accept this financial responsibility prior to the child being allowed to bring his/her laptop computer home from school. If the laptop is lost or stolen while in the student's possession, a report must be filed immediately with the local police authorities and school personnel. Seniors must clear all records and pay all fees before participating in graduation ceremonies.

#### ***Repossession***

If you do not timely and fully comply with all terms of this Agreement and the Parent/Student Laptop Handbook, including the timely return of the property, the District shall be entitled to declare you in default and come to your place of residence, or other location of the property, to take possession of the property.

#### ***Term of Agreement***

Your right to use and possess the property terminates no later than the last day of the school year unless earlier terminated by the District or upon withdrawal from the District.

### ***Appropriation***

Your failure to timely return the property and the continued use of it for non-school purposes without the District's consent may be considered unlawful appropriation of the District's property.

### ***Use & Insurance Fee***

Students will pay a non-refundable annual use & insurance fee of \$50.

- Students will pay fee on or before taking possession of the laptop/netbook.
- In case of theft, vandalism, and other criminal acts, a police report **MUST** be filed by the student or parent within 48 hours of the occurrence with the local police authorities. Incidents happening off campus must be reported to the city police by the parent and a copy of the police report must be brought to the school by the next school day.
- If the laptop is stolen and the student reports the theft (by the next school day) and a police report is filed, then the student will not be held responsible for the full cost of the laptop. Instead the annual use and insurance fee will be used to replace the computer.
- Students will be charged the Fair Market Value of the laptop/netbook if lost and not reported (see Fair Market Value chart below).
- Seniors must clear all records and pay all fees before participating in graduation.

Fair Market Value

\* Original cost of the laptop to the District is currently \$507.00.

You can find out more information about the Student/Parent Laptop Agreement Form and updates to this handbook at <http://laptop-committee.howeisd.net>.

## **CONDUCT**

### **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—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.

### **Disruptions**

As identified by law, disruptions include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.

- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.
- Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district.

### **Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones**

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess telecommunications devices, including mobile telephones; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing. The use of mobile telephones in locker rooms or restroom areas at any time during the instructional day, at school, is strictly prohibited.

A student who uses a telecommunications device during the school day will have the device confiscated. The confiscated telecommunications device may be picked up from the office after school and will be charged a fee of \$15 at time of pick up.

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved will be disposed of at the end of the school year.

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

### **Other Electronic Devices**

During school hours, students are not permitted to display or use such items as radios, CD players, MP3 players, video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, or other electronic devices at school, unless prior permission has been obtained from the principal. Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the principal's office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items. The confiscated electronic device may be picked up from the office after school and will be charged a fee of \$15 at time of pick up.

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

### **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.

A student attending a social event may be asked to sign out when leaving before the end of the event; anyone leaving before the official end of the event will not be readmitted.

### **CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS**

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a

contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

The school nurse or the principal's office can provide information from the Department of State Health Services regarding these diseases.

## **COUNSELING**

### **Academic Counseling**

Students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn more about course offerings, graduation requirements, and early graduation procedures. Each spring, students in grades 5-12 will be provided 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.

To plan for the future, each student should work closely with the counselor in order to enroll in the high school courses that best prepare him or her for attendance at a college, university, or training school, or for pursuit of some other type of advanced education. The counselor can also provide information about entrance exams and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission to state colleges and universities, financial aid, housing, and scholarships.

### **Personal Counseling**

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues, or substance abuse. The counselor may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns. A student who wishes to meet with the counselor should make an appointment with their school's counselor.

### **Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment**

The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent. Parental consent is not necessary when a psychological examination, test, or treatment is required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

### **CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Taken the Course**

A student who has previously taken a course or subject—but did not receive credit for it—may, in circumstances determined by the teacher, counselor, principal, or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam 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, correspondence courses, or independent study supervised by a teacher.

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

A student may not use this exam, however, to regain eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities.

For further information, see the counselor.

### **CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course**

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course for which the student has had no prior instruction.

A student will earn credit with a passing score of at least 90 on the exam.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the principal no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. The district will not honor a request by a parent to administer a test on a date other than the published dates. If the district agrees to administer a test other than the one chosen by the district, the parent must purchase a test from a university approved by the State Board of Education. For further information, see the counselor.

### **CREDIT RECOVERY**

Any student making a failing grade(s) for the first and/or second semester in Reading/Language Arts, Math, Science, and/or Social Studies may participate in the Student Credit Recovery Program (pending seat availability). This program offers students additional instruction and requires the student to demonstrate mastery of that grade level subject before receiving credit for the course.

#### **Requirements:**

- Students failing a course with a 67 or below average in the first semester of a school year will be **REQUIRED** to complete the credit recovery program during the second semester of school at the determined times the class is offered.
- Any remaining seats available will be offered as an option to students failing a course(s) with a 68-69 average in the first semester of a school year. The seats will be offered on a first come first serve basis.
- Students failing a course in the second semester of a school year will be **REQUIRED** to complete the credit recovery program during the summer at the determined times the class is offered.
- Students attending credit recovery program may not miss more than 1 day for emergencies only. All emergencies will be approved by the building principal.
- Student must pass the credit recovery program with a grade of 70 or better in all assigned modules to get a passing credit for that semester. Parents will be notified by the campus Principal by mail as to the results of the testing and final decision. Students passing a subject or subjects in the credit recovery program will receive a 70 for the semester in that subject.

- Students moving into the district within the second semester, and have a failing grade in a course or courses from the previous school will be required to complete all credits in the summer at the determined times the class is offered.
- This program will not take place during the regular school hours during the regular school year. It will be offered on Saturdays only for students working to gain first semester credit, and summer school for those working to gain second semester credit.
- Fees may apply when necessary.

**Students may also attend Summer School for the following reasons:**

- Due to Student Success Initiative in grades 5 and 8, required to take third administration for TAKS tests. (Not applicable to the 2011-2012 school year)
- Due to failing grades for the year in a subject and needs to test into the next grade level (Credit Recovery Program).

**Students previously retained-** The student will participate in the program and be tested. If the student fails to meet the criteria, the principal will call a Grade Placement Committee meeting to make the final decision of placement.

**DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION**

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from 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.

**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. 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 or 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, 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. A copy of the district's policy is available in the superintendent's office.

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 or intimidating 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.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student is prohibited.

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. However, romantic and other inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Examples of prohibited 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.

### **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.

Retaliation against a student might occur when a student receives threats from another student or an employee or when an employee imposes an unjustified punishment or unwarranted grade reduction. Retaliation does not include petty slights and annoyances from other students or negative comments from a teacher that are justified by a student's poor academic performance in the classroom.

## **Reporting Procedures**

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced dating violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, counselor, principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent.

## **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. The district will notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district.

In the event 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 policy.

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

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal to the superintendent.

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

### **School Materials**

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with the prior approval of the principal, 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 principal.

### **Nonschool Materials...from students**

Students must obtain prior approval from the principal before posting, circulating, or distributing copies of written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any nonschool material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. The decision regarding approval will be made within two school days.

The principal has designated the front office as the location for approved nonschool materials to be placed for voluntary viewing by students.

A student may appeal a principal's decision in accordance with policy and must direct the appeal to the superintendent. Any student who posts nonschool material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without the principal's approval will be removed.

### **Nonschool Materials...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 with prior district approval. To be considered for distribution, any nonschool material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the principal for prior review. The principal will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the superintendent.

Prior review will not be required for:

- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.
- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours or a noncurriculum-related student group meeting.
- Distribution for electioneering purposes during the time a school facility is being used as a polling place, in accordance with state law.

All nonschool materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from district property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

## **DRESS AND GROOMING**

The district's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards. Students must comply with the dress code found at the back of the handbook.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS**

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

Eligibility for initial and continuing participation in many of these 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. [See <http://www.uil.utexas.edu> for additional information.]

The following requirements apply to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives, at the end of a grading period, a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than an Advanced Placement course; or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or language other than English—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- A student shall be allowed in a school year ten extracurricular activity absences not related to post-district competition; however, a student shall be permitted additional absences for this purpose, to a

maximum of five, if the student has a grade average of at least 85 in the courses or subjects to be missed.

- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.

### **Standards of Behavior**

Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups such as the band, cheerleading, flag corps, and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior—including consequences for misbehavior—that are stricter than those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the Student Code of Conduct or by local policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization’s standards of behavior.

### **Offices and Elections**

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

### **Student Council**

### **FEES**

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

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.

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 school principal.

## **FUND-RAISING**

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the superintendent at least 30 days before the event.

## **GANG-FREE ZONES**

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.

## **GRADING GUIDELINES**

Grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated and distributed to students and their parents by the classroom teacher. These guidelines have been reviewed by each applicable curriculum department and have been approved by the campus principal. These guidelines establish the minimum number of assignments, projects, and examinations required for each grading period. In addition, these guidelines establish how the student's mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.). Grading guidelines also outline in what circumstances a student may be allowed to redo an assignment or retake an examination for which the student originally made a failing grade. More information can be found in Credit Recovery and ZAP sections of this handbook.

### **Grading Policies**

Guidelines shall ensure that grading reflects student achievement and that a sufficient number of grades are taken to support the grade average assigned.

- The Site Based Decision Making Team and the Grade Level Teachers will develop each school year's grading policy.
- This policy will be available to parents at the Meet the Teacher Night, sent home the first week of school, and upon request.
- Each department policy will follow state and local policy.
- Tests or quizzes will not be allowed to go home for completion.
- Projects, essays, or reports will be assigned with clear criteria of expectations and date of completion.

### **Grade Level Standards for Promotion**

- All Students are required to perform on grade level TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) unless otherwise specified by an Individual Education Plan by Special Education.

- Promotion to next grade level will be based on an overall average grade of 70 in core subject areas per local policy.
- Modified work will be noted on assignments and grades based on modified work will be noted on the report card.

### **Reading / Language Arts**

- Six weeks' grades will be based on 40% daily work & homework, and 60% test, quizzes, final essays, projects, and etc. at teacher's discretion.
- Accelerated Reader for 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> will count 10 points required per six weeks as a test grade, and each quiz as a daily grade.
- Accelerated Reader for 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be only used as incentive.
- Students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade will have assigned novels, readings, book reports, and projects.
- There should be no less than 3 tests / projects per marking period

### **Math**

- 60% for Test / quizzes (Includes all tests and quizzes where the student cannot use resource materials) There should be no less than 3 tests per marking period.
- 30% for In-class assignments (Includes any activities / quizzes where the student may use resource materials) and 10% for homework (Including any daily assignments that the student starts in class and can take home to complete).

### **Science**

- Six weeks' grades will be based on 40% daily work & homework, and 60% test, quizzes, final essays, projects, and etc. at teacher's discretion.
- Students will be able to drop the 2 lowest daily grades
- There should be no less than 3 tests / projects per marking period

### **Social Studies / History**

- Six weeks' grades will be based on 40% daily work & homework, and 60% test, quizzes, final essays, projects, and etc. at teacher's discretion.
- There should be no less than 3 tests / projects per marking period

### **Art**

Art Grades are based on classroom participation and rubrics designed to evaluate completed artwork. Project criteria may include neatness, precision, intricacy, following directions, and implementation of concepts. Short-term projects normally require 2-3 days to complete, while major projects often require 2-3 weeks. Therefore, in a marking period with complex assignments, it is possible for a student's six-week average to be determined by as few as 6 grades. While tests are not given in class, some projects are cumulative and require the student to demonstrate or apply his knowledge of multiple skills or techniques. Such projects count as two assignments and receive 2 grades.

## Technology

All work is counted as daily work. There are no test grades. All work must be completed in class. Extra time is provided for work to be completed if class time is insufficient to complete the day's assignment. Work is not counted late as long as it is completed by progress report time for the first three weeks' assignment and the end of the six weeks for the second three weeks' assignments. ZAP is not assigned for missing work.

**Rationale for Grading Calculation:** Students are held accountable by state and federal accountability standards based on test performance. Students needing accommodations or modifications for testing will certainly receive appropriate services.

## HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS

### Bacterial Meningitis

State law specifically requires the district to provide the following information:

- What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is most common and the least serious. Bacterial meningitis is the most common form of serious bacterial infection with the potential for serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease, but requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

- What are the symptoms?

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

Children (over 1 year old) and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pains, and drowsiness or confusion. In both 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, the majority of people make a complete recovery. In some cases it can be fatal or a person may be left with a permanent disability.

- How is bacterial meningitis spread?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing, sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes).

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

- How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include when there is a disease outbreak in a community or for people traveling to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. Also, a vaccine is recommended by some groups for college students, particularly freshmen living in dorms or residence halls. The vaccine is safe and effective (85–90 percent). It 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 Web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>.

### **Physical Activity for Students in Elementary and Middle School**

In accordance with national policies, the district will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten 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, middle, and junior high school student physical activity requirements, please see the principal.

### **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)**

Information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available by contacting Clay Wilson, Assistant Superintendent.

### **Other Health-Related Matters**

#### ***Asbestos Management Plan***

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, is available in the administrative office. If you have any questions, please contact Ricky Brinlee.

#### ***Energy Drinks***

Due to health and safety concerns of students, energy drinks will not be allowed in the school, on the bus, at extracurricular activities, or at school functions. These drinks should be discarded

before entering the school building. The definition and determination of an energy drink will be at the discretion of the campus principals.

### ***Pest Management Plan***

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Ricky Brinlee.

### ***Physical Fitness Assessment***

The state of Texas requires all students in grades 3-12 to participate in the Fitnessgram fitness assessment each year. The purpose of this assessment is to provide students and parents with information relating to their child's performance on fitness activities in relation to a "Healthy Fitness Zone". It is the practice of Howe ISD to send those results home after the assessments. If you do not receive a report from the Fitnessgram assessment, contact your child's school and one will be made available to you. Student data from the Fitnessgram assessments are sent to TEA but in a format that does not identify the data with individual students. It is used for studying health-related demographics.

### ***Sick Policy***

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student should receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent. The student should not be allowed to return to school for 24 hours for the following reasons: fever and vomiting.

### ***Tobacco Prohibited***

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of tobacco products by students and others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. For more information see the Student Code of Conduct.

### ***Vending Machines***

The district has adopted policies and implemented procedures to comply with state and federal food service guidelines for restricting student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines see the principal.

## **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, Ritchie Bowling, Middle School Principal.

## **IMMUNIZATION**

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://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco/affidavit.shtm>. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal

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, rubeola (measles), rubella (German measles), mumps, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis (polio), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, varicella (chicken pox), and meningococcal. The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the Department of State Health Services. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required 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.

For further information, go to the Department of State Health Services Web site:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm>.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

### **Questioning of Students**

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the principal 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 principal 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 principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the principal 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 of 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 principal 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 principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal 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 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 required to register as a sex offender or who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.

## **MAKEUP WORK**

### **Makeup Work Because of Absence**

For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course, 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 and within the time specified by the teacher.

A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher may receive a grade of zero for the assignment. For more information on late work, please read the ZAP and Grading Policies in this handbook.

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 time lines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

## **MEDICINE AT SCHOOL**

District employees will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements, with the following exceptions:

- 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.
- Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
- 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.
- In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only:
  - In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district's medical advisor; and
  - When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district's form.

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may be permitted to possess and use prescribed 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 the ability to use the prescribed medication, including any device required to administer the medication.

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

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 for information.

### **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**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Howe ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

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

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of gender: Kevin Wilson, Superintendent, 105 W. Tutt St. Howe, TX, 75459 ; 903-532-3204.
- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Clay Wilson, Asst. Supt., 105 W. Tutt St. Howe, TX, 75459 ; 903-532-3204.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent.

## **PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE**

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 principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge.

One minute of silence will follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to pray, reflect, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others.

## **PRAYER**

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not 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 on the basis of 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. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

In grades 1–8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas, a grade of 70 or above in language arts and mathematics, and a grade of 70 or above in either science or social studies.

Parents of a student in grades 3–8 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her 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.

In previous years, the Student Success Initiative (SSI) provided a student in grades 5 or 8 two additional opportunities to take a failed assessment. If a student failed a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, would determine the additional special instruction the student was to receive. After a third failed attempt, the student would be retained.

For the 2011-2012 school year, SSI will not be in effect. Whether the student is retained or promoted, will be based on local grading policy. An educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year.

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

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student in 8<sup>th</sup> grade or beyond 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 a guidance counselor, teacher, or other staff member designated by the principal. 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.

## **RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

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

A student who will need to leave school during the day must bring a note from his or her parent that morning and follow the campus sign-out procedures before leaving the campus. Otherwise, a student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day.

Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student should receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent. The parent must still provide a note, when the student returns to school, explaining the absence.

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

Report cards with each student's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every 6 weeks.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will be given a written progress report if their child's performance in any course is near or below 70, or is below the expected level of performance.

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal 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 campus'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 principal.

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in a class or subject.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports may be signed by the parent and returned to the school.

## **SAFETY**

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

- 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 principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal 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.

### **Accident Insurance**

Soon after the school year begins, parents will have the opportunity to purchase low-cost accident insurance that would help meet medical expenses in the event of injury to their child.

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

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

### **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school may have to rely on 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.). 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 because of severe weather or another emergency.

## **SCHOOL FACILITIES**

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

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

The cafeteria is open to students before school, beginning at 7:30 a.m.

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

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

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

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on district premises and at school-sponsored events off district premises, such as play 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. **Students are not permitted to ride a bicycle, scooter, skateboard, etc. on school property of school functions during, after, or before school hours. The item may be confiscated and a fee may be assessed to return it to the student.**

### **Use of Hallways During Class Time**

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

### **Cafeteria Services**

The district participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily. Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. Contact Sally Abercrombie at 903-532-3346 to apply.

The district follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day.

### **Library**

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

### **Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups**

Student-organized, student-led noncurriculum-related groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the principal before and after school. These groups must comply with the requirements set up by the principal in agreement with the groups' sponsors.

A list of these groups is available by contacting the office.

## **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 and Lockers**

Students' desks and lockers 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 and lockers. Students must be certain that their lockers are locked, and that the combinations are not available to others.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause 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 or locker.

### **Vehicles on Campus**

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

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact Clay Wilson, Asst. Superintendent.

## **STAAR TESTING**

## **STEROIDS**

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for medical use only, and only a physician can prescribe use.

Body building, muscle enhancement, or the increase of muscle bulk or strength through the use of an anabolic steroid or human growth hormone by a healthy student is not a valid medical use and is a criminal offense.

Students participating in UIL athletic competition may be subject to random steroid testing. More information on the UIL testing program may be found on the UIL Web site at [http://www.uil.utexas.edu/athletics/health/steroid\\_information.html](http://www.uil.utexas.edu/athletics/health/steroid_information.html).

## **STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE (SSI)**

For information regarding SSI, please refer to the Promotion and Retention section in this handbook.

## **SUMMER SCHOOL**

Summer school is offered to students due to attendance or credit recovery. See Credit Recovery for more information.

## **TAKS (TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS)**

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state-mandated assessments (such as TAKS: the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–11
- Reading, annually in grades 3–9
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7
- English language arts in grades 10 and 11
- Social studies in grades 8, 10, and 11
- Science in grades 5, 8, 10, and 11
- Any other subject and grade required by federal law

TAKS-Accommodated, TAKS-Modified, and TAKS-Alternate for students receiving special education services are administered to eligible students.

Linguistically accommodated testing (LAT), as well as the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) for students identified as limited English proficient, are also administered to eligible students.

## **TARDINESS**

A student who is tardy to class after the tardy bell rings will be marked as tardy. If a student is tardy more than 15 minutes, that student will be marked as absent. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe disciplinary action, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. For more information, see Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance Law.

## **TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, AND TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT**

State-approved textbooks are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. 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 paid for by the parent;

however, the student will be provided textbooks and equipment for use at school during the school day.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. The principal, however, may make an exception if the parent makes a written request that the student be released to the parent or to another adult designated by the parent.

### **SCHOOL BUS RIDER'S SAFETY HANDBOOK**

The Howe Independent School District provides bus transportation to and from school as a courtesy service for eligible students residing in the district. The State of Texas prescribes the conditions governing school bus operations and funds the service by allotting the district a given amount for eligible students transported. HISD purchases its own busses to provide this service to its students.

Eligible students are defined by state statute as residing in the district at least two miles from the school they attend, as measured by the nearest practical route. The nearest practical route is the nearest traveled public road, which may or may not be the road used by the school bus. Address eligibility is continually audited year round. When an address is found to be ineligible (because of street openings, construction changes, etc.), notification will be made as soon as possible with a grace period allowed for parents to locate alternate means of transportation.

In order to meet the conditions outlined by the state and provide safe, prompt movement of eligible students, the school district has adopted standard regulations and procedures and has provided restrictive measures for violations of the rules. They are herein outlined for your information and for the guidance of your child.

The school district is pleased to provide transportation for its eligible students and solicits your assistance in helping create a safe, healthy operation. You may do so by reading the enclosed material and acknowledge receipt by completing and returning the enclosed contract to the bus driver. We ask your cooperation with school personnel in developing proper behavior patterns for those pupils who ride the bus.

If you should need information concerning bus routes, call Ricky Brinlee (903)-532-3348. If you should need information concerning student misconduct on buses, you should call the student's school principal.

### **General Rules**

1. Obey the instructions of the bus driver. At no time will a student act toward, or address comments to the bus driver in a disrespectful manner, or refuse to cooperate with the driver.
2. The bus driver will arrange seating assignments, and each student will be expected to remain in his/her assigned seat for the duration of the trip.
3. Board and leave the bus at designated stops only.

4. Only students who are eligible to ride may be transported. Students must ride their assigned bus.
5. Do not ask to ride home on another bus with a friend without a note from home. A campus administrator must sign it.
6. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide transportation to school if a child misses the bus.
7. If you do not ride for three days, you must call the transportation office (532-5518 ext. 127) or the bus may not come by again until contacted.

### **Procedures for Waiting for the Bus**

1. Be at your bus stop five minutes before scheduled pickup time. The driver will not wait or honk.
2. Stand on the sidewalk or back from the roadway while waiting for the bus.
3. When the bus approaches form a line and be prepared to load immediately.
4. Stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the red loading lights come on.
5. Parents should instruct their children on what procedures to follow if the bus is missed.
6. Students will abide by the individual school rules and regulations concerning bus students, including conduct and dress code.

### **Loading the Bus**

1. Do not push or shove.
2. Use the handrail and steps. Carry large bags and objects in front of you.
3. Go to your seat. The bus will not move until all students are seated.
4. Students will sit in their assigned seat at all times.

### **Conduct on the Bus**

1. Remain seated while the bus is moving. Each student will be expected to remain seated for the duration of the trip and remain seated until the bus door opens.
2. Do not change seats. **The driver is required to assign seats.**
3. A student shall not refuse to sit in an assigned seat or deny another a place to sit.
4. Normal conversation is permitted; any loud noises may distract the driver and create an unsafe condition.
5. Scuffling, fighting, and the use of obscene, vulgar or profane language and gestures are forbidden.
6. Do not throw objects inside or out of the bus. Keep all pens and pencils put away at all times.
7. Students will not be allowed to eat or drink on the bus.
8. Do not mark, cut, or scratch any part of the bus. The person who is responsible will pay vandalism costs.
9. The emergency door and exit controls should be used by pupils only during supervised drills or actual emergencies.
10. Students will never attempt to sit in the driver's seat or operate the passenger door or other driver controls except in cases of extreme emergency.

11. Students shall face forward for the duration of the trip and shall keep their feet on the floor in front of them and out of the bus aisle. Keep all body parts inside the bus and to yourself.

### **Getting off the Bus**

1. Stay seated until the bus is completely stopped.
2. Use the handrail and take one step at a time when leaving the bus.
3. Wait for your turn to leave the bus; pushing and crowding will only slow exiting and may cause an accident.
4. You must use your assigned stop at all times. (A.M. and P.M. routes).
5. Stay clear of the bus when unloading. Do not chase or hang on to the bus at any time.
6. If any article drops or rolls near or under the bus, do not go after it. Go to the door of the bus and ask the driver for help.

### **Crossing the Street or Highway**

1. All students living on the left side of the roadway shall exit the bus and move to a point 10 to 15 feet in front of the right bumper and wait for the driver to signal you that it is safe to cross.
2. Check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
3. Never cross behind the bus.
4. **CAUTION!** Be alert for the vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading or unloading students.
5. Cross all streets at intersections. Obey all traffic signals and signs on your way home.

### **Accidents or Emergencies**

1. Follow the driver's instructions.
2. If you must leave the bus, stay in a group.
3. The student nearest the door will open the door and hold it open.
4. Leave the bus in a single file line as quietly as possible.
5. Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the door.
6. Once outside the bus, follow the driver's instructions completely.

### **Extra-Curricular Trips**

1. Bus rider rules apply to all school-sponsored events.
2. Discipline will be the responsibility of the building principal and the trip sponsor.
3. The bus must return clean when returning from a trip.

### **Prohibited Items**

Tobacco, alcohol, and glass containers.

Live animals or insects.

Weapons, explosive devices, matches or cigarette lighters, harmful drugs or chemicals.

Any object (musical instrument, shop project) too large to be carried by the student. All other items must be kept on the student's lap at all times.

Radios and Ipods without headphones, and skateboards.

## **Discipline**

The school bus is an extension of the classroom and the principal will administer discipline with assistance from the bus driver. All school board policies that apply to student conduct and other student related activities apply also to the school bus. Cameras may be run at different times to record students' and drivers' behavior for bus safety.

### **Bus Discipline Procedure:**

The student will be given verbal warnings for misconduct. Every effort will be made to solve the problem prior to reporting the student to the principal.

The uniform disciplinary action will be:

- A. **First Infraction**--Student will receive a written warning.
- B. **Second Infraction**--The student may be suspended from riding the bus for 3 days.
- C. **Third Infraction**--The student may be suspended from riding the bus for 10 days.
- D. **Fourth Infraction**--The student may be suspended from riding the bus for the remainder of the semester. (If this occurs during the last six weeks of a semester it may be extended to the end of the following semester.)
- E. **Fifth Infraction**--The student may be suspended from riding the bus for the remainder of the year.

The building administrator has the authority to skip steps for serious violations, or to repeat them if the misconduct is not a serious safety violation. All disciplinary actions are at the principal's discretion.

### **Bus Facts**

- Buses cost about \$85,000 each and require one year for delivery.
- Repair to vandalized seats cost up to \$100.00 per seat.
- Operations are funded by the State of Texas based on approved mileage plus additional Howe ISD tax revenue.
- All buses receive attention in an ongoing preventive maintenance program.
- Howe ISD buses traveled in excess of 125,000 miles last year.

## **VANDALISM**

The taxpayers of the community have made a sustained financial commitment for the construction and upkeep of school facilities. To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended—both this year and 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**

For safety purposes, video/audio 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 principal will review the video/audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

### **General Visitors**

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the principal's office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal 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.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

### **Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students**

On College and Career Day, the district invites representatives from colleges and universities and other higher education institutions, prospective employers, and military recruiters to present information to interested students.

## **WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL**

A student under 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The school requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. The parent may obtain a withdrawal form from the principal's office.

On the student's last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to each teacher for current grade averages and book and equipment clearance; to the librarian to ensure a clear library record; to the clinic for health records; to the counselor for the last report card and course clearance; and finally, to the principal. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student, and a copy will be placed in the student's permanent record.

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

## **ZAP POLICY**

Zeros Aren't Permitted (ZAP) is a program designed to increase expectations of students who habitually, or even occasionally, fail to complete and turn in homework assignments on time. It is first and foremost an expectation of high academic standards for all students. This program will direct students to utilize their abilities to acquire self-discipline and work habits that will serve them in an educational setting and in the future when they enter their next educational environment or workplace. When the belief is expressed and maintained that a student **can** and **will** be successful, that student must meet the level of expectations. He/she will take pride in completing an assignment and doing it to the best of his/her ability. This value will translate to success in all areas.

We realize that for many students a zero is not an immediate consequence since most students who repeatedly receive zeros are students who are struggling in school anyway. This is just one

more strategy to help a child experience more success in school. Preparing a student for high school and for life requires teachers to ensure each child knows the curriculum, and if he/she is not completing assignments a teacher cannot provide an accurate measure of that student's knowledge.

For this program to be effective, all staff must adopt the following policy: *“All assignments must be completed in a timely manner. Failure to do so will result in the student being assigned an after-school homework session because Zeros Aren't Permitted (ZAP).”*

### **How it works:**

- Assignments should be 100% complete before accepting the assignment. The teacher has discretion in deciding if work has been completed satisfactorily before accepting it.
- Students serving ZAP for multiple assignments in one week will also serve lunch detention for one week to have extra time to complete work due.
- Teachers are to submit names of students to the ZAP coordinator by e-mail each Wednesday before noon, for zeroes accumulated from the prior week.
- A box in the workroom will be available for teachers to submit an extra copy of the missing assignment by lunch on Friday.
- Students are then assigned ZAP Lab on Friday after school. The ZAP coordinator will contact the student's parents to let them know they will be serving a ZAP Lab. A letter will go home as documentation.
- Students will be collected at 3:10 p.m. on Friday for ZAP Lab.
- Completed assignments will be collected by the ZAP coordinator and placed in the teacher's mailbox. The maximum amount of points that can be earned on a late assignment is 60% of the original point value.
- If a student turns the late assignment in before the ZAP Lab, they will still go, but need to take other homework or a library book. **ZAP Lab hours are 3:30-5:30 P.M.**
- **Students will be allowed to only serve one hour the first ZAP placement if work is turned into the classroom teacher before the assigned ZAP.** The classroom teacher has discretion when allowing students to serve the minimum of one hour of ZAP for work that is turned in before the day the ZAP is served.
- **Students with 1 or more ZAPs for the school year will attend the entire 2 hour period for all future ZAPs.**
- **Students that serve 4 or more ZAPs within the first six weeks will no longer serve ZAP, and a zero for the assignment will be given. Students with 5 or more ZAPs close together, within two six week periods, will also be removed and a zero for the assignment will be given.**

## 2011-2012 HMS Dress Code

**The Howe Independent School District’s student dress code is designed to build self-esteem, bridge socioeconomic differences between students, reduce ethnic and racial tensions, and encourage positive behavior, thereby promoting school safety and improving the learning environment.**

Clothing or jewelry which displays or advertises controlled substances, such as alcohol, tobacco, or drugs, or that maybe considered lewd, offensive, or obscene (i.e. Surf Naked, Hooter’s, Twin Peaks, Caught chasing tail, and etc.) is prohibited.

Clothing Item	Permitted Styles	Special Comments
Tops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School-sponsored, HYA, or professional/college game attire</li> <li>• Short or long-sleeved, collared shirt</li> <li>• Pull over sweater/sweatshirt</li> <li>• Crew neck (rounded t-shirt)</li> <li>• Turtleneck and mock turtleneck</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No visible cleavage</li> <li>• All shirts must be completely buttoned with exception of neck button</li> <li>• No spandex or other stretch material</li> <li>• All shirts must extend below the hip line</li> <li>• No sheer or see-through</li> </ul>
Bottoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four- or Five-pocket jeans (plain, designs/logo must fit within guideline below)</li> <li>• Pleated or non-pleated slacks</li> <li>• Windpants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All pants must be worn above the hip level</li> <li>• No excessively baggy style, legs no wider than length of shoe</li> <li>• No holes or skin showing</li> <li>• Belts must be worn inside belt loops at all times and appropriate size</li> <li>• No studs, brads, or other excessive adornment on belts</li> <li>• Must be hemmed properly at bottom</li> <li>• No pajamas, warm-ups, or sweatpants</li> </ul>
Skirts/Dresses Shorts/Capris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hem of skirt or kick pleat must touch the kneecap or below</li> <li>• Dresses must have sleeves</li> <li>• Capris must touch the knee cap or below</li> <li>• Shorts permitted on Middle School campus ONLY and must meet above guidelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No holes or skin showing</li> <li>• Hemmed properly at bottom</li> <li>• No low-cut neckline (dresses)</li> <li>• Leggings may only be worn under skirts as long as guidelines for skirts are met</li> </ul>
Outerwear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sweatshirt</li> <li>• Hooded sweatshirt</li> <li>• Jacket, Coat, Windbreaker</li> <li>• School-sponsored Jacket</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must comply with all above “Tops” guidelines</li> <li>• No trench coats</li> <li>• Must remain completely unbuttoned or unzipped in the building</li> </ul>
Footwear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closed toe shoes</li> <li>• Flip-flops/sandals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No house shoes</li> <li>• Shoes must match</li> </ul>
Hair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys: Restrictions include sideburns past earlobes, ponytail, pigtails, and braids; no facial hair below the corners of the mouth; hair may not extend below the collar of the shirt, earlobes, or eyebrows</li> <li>• No mohawks or faux hawks.</li> <li>• All students: neatly groomed; no unnatural hair color may be displayed, such as green, purple, etc., nor symbols or gang-style haircuts</li> </ul>	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No hats</li> <li>• No visible tattoos</li> <li>• No gauges or visible body piercing, other than in the ears</li> <li>• Boys may only wear one stud in each ear and may not wear nail polish</li> <li>• No offensive language or symbols depicting death (skulls, weapons, drug or alcohol related)</li> <li>• No heavy metal or gang-related clothing</li> <li>• No chains or bandanas</li> <li>• All clothing must fit appropriately, not excessively tight or large</li> </ul>	

- **Administrators will have complete and final judgment** on all matters concerning interpretation of the student dress code. Matters concerning the appearance and dress not specifically covered in the dress code policy that is disruptive to the educational process is not permitted.