



# yes prep

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### YES PREP STUDENT HANDBOOK 2016-2017

*Whatever It Takes!*

The YES Prep Public Schools Student Handbook may be available online at [www.yesprep.org](http://www.yesprep.org) under each specific campus' link. All YES Prep students and families are expected to carefully review the policies and procedures in the YES Prep Public Schools Student Handbook. Hard copies of the handbook and Spanish translations can be requested at the main office by completing a Handbook Request Form.

Throughout the year, the handbook may be adjusted to meet the needs of students, parents, staff, and the school. Agreement with this handbook also means agreement with the possibility for handbook changes. If changes happen, we will notify parents and students through parent notes and during the school year. We will also post these changes online for easy access. By signing the handbook agreement page, you are acknowledging that the handbook may change at times.

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We have read the YES Prep Public Schools Student Handbook, and we accept the policies and procedures contained within it and agree to abide by them. ***We expressly give our permission to YES Prep and authorize YES Prep to use our student's photograph and YES Prep Photos for its authorized purposes.***

We, the YES Prep Public Schools student and parent/guardian, understand that a failure to follow the expected policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Bus Route \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Home Room \_\_\_\_\_

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# YES Prep Public Schools

## ***Commitment to College Completion***

YES Prep is not just a school. YES Prep is a way of life. Every minute of every day is designed to ensure every student completes college and is committed to improving underserved communities. The *Commitment to College Completion* is **shared** by all YES Prep staff, family members, and students, and it defines the ***Whatever It Takes*** spirit that all of us are expected to demonstrate in the daily pursuit of this goal.

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### **Student's Commitments – *I fully commit to YES Prep in the following ways:***

- I will arrive at school on time and will remain for the entire school day, every day.
  - I will attend YES Prep on appropriate Saturdays.
  - I will attend the mandatory summer program (if applicable).
  - I will complete all of my homework every night. If there is something I do not understand, I will call my classmates. I will raise my hand and ask questions in class.
  - I will accept the school consequences when I do not complete my assigned homework prior to arriving at school.
  - I will stay after school and/or on Saturday to repair any damage that I do to the learning environment, to my relationships with staff and classmates, and/or to my own trustworthiness.
  - I will always behave in a way that protects the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals in the classroom. I will always show respect to my YES Prep teammates and to everyone in the YES Prep family.
  - I will follow all aspects of the YES Prep dress code for the entire school day.
  - I will always work, think, and behave in the best way I know how, and I will do ***Whatever It Takes*** for my fellow students and me to learn.
  - **For the whole time I am a student at YES, I commit to the work required of me and will do *Whatever It Takes* in order to be accepted to and graduate from a four-year college or university.**
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### **Parents'/Guardians' Commitments – *We fully commit to YES Prep in the following ways:***

- We will make sure our child arrives to YES Prep on time and remains for the entire school day.
- We will make arrangements for our child to come to YES Prep on appropriate Saturdays and will provide transportation.
- We will ensure that our child attends the mandatory summer program (if applicable).
- We will send our child to school every day, excluding any serious illness or excused absence. In the rare case that our child is absent, we will call the Front Office before the beginning of the first class period to notify the school of the absence.
- We will always help our child in the best way we know how, and we will do ***Whatever It Takes*** for him/her to learn. This means that we will do the following: provide a quiet place for our child to study, review his/her homework every night, sign his/her agenda, and let him/her contact a classmate if there is a question about the homework.

- We understand that our child must serve time during or after school on any day he/she arrives to school without having completed their assigned homework with homework. If my child misses this commitment, I understand that he/she will lose privileges and have to make up the time. It is my responsibility to provide transportation for my child if he/she stays after school.
- We understand that our child may also be required to remain after school or serve time on Saturday if he/she has chosen to disrespect the YES Prep team. If this situation occurs, we commit to picking up our child from school on time.
- We will always make ourselves available to the school via phone or in person, and we will address any concerns that arise.
- We will carefully read all papers sent home, including school memos and newsletters, and (if necessary) sign them and return them by the requested deadline. If we fail to return papers on time, we understand that our child will lose privileges.
- We will attend all required parent meetings, exhibitions, performances, and conferences.
- We will allow our child to go on YES Prep field lessons, including out-of-town field lessons.
- We will make sure our child follows all aspects of the YES Prep dress code every day.
- We understand that our child must follow all YES Prep rules in the handbook in order to protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals in the classroom, and we will support the implementation of consequences for breaking any of these rules.
- We, not the school, are responsible for the behavior and actions of our child.
- **For the whole time my child is a student at YES, I will do *Whatever It Takes* to support my child in order for him or her to be accepted to and graduate from a four-year college or university**

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• **Teachers' Commitments – We fully commit to YES Prep in the following ways:**

- We will arrive at YES Prep on time and will remain for the entire school day.
- We will support our students at YES Prep on appropriate Saturdays.
- We will attend and participate in all staff meetings and professional development.
- We will treat every student fairly and with respect.
- We will teach YES Prep students in the best way we know how, and we will do ***Whatever It Takes*** for our students to learn, including providing students with our professional work phone numbers for any school related questions.
- We will make ourselves available to work with students and parents, and we will address any concerns they might have.
- We will make it a priority to praise and educate our students.
- We will provide academic remediation for our students as needed to support their learning.
- We will respond to all communication from students, parents, and fellow staff members within 24-48 hours.
- We will always protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals in the classroom.
- **We will provide a rigorous college-preparatory curriculum along with necessary support in order to prepare every YES Prep student to be accepted to and graduate from a four-year college or university.**



**Whatever It Takes**



## Academics Performance

At YES Prep Public Schools, our mission is to prepare students for the successful completion of a college career. The facts are before us: most public schools in Houston are not striving for this same goal, and many of our students enter YES Prep with test scores and skills below the average. YES believes it takes a 100 percent commitment from families, staff, and students not only to close that achievement gap, but to create an environment in which YES students are exceeding and outperforming their peers in neighboring schools. Our goal is for YES Prep students to be competitive as college students and college graduates; in order to do that, our rigor and expectations must be high.

To be in “good academic standing” means a student is passing all of his or her classes in a given grading cycle. We realize that sometimes a student may need more than one grading cycle to reach good academic standing, but our goal is that all students will achieve and maintain this status while at YES Prep. For those students who struggle to reach good academic standing, we have instituted supports to help them reach that goal. Additional academic support is not meant to be a punishment for struggling students; rather, it is a system that signifies to teachers and parents that a student needs extra support in the academic setting. That extra support can be tailored to meet each student’s individual needs.

The promise of a YES Prep education, that each of our students will be successful in a four-year college, is realized when parents, school staff and students work together. We recognize that the expectations put upon YES Prep students are significant. By reaching to meet these expectations, students demonstrate that they share this core value of college matriculation and success, and that they are committed to creating powerful futures for themselves, their families, and their communities.

## Curriculum and Assessment

The mission of YES Prep Public Schools is to ensure that each of our graduates successfully complete a four-year college or university program and earns a bachelor’s degree. To that end, the curricular program we follow in middle school and high school has been designed to prepare students for a rigorous high school experience and the rigors of college-level work. Students can expect demanding classes, teachers who expect participation and engagement, opportunities to think about problems and issues in multiple frameworks, and an emphasis on clear, concise, and accurate written and verbal communication. YES Prep will provide students with the support and appropriate interventions to make it possible for each of our students to succeed academically, including group and individual tutorial and enrichment sessions, opportunities to contact the teacher for help after school, and frequent feedback to both students and parents about progress in class.

In addition to taking part in annual assessments required by the State of Texas, YES Prep students will also receive feedback on their progress from other assessment measures. At least once per year, sixth through ninth grade students will take the MAP assessment, a national norm-referenced assessment that will allow us to measure the growth each student demonstrates over the course of each year in math and reading. MAP assessments do not factor into a student’s course grade. Additionally, YES Prep measures students’ achievement on our internal curricular standards with common assessments in most subject areas across

all of our campuses. Results from the common assessments are included in a student's grade for that subject area and are also used to inform decisions made about each student, including but not limited to scheduling and promotion to the next grade level.

## Required Academic Program for the High School

YES Prep commits to preparing each student for success in college or university coursework. Therefore, the requirements for graduation from a YES Prep school include more than simply putting in "seat time" to earn credits. In order to earn a high school diploma from YES Prep Public Schools, each student must fulfill the following requirements, unless exempt from such requirements by the student's ARD committee. Completing the requirements below ensures a student is on track to earn a distinguished or recommended diploma from the State of Texas. This diploma option is relevant for the Class of 2017 only. More information about the Texas high school graduation plans is available via the campus college counseling team or other campus administrators.

A student must earn at least 26 credits of high school coursework, including the following minimum requirements:

English	4 credits, to include: English I, English II, Introduction to Rhetoric & Composition, and AP English Language <i>AP English Literature may be substituted for Introduction to Rhetoric and Composition, and rarely for AP English Language</i>
Mathematics	4 credits, to include: Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, and Pre-Calculus, AP Statistics, AP Calculus, or Advanced Quantitative Reasoning
Social Studies	4 credits, to include: World Geography or AP Human Geography, World History, AP World History, U.S. History or AP US History, Government (1/2 credit), and Economics (1/2 credit)
Science	4 credits, to include: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and an additional science elective
World Languages	3 full credits in one language other than English
Fine Arts	1 full credit (1 year-long class or two semester long classes)
Physical Education	1 full credit
Health	1 half credit (1 semester-long class)
Communication Applications (Speech)	1 half credit (1 semester-long class)

### High School Advanced Coursework Requirement

**Every** YES Prep student, unless exempt from such requirements by the student's ARD committee, must take and pass at least **one** Advanced Placement before for high school credit in order to be eligible to receive his/her high school diploma. It is recommended that students take no more than three AP courses in a single year. However, students can petition to take more than three AP courses, and YES Prep will consider this petition on a case-by-case basis.

### High School Assessment Requirement

A student must receive passing scores on required state assessments as set forth by the State of Texas. These assessments and requirements may vary from year to year depending on a student's entrance year into ninth grade. Please contact your school administration for more information.

## College Acceptance Requirement

A student must be accepted to at least one four-year college or university in order to be eligible for a YES Prep high school diploma, unless exempt from such requirements by the student's Admission Review Dismissal (ARD) committee.

## Exceptions to the Required Academic Program

YES Prep is dedicated to meeting the needs of each individual student. In the case of students who qualify for special education or 504 services, YES Prep may choose to amend any of the above requirements for graduation. Requests to amend the required academic program will be considered on a case by case basis.

## Seminar Courses

"Developmental perspective on college access is needed more today than ever before. Attaining a college degree today is a challenging and complex process that starts long before youth apply to college and continues after they enter. This is reflected in the fact that youth practitioner, higher education administrators, and policy makers define college access and success as a broad set of tasks that span settings and time. These include **aspiration, preparation, application, matriculation, and, finally, graduation**. Across these stages, young people need multiple supports and resources in order to develop the social, emotional, and cognitive skills that they need to successfully navigate the process." (Ready, Willing, and Able: A Developmental Approach to College Access and Success. Savitz-Romer, Mandy & Bouffard, Suzanne. Harvard Education Press, 2012. pg.10).

YES Prep offers seminar courses to all students in order to prepare them for the complex process of becoming 'college ready'. Seminar courses may begin in middle school or 9<sup>th</sup> grade depending on the campus they attend. Students are expected to complete seminar courses in 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades based on availability at each campus. These courses help students explore their strengths, aspects of their personalities, and career and college options as they formulate their college-going identities. In addition, students learn study skills, research strategies, writing, reading, and presenting strategies, along with regular access to preparation for the college application process and college entry exams.

## Grading Policies

The purpose of grading and the reporting of grades at YES Prep is to share the progress of a student's academic achievement with all stakeholders: the student, the parent/guardian, the teacher, and the campus-based leadership team. Above all else, the grade a student receives should be a reflection of his/her learning and his/her ability to demonstrate achievement on course content.

Grades should provide all stakeholders with feedback on a student's progress, and, as such, should be clear and precise. Grades should never be used to punish or reward a student.

All assignments shall relate to instructional objectives that are tied to the essential knowledge and skills for the curriculum established for each course. Students' performance on classroom assignments should indicate the level of mastery achieved on these course objectives.

In accordance to TEC, Section 28.021: A student may be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter of the course or grade level

YES Prep courses are generally organized into semesters. Most core academic courses span two semesters, while many elective courses are one semester long. Students' grades for each semester are determined by averaging the grades from three six-week grading cycles, with additional weight given to results from common assessments or final exams, as appropriate. Refer to the YES Prep yearly calendar available on [www.yesprep.org](http://www.yesprep.org) for the dates of the six week reporting cycles.

## **Gradebook Guidelines**

Each teacher is expected to enter, at minimum, one to two achievement-based grades in the gradebook per week. Grades are expected to be entered within five business days of the assignment's date, with the exception of major papers and projects. Gradebook weights and assignments should look consistent among teachers at a campus of a similarly named course.

By the end of each six-week grading cycle, every teacher should have at least 8 achievement-based grades recorded in the gradebook. The grades entered should be an accurate representation of the student's achievement in the six weeks. No single assignment should weigh more than 25% of the 6-week average in the gradebook.

## **Extra Credit Policy**

The purpose of grading and reporting grades is to provide an accurate reflection of a student's knowledge on the most essential concepts in the stated curriculum. Given this purpose, teachers should not create extra credit activities or assignments. Extra credit assignments tend to be misaligned with the mission of grading, in so far as, creating grades that are *not* achievement based, adding extra grades for an objective that is already adequately tested, or giving assignments that do not cover the essential knowledge and skills. Instead of providing extra credit, teachers should adhere to the reassessment policies outlined in this Guideline and in their Individual Campus Supplement (ICS).

## **Reassessment**

All students, in all grade levels, and all content areas, will have some opportunity to take reassessments at YES Prep. Students and families should refer to the Individual Campus Supplement (ICS) for specific campus and grade-level information pertaining to reassessments. At each campus, the opportunities given for reassessment are consistent for students within each grade level. The ICS explains campus based guidelines per grade level pertaining to reassessment policies.

## **Grading Scale**

YES Prep grades on a number and letter system. Please refer to the table below for conversions; grade points are only awarded for courses taken for high school credit. Some students enroll in high-school level classes while still in middle school; these courses do factor into a student's GPA and the grades in these courses will be reported on the student's official transcript.

Please note that YES Prep does not award a grade of "D" for any work done. Each assignment, including class work, projects, labs, exam and quizzes, and all other graded work, receives either a passing grade, meaning it meets YES Prep standards, or a failing grade, meaning that it does not meet YES Prep standards.

Students will take YES Prep Common Assessments for all core classes. . These Common Assessment scores will be included in semester averages and printed on report cards. The lowest score a student may receive on a Common Assessment, or on an assignment submitted by a student, is 50%.

For AP courses, 1 additional grade point will be added to the grade point scale below. For example, a student who earns a B in an AP class will be awarded 4 grade points. In order to qualify for the 1 point addition, the course must be represented on a student’s official transcript as an AP course. Pre-AP courses are given a weight of 0.75 extra points.

Number Grade	Letter Grade	Grade Points (for credit classes only)
100-97	A+	4.33
96-93	A	4
92-90	A-	3.67
89-87	B+	3.33
86-83	B	3
82-80	B-	2.67
79-77	C+	2.33
76-73	C	2
72-70	C-	1.67
69 and Below	F	0

## Policy for Auditing High School Courses

At YES Prep, a student may be requested by the campus leadership staff to audit a course. When a student is enrolled in an audited course, the student **does** receive a numerical grade for the course, however the grade is **not** calculated into the student's GPA. Additionally, the student does **not** receive credit for the audited courses. A campus cannot schedule a student to enroll into an audited class until and unless the campus has parent permission. All YES Prep campuses have the discretion to require a student to audit a section A of a course before taking section B of said course.

## Awarding Credit from Other Schools

YES Prep will award credit earned at other public schools. Students seeking to have credit awarded from institutions other than Texas public schools must present a report card or transcript indicating the credits earned at the previous institution; YES Prep may require additional information (such as course syllabus) in order to award credit. YES Prep reserves the right to deny credit to a student who earned a “D” at another institution; in such cases, the student may petition to take a YES Prep competency exam in order to demonstrate proficiency in that subject area and be awarded credit for a passing score.

## Ranking Policy

As our transcripts and school profile indicate, it is our policy not to rank our students. However, given the unique nature of State of Texas’ admissions standards for public colleges and universities, we reserve the right to disclose academic information related to decile and quartile rankings required for automatic admission. The [Uniform Admission Policy](#) is defined in sections 51.801 through 51.809 of the Texas Education Code.

## Honor Roll

YES Prep celebrates those students who, through their hard work and dedication, achieve high academic results. Students who receive exceptionally high grades in any given grading cycle will be recognized and become honor roll members for the following grading cycle. Please refer to the campus supplement for specific information about how your campus will determine honor roll eligibility.

## Retention

Student retention occurs when a YES Prep student must repeat a grade level due to insufficient academic performance and/or poor attendance. The YES Prep Public Schools instructional staff and administration reserve the right to retain any student who fails to demonstrate academic mastery in core subject areas. Retained students may be required to repeat specific classes or an entire grade level, depending upon the individual student's performance. Grade-level retention meetings are held during the second semester of the school year, and input from the instructional staff members, as well as grades and test scores, at that particular grade level are considered when making retention decisions.

As an Open Enrollment Charter School, YES Prep creates its own promotion/retention policies. While enrolled at YES Prep, students must have prior written permission to seek summer school or other credit recovery opportunities from an institution other than YES Prep. Students who choose to attend summer school at another school system without prior written permission from the school director will not be promoted to the next grade level.

## Middle School Promotion Standards

In order to be promoted **from sixth to seventh grade or from seventh to eighth grade**, students must:

- Earn passing yearly averages in core academic subjects, including English, math, social studies, and science. Students may have **one** yearly average lower than a 70 and still be eligible for promotion to the next grade.
  - If a student fails **two** academic classes in yearly average, the student goes to the Promotion Committee, relevant data are reviewed, and the Promotion Committee will determine retention or promotion.
- Attend school at least 90 percent of the academic year.
  - Middle school students who are not in attendance at least 90 percent of the academic year risk a loss of credit that could affect promotion to the next grade level (see section on Attendance).

In order to be promoted from **eighth to ninth grade**, students must:

- Earn passing yearly averages in core academic subjects, including English, math, social studies, and science. Students may have **one** yearly average lower than a 70 and still be eligible for promotion to the next grade.
  - If a student fails **two** academic classes in yearly average, the student goes to the Promotion Committee, relevant data is reviewed, and the Promotion Committee will determine

retention or promotion. Special consideration should be given to students who fail a foreign language course.

- Earn satisfactory performance on STAAR assessment requirements, as outlined by the State of Texas.
  - Please see Middle School Student Success Initiative section for more details.
- Attend school at least 90 percent of the academic year.
  - Middle school students who are not in attendance at least 90 percent of the academic year risk a loss of credit that could affect promotion to the next grade level (see section on attendance).

## **Middle School Promotion Committee Consideration**

The campus has the option to promote students by Promotion Committee in exceptional circumstances. The Promotion Committee will consider all applicable factors when making promotion and retention decisions, including but not limited to, trending in class grades, STAAR and EOC test results, YES Prep common assessment results, MAP, literacy/fluency growth, TELPAS and other modes of ELL evaluation and support, decisions of the student's ARD committee, and other appropriate, norm-referenced assessments.

## **Middle School Student Success Initiative (SSI)**

If a student does not demonstrate proficiency on state required tests for mathematics and reading, the student may advance to or be placed in the next grade level **only if:** (1) s/he completes all accelerated instruction required by the promotion committee (PC); and (2) the PC determines, by unanimous decision, that the student is likely to perform at grade level at the end of the next school year if given additional accelerated instruction during the course of the year. In making promotion decisions, the PC is required to consider the recommendation of the student's teachers, the student's grades, and the student's scores, and any other relevant academic information.

YES Prep will provide accelerated instruction to all students who do not demonstrate proficiency on state required tests. Students who do not meet the standard on state required tests must receive appropriate instructional intervention so that they will be able to make the academic progress necessary to do on-grade-level work at the next grade. Accelerated instruction may require participation by the student before or after normal school hours and may include participation at times of the year outside normal school operations, on campus or at home.

Any student who fails to demonstrate proficiency in state required tests must complete required accelerated instruction before being promoted or placed in the next grade, and when promoted to the next grade level, will receive instruction in that subsequent grade from a teacher who meets all state and federal qualifications to teach that subject and grade. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 defines a highly qualified teacher as one who has obtained a full state teacher certification or has passed the state teacher licensing examination and holds a license to teach in the state, holds a minimum of a bachelor's degree, and has demonstrated subject area competence in each of the academic subjects in which the s/he teaches.

# High School Promotion Standards

## Ninth-Grade Requirements

- a. Students are retained in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade if they:
  - i. Fail to earn credits in the following subject areas prior to the beginning of the following school year:
    - 1.0 credit of Algebra I
    - 1.0 credit of English I
    - A sum of 1.0 total credit in Biology, or World Geography/AP Human Geography (1.0 credit in Biology or World Geography; or 0.5 credits in Biology plus 0.5 credits in World Geography/AP Human Geography)
  - ii. Fail to recover these 3 necessary credits in the immediately following summer. Students will be classified as 9<sup>th</sup> graders until proof of passing credits are officially received by YES Prep from the sending agency/educational organization.

## Tenth-Grade Requirements

- a. Students are retained in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade if they:
  - i. Fail to earn credits in the following classes prior to the beginning of the eleventh-grade school year:
    - Geometry
    - English II
    - World Languages (1 credit)
    - A sum of 3.0 total credits from these courses: Biology, Chemistry, World History, World Geography, or AP equivalents of these courses
  - ii. Fail to recover all necessary credits in the immediately following summer. Students will be classified as tenth-graders until proof of passing credits are officially received by YES Prep by the sending agency/educational organization.

## Eleventh-Grade Requirements

- a. Successful completion of core subject areas: Physics, Introduction to Rhetoric and Composition, Algebra II, World Languages (two full credits required), U.S. History/AP US History
- b. Students are retained in the eleventh grade if they:
  - i. Fail to credit in the following classes prior to the beginning of the twelfth-grade school year:
    - Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II
    - English I, English II, and Introduction to Rhetoric and Composition, or AP equivalents
    - Biology, Chemistry, Physics, or AP equivalent courses
    - World Languages (2 credits)
    - World Geography, World History, U.S. History, or AP equivalent courses
  - ii. Fail to recover all necessary credits in the immediately following summer. Students will be classified as eleventh-graders until proof of passing credits are officially received by YES Prep from the sending agency/educational organization.

Students must meet all local YES Prep graduation requirements to be on track to graduation to be classified as a senior.



## Twelfth-Grade Requirements

- a. Successful completion of core subject areas: AP English Language, Government, and Economics
- b. Students are retained in the twelfth grade if they:
  - i. In addition to the ninth-, tenth-, and eleventh-grade credit requirements, students must earn credit in the following classes by graduation of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade school year:
    - AP English Language (1 full credit / 2 semesters)
    - Pre-Calculus, AP Statistics, or Advanced Quantitative Reasoning (1 full credit)
    - Government (1/2 credit)
    - Economics (1/2 credit)
    - Additional science elective (1 full credit)
    - World Languages (3 credits)
  - ii. If a student fails any senior-year required courses and is not able to make them up by May 15 of senior year, the student must make up credits during summer school after senior year but no later than August 1. Student will not be eligible to receive diploma at Commencement ceremonies. Note that student can only make up **two** half-credit courses during the summer, at maximum. If a student needs to make up more than two half-credit courses, then s/he will need to return to YES Prep for at least the fall semester of the next school to recover all necessary credits needed to meet graduation requirements.
  - iii. Note that a student's continued acceptance to a four-year college/university throughout the senior year is a requirement for graduation, especially if the student has had to perform credit recovery during the senior year. Colleges do have the right to rescind college acceptances due to poor academic performance.

## Elective Requirements

In addition to the core course requirements listed above, each student must earn the following elective credits in order to meet YES Prep graduation requirements:

- Fine Arts- 1 credit
- Communication Applications- 0.5 credits
- Health- 0.5 credits
- Physical Education- 1 credit
- Electives- 4 credits

## Regaining Credit in the High School Using Yearly Averages

Traditionally, if a student has failed either semester of a course then s/he must complete a credit recovery course over the spring or summer or online (see Summer School, below). In certain circumstances, students may be able to earn credit for a failed first-semester course by demonstrating strong performance in the second semester. For students in grades 9-11 only, the following guidelines apply:

**For English I, English II, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, World Languages 1, World Languages 2, Biology, Chemistry, World Geography, World History, and equivalent AP courses for listed subjects:**

- If student fails the first semester (S1) of one of the above courses, then s/he can regain credit for S1 if:
- Overall yearly average for course is over 70 percent

and

- S/he earns a passing score on the **average** of Semester 1 and Semester 2 Common Assessments.

## **Earning High School Credits in Spanish Courses through Credit by Exams (CBE) Tests**

YES Prep has board approved Credit by Exam (CBE) assessments in Spanish that allow students to receive credit for lower level Spanish courses as a result of these exams. Students can take a Spanish CBE test prior to student's enrollment in a Spanish course. The student must receive a grade of 80% or greater on the CBE in order to receive credit for the course, if the student has had *no prior instruction* in that *course*. Results of the CBE test are used to award credit for Spanish I, II, and/or III and to place the student in the appropriate level of Spanish in the following school year. For each exam in which the student scored an 80% or greater, the student will be awarded credit before the beginning of the following school year.

Credit in Spanish I is a prerequisite for enrollment in Spanish II; credits in Spanish I and II are prerequisites for enrollment in Spanish III; credits in Spanish I, II, and III are prerequisites for enrollment in AP Spanish Language or Literature.

After receiving credit through a CBE test, a parent will receive a letter from the school indicating the grade the student will receive for this course. If a parent wants to refuse this credit for the child, the parent should sign and return the letter, with a check by REFUSE credit, and the student will **not** receive the credit, nor the grade, for this course. The parent must return the letter to the front office within 10 business days of receiving the letter.

Occasionally, Spanish CBEs are administered to students who have had prior instruction in said Spanish course. If a student has received approval to sit for a Spanish CBE for a course for which he or she has had prior instruction, the student must receive a 70% or greater on the CBE in order to receive credit for the Spanish course (see section below on Credit By Exams).

Students may only take a CBE for a specific course a maximum of **two times (two attempts)**. A student can take a CBE a second time if and only if the student failed the CBE on the first attempt. For more information about CBEs, please reach out to the Director of Academics at the campus.

## **Earning High School Credits in Courses (other than Spanish) through Credit by Exams (CBE) Tests**

In certain circumstances, YES Prep will approve the administration of a Credit by Exam provided by an approved CBE external vendor, such as Texas Tech or UT. The circumstances in which YES Prep allows a student to take an external CBE are listed in the table below. These external CBE are *only* to be given to students with approval from the campus-based Director of Academics. Furthermore, the CBE exams must be given within the window of time shown in the table below. Students may only take a CBE (internally or externally created) up to two times; the second administration is only given if a student failed to receive credit on the first administration. Approval to sit for a second administration of a CBE exam may only be given by the Director of Academics. The campus will order, pay, and track the results of the external CBE tests. Students may have the opportunity to take CBE exams in the subjects listed in the table below. For courses in which the student has received prior instruction, the student must earn a minimum score of

70% in order to receive credit. For courses in which the student has received no prior instruction, the student must earn a minimum score of 80%. Students may not be charged a fee to take the external CBE test.

CBE:				
Testing Season	Season 1	Season 2	Season 3	Season 4
Timeframe	July, August, Sept.	Oct., Nov., & Dec.	Jan., Feb., & March	April, May, June
Testing Window	2 <sup>nd</sup> week in Aug.	2 <sup>nd</sup> week in Dec.	1 <sup>st</sup> week in March	2 <sup>nd</sup> week in May
Acceptable Reasons for CBE Administration	A. Student is missing a state required credit on their transcript from years past.	A. Student is missing a state required credit on their transcript from years past.	A. Student is missing a state required credit on their transcript from years past.	A. Student is missing a state required credit on their transcript from years past.
	B. After attending YES Prep Credit Recovery or taking a summer course at an approved external institution, student failed the course. Student must have attended the course at least 90% of the time.			B. After attending YES Prep Credit Recovery or taking a spring course at an approved external institution, student failed the course. Student must have attended the course at least 90% of the time.
			C. Spanish CBE (internal CBE exams), Administration I	D. Spanish CBE (internal CBE exams); Administration II
Courses Approved for External CBE Administration: English I, English II, English III, English IV, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus, Calculus (if available), AQR (if available), World Geography, World History, US History, Government, Economics, Health, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Environmental Science, LOTE (non-Spanish LOTE exams),				

## High School Summer School Credits

If a student fails a class during the school year and has not regained credit using yearly averages, s/he must take the class the following summer after the current school year. If the student does not take the course over the following summer, the student risks having to repeat the grade, unless s/he petitions the school director, high school principal, or director of college counseling by presenting legitimate reasons as to why s/he could not attend summer school or that s/he has evidence of prior approval from the school director, high school dean of students, or director of college counseling.

Students who need to enroll in credit recovery classes must do so through the YES Prep Summer School Program unless the course they need to take is not being offered by the YES Prep program. In such cases,

prior approval for any summer coursework taken outside of YES Prep must be obtained from the school director, high school dean of students, or director of college counseling in order for the credit to be honored.

Without prior agreement from the school director, YES Prep Public Schools limits the number of make-up credits earned outside of YES Prep (e.g. Houston Community College Adult High School Program, on-line credit recovery courses) for classes a student has failed while attending YES Prep to four total full credits over the course of a student's high school career at YES Prep. Students must receive approval from the school director, high school dean of students, or director of college counseling in order to enroll in a course outside of YES Prep. YES Prep will accept up to two outside classes (2.0 credits) for classes taken outside of YES Prep during any given summer session.

Students failing to meet the promotion standard may be promoted if the following criteria is met

- 1) no more than 1.5 credits short of the promotion standard
- 2) Students will be able to complete the missing credits the following school year including summer credit recovery.

All HS Promotion appeals must be approved by the 1) school director and 2) head of schools or the senior director of student support.

## **High School Academic Year Outside Credit Policy**

Juniors and Seniors may take credit recovery during the spring semester for classes they did not pass in the fall semester in consultation with school officials. The maximum number of credits allowed to be taken the spring of junior or senior year is 1 credit or 2 half credits. Any exceptions to the 1 credit policy, including requests for a junior or senior to take more than 1 credit or requests for a junior or senior to take a class originally taken before the fall semester of their current year, need to be approved by the 1) school director and 2) school director's manager or the managing director of academics.

Any proposals for freshman or sophomores to earn outside credit during the spring semester need to be approved by the 1) school director and 2) school director's manager or the senior director of student support.

## **Student Support Services**

YES Prep offers a variety of specialized support services to students who have identified needs. When a student fails to make progress, s/he will have interventions tailored to meet his or her needs, and campus staff will work to ensure program continuity; the student's participation in the educational process to the maximum extent appropriate; including those students needing an advanced curriculum.

## **Students Experiencing Academic or Behavioral Difficulties**

If a child is experiencing learning and/or behavioral difficulties, the parent may contact the school administrator or grade-level chair to learn about YES Prep's overall screening system for support services. Campuses will administer a universal screening tool to determine which students are in need of immediate academic support. These students will be placed in intervention groups based upon level of need. Students who are participating in research-based interventions and still failing to make progress in

the regular classroom may be considered for tutorials, peer tutoring, and other support services that are available to all students.

### **Response to Intervention (Rtl) Committee:**

Students showing difficulty in academic areas should first receive help under YES Prep's Response to Intervention (Rtl) Committee. The Rtl Committee at each campus works to identify reasons for student difficulties and to develop and implement interventions to assist each student.

A process is in place for screening potential reading difficulties. See the Section on Dyslexia Services below.

### **Child Find Notice**

Pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, YES Prep Public Schools has a duty to locate, identify, and evaluate and, if eligible, provide a free and appropriate public education to students with disabilities. For additional information about the rights of parents of eligible children, or for answers to any questions you might have about identification and evaluations, please reach out to the YES Prep Public Schools 504 District Coordinator or Special Education Director-at (713) 967-9000.

### **Section 504**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights law. The law is designed to eliminate discrimination against students with disabilities. Students who qualify to receive services under Section 504 will receive accommodations based on their Service Plan. These accommodations will be those deemed necessary for them to be successful in the classroom. Students receiving services under Section 504 are responsible for all content standards for their enrolled grade level and must meet all promotion standards in order to be promoted to the next grade.

### **Special Education/Child Find Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**

YES Prep Public Schools complies with the IDEA, which guarantees the provision of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to all students who are eligible for services under the IDEA.

It is the policy of YES Prep Public Schools to ensure that all eligible children with disabilities who are within YES Prep schools receive a FAPE available in accordance with its procedures as reflected in the Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process located at: <http://framework.esc18.net/>. YES Prep Public Schools ensures that an individualized education program (IEP) is developed, implemented and monitored for each child with a disability.

A parent may request in writing an evaluation for special education services. The letter should be addressed to the School Director or Director of Special Education for YES Prep Public Schools. Within 15 school days YES Prep must determine if the evaluation is warranted. A team of YES Prep staff members will meet and determine whether an evaluation is needed. If it is determined that YES Prep will conduct an evaluation the parent will be provided informed consent for the evaluation. YES Prep must complete the evaluation and the report in compliance with applicable Federal and State law. YES Prep must give a copy of the report to the parent and hold any meetings in compliance with applicable Federal and State law.

If YES Prep determines that the evaluation is not needed, YES Prep will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated and what supports YES Prep will provide. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights if they disagree with YES Prep's decision. Additionally, the notice must and will inform the parents how to obtain a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards-Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*.

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is the Campus School Director or YES Prep Special Education Director.

## **English Language Learners**

YES Prep Public Schools provides instructional and language support programs tailored to the needs of its students to ensure that all students enter college with the skills necessary to be successful. For English Language Learners (ELLs), YES Prep provides a content-based English-as-a-Second-Language program that focuses not only on developing English as a second language but using English as a medium to learn mathematics, science, social studies, and other academic subjects.

The goal of our program is to enable limited English proficient (LEP) students to become competent in verbal comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing in English. We work towards this goal by providing linguistic accommodations during instruction and assessment for all LEP students who qualify. We also train teachers in the use of high-impact instructional strategies, scaffolding, and accommodations in the teaching of LEP students so that students may work towards mastery of content as well as mastery of the English language.

All LEP students will be monitored in order to ensure academic progress. Students will be tested in English language proficiency for entry into the ELL program and will be tested each spring using the state-required TELPAS (Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System) test. The TELPAS indicates a student's level of language proficiency and progress in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Students who are Beginning Language Learners according to the TELPAS assessment will be given additional accommodations and modifications in the classroom which may include the use of Sheltered Instruction which focuses on acquisition of academic vocabulary and English language structures while meeting content area standards.

At YES Prep, all middle school English teachers are required to become certified in teaching English as a Second Language in order to better support ELLs in the classroom. Every YES Prep campus has a dedicated Literacy Specialist who is responsible for coordinating support of LEP students on the campus. YES Prep also employs an ELL Coordinator who provides system-wide support.

In addition to providing a strong core instructional program, all ELLs will participate in additional intervention opportunities and programs which may include Rosetta Stone, Direct Instruction Spoken English, and/or Reading Intervention classes targeting phonics, fluency, spelling, written expressing, and reading comprehension in English. We also offer tutorials and small group instructional support. These services are coordinated by the Campus Literacy Specialist with the collaboration of the campus instructional leaders and the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC), which is responsible for

recommendations regarding the identification, program placement, academic interventions, and reclassification of LEP students.

The campus Literacy Specialist is the designated person to contact regarding questions about YES Prep's ELL program.

## **Dyslexia Services**

Dyslexia, a language-based disorder, refers to a cluster of symptoms that result in students having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly with phonological awareness, phonics, and orthography. Students with dyslexia often struggle with reading fluency, spelling, and writing.

All students at YES demonstrating need in fluency, decoding, spelling, or phonological awareness, including those with dyslexia, are enrolled in a reading intervention class, where they receive research-based direct instruction in these skills (Level 1 Services). This instruction is systematic, error-free, taught to mastery, and multisensory. If students enrolled in reading intervention classes display a pattern of dyslexic characteristics, they may be referred for dyslexia screening by the Literacy Specialist. Students with dyslexia who are not meeting literacy goals, are academically unsuccessful, or have unique curricular needs will receive additional targeted one-on-one or small group instruction from a trained literacy specialist, for at least 60 minutes per week (Level 2 Services). If the RTI or Section 504 committee determine that a student's dyslexia substantially limits a major life activity, that student will be enrolled in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Section 504 Committee will annually review and recommend accommodations for all students enrolled in the program. For dyslexic students who are not enrolled in 504, the literacy specialist will recommend appropriate accommodations for instruction and assessment.

## **Homebound**

If a student has a medical or psychological condition that necessitates being absent for a total of at least four weeks, not necessarily consecutively, a homebound referral will be initiated. Once the school receives a completed eligibility form (YPHB 2) from a certified physician that there is a *medical necessity* for the student to receive homebound services, a committee will meet to review and determine an educational program to meet the individual student's needs. Convening of the committee is not a guarantee of homebound services. A case manager will be assigned and a weekly schedule will be developed for in-home instruction, which is mutually agreed upon by the committee and student's parent(s) or guardian(s). Parents are responsible for providing adult (age 18 and over) supervision during homebound instruction, requesting any schedule changes 24 hours in advance, and securing medical documentation for continuation and/or termination of services. Students are responsible for meeting the requirements of grade-level curriculum and will be required to take all standardized tests when possible. Student Support Counselors will coordinate transition services, which may include academic, medical, and social emotional support upon termination of services. Students referred for homebound services may be considered for qualification under Section 504. Some students may also be eligible for services under the IDEA if the student qualifies.

## **Pregnancy Related Services (PRS)**

When a student is determined eligible through a certified physician's written confirmation to receive Pregnancy Related Services, a case manager will be assigned and a committee will meet to determine a

coordinated educational plan. This plan will address needed transition and counseling services, coordination of health services, assignment to appropriate outside agencies for support, and schedule accommodations. Students are required to meet grade-level curriculum and standardized assessment requirements. Confinement in the home may include prenatal, post-partum, extended post-partum, or break-in-service and will be determined by the student's physician based on individual need.

## Homeless Students

YES Prep Public School surveys students and parents annually through the Student Residency Questionnaire to determine if their living situation is transitional as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence are considered homeless and may be eligible for services. Families will be contacted by their student support counselor to determine the type of services the student may be eligible for during the school year. If, during the year, a family's living situation changes due to loss of housing or economic hardship, the family should contact their student support counselor to update their Student Residency Questionnaire and determine if they are eligible for services. Questions concerning services to homeless students should be directed to the homeless liaison at (713) 967-9155.

## Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect

All YES Prep community members are required by law to report suspected child abuse/neglect to the proper authorities. A person making a report is immune from civil or criminal liability, and the name of the person making the report is kept confidential. Any person suspecting child abuse/neglect and not reporting it can be held liable for a Class B misdemeanor. The law requires persons to make a report within 48 hours of the time they suspect the child abuse/neglect by calling the **Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or online at [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)**. The hotline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Child Protective Services (CPS) reports may be made by classmates, neighbors, family members, clergy, school administrators, school social service professionals, teachers, passersby, and anyone in the community. YES Prep policy states that we do not disclose the source of the report nor do we confirm or deny that the report originated from our school.

YES Prep students are strongly encouraged to seek help for themselves and their teammates if they are being hurt by an adult, suspect that their teammate is being hurt by an adult, or communicate intentions to harm others. By seeking help, Student Support Counselors are able to refer students and families to community and/or counseling agencies that teach effective ways of communicating, disciplining, and dealing with common family stressors.

## College Initiatives

Robust and comprehensive college counseling is a central component of the YES Prep College Initiatives program.

### College Advising

- **Personal Advising.** College Counselors meet one-on-one with students to guide them toward colleges that match their career aspirations, have strong support programs, and are financially affordable.



- **College Trips & Visits.** Students gain exposure to many different colleges through tours with our Success Teams, fly-in programs with our IMPACT schools, and visits to YES Prep’s College Fair. College visits or tours that fall during the school day and not coordinated by YES Prep must have prior approval and authorization from a campus-based college counseling staff member in order to be considered for an excused absence.
- **College Affordability Counseling.** Our counselors work with families to help them understand financial aid award letters and determine which college are most affordable.

### **Alumni Support**

- **IMPACT Partner Colleges.** These 35 high selective colleges and universities agree to meet 100% of demonstrated financial need and to provide specialized support for eligible YES Prep students.
- **Success Team Schools.** We work with college campus professionals at these state and local universities and colleges to provide resources and support students academically, socially, and emotionally.
- **Alumni Scholarships.** Each year, we award tens of thousands of dollars in scholarships that are available only to YES Prep students.

### **College Prep Seminar Classes**

- **Application Guidance and Support.** In college preparatory seminar classes, students begin to develop their college-going identity, practice skills that will lead to college success, and complete parts of the college applications.
- **Standardized Test Prep.** Students receive a Princeton Review-designed SAT or ACT test prep class that is delivered as part of their junior seminar.

### **Student Opportunities**

- **Service, Academic, or Cultural Programs.** Our advisors match students with summer programs that meet their interests and long-range goals, including academic courses at universities, outdoor leadership excursions, or study abroad experiences.

## YES Prep Culture and Environment

Since its beginning, YES Prep has embraced a culture of support, achievement, and a “Whatever it Takes” attitude. At YES Prep, “Whatever it Takes” means working as hard as necessary to achieve the goal of college graduation. It includes long hours, community service, homework, and support from adults and teammates. Striving for such high expectations is not easy for anyone, and so we endeavor for each YES Prep campus to feel like a family-oriented school. YES Prep teachers, staff members, and administrators are all dedicated to caring for a child during all the years s/he is a student at YES Prep, and beyond. Being a member of the YES Prep family is a lifelong privilege. The rules and policies that we enforce are often stricter than at other schools because we believe our students can and should be held to a higher standard. As Aristotle said, “we are what we do every day; excellence is a habit.”

## Closed Campus Policy

Providing a safe and orderly campus environment is critical. Therefore all students are required to stay on campus upon arrival. If it is necessary to leave campus for doctor or dental appointments, or for reasons of illness, all students who are leaving campus must have an approved parent/guardian check out him/her out through the attendance office. Additionally, visitors, parents or other family members may not walk around campus unescorted.

## Discrimination

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

Examples of prohibited harassment may include offensive or derogatory language directed at another person’s religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening, intimidating, or humiliating conduct; offensive jokes, name calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; display of graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

State and federal law prohibits discrimination. YES Prep Public Schools complies with all non-discrimination rules and regulations and does not permit discrimination against students on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, family situation, religion, or political affiliation. This holds true for all students who are participating in educational programs and/or co-curricular school activities. Inquiries regarding compliance procedures may be directed to the school administrator.

## Harassment / Bullying /Inappropriate Conduct

No one should be subjected to harassment, bullying, or inappropriate conduct on campus for any reason. Therefore, it is the policy of YES Prep Public Schools that all employees, volunteers, parents, and students will deal with all persons in ways that convey respect and consideration for individuals regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, family situation, religion, or political affiliation. Acts of harassment, bullying, hostility, or other inappropriate conduct,

whether verbal, written, or physical, will not be tolerated and constitute grounds for disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. Prohibited harassment of a student is defined as physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the student's race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, family situation, political affiliation, or any other basis prohibited by law that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

- Affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

Prohibited harassment includes dating violence as defined by this policy.

Legal agencies may also be contacted.

Inappropriate conduct, that might not rise to the level of harassment is also prohibited and can include, but is not limited to: physical (hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, etc.), oral or written comments (threatening, taunting, teasing, starting rumors, hate speech, or inappropriate comments or actions that result in intimidation or revealing of personal information without permission, etc.), electronic (e-mail, text messaging, blogging, social networking sites, etc.) or written threats.

Additionally, YES Prep recognizes that inappropriate conduct may take the form of social or relational aggression. Relational aggression is behavior that is intended to harm someone by damaging or manipulating his or her relationships with others through direct and indirect methods, which include, but are not limited to social isolation and/or excluding, blatant acts of aggression that can be physical and verbal, and harm through damage or threat of damage to another's physical well-being. Students who engage in this behavior toward another YES Prep student will be subject to disciplinary actions outlined for other forms of bullying. (See Code of Conduct Section)

If a student believes s/he is a target of discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment or dating violence) or other inappropriate behavior described in this section, the student should immediately notify his or her teacher, the student support counselor, a dean of students, principal, or the school director. Additionally, if anyone else believes that someone else has been a target of harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate behavior described in this section, that individual should immediately notify the student support counselor, a dean of students, principal or school director.

Students who witness, or are made aware of, such situations are expected to report the incident immediately to a school administrator. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

**Sexual harassment** includes all unwanted, uninvited, or non-reciprocal sexual attention (whether direct or indirect) as well as the creation of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school or work environment. Harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- Sexually suggestive looks or gestures
- Sexual jokes, pictures or teasing
- Pressure for dates or sex
- Sexually demeaning comments

- Deliberate touching, cornering, or pinching
- Attempts to kiss or fondle
- Threats, demands, or suggestions that favors will be granted in exchange for sex or tolerance of sexual advances

**Dating violence**, which is prohibited conduct, and occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person in a dating relationship. Dating violence also occurs when a person commits these acts against a person in a marriage or dating relationship with the individual who is or was once in a marriage or dating relationship with the person committing the offense, as defined by Section 71.0021 of the Family Code. It is a pattern of coercive behavior that one partner exerts over the other for the purpose of establishing and maintaining power and control. Dating violence can include, but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse (hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, etc.)
- Control of daily activities, choices, and access to resources
- Isolation from family, friends, religious activities, school, community, etc.
- Emotional abuse (put-downs, public humiliation, etc.)
- Sabotage
- Technological abuse and stalking
- Sexual coercion
- Suicide or homicide threats, attempts, or completions

**Bullying** is prohibited. Students are prohibited from engaging in bullying activities which include: engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by YES Prep and that has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property, or is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

Such conduct will be considered **bullying** if that conduct exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

If a student believes s/he is a target of bullying, the student should immediately notify his or her teacher, the student support counselor, a dean of students, principal, or the school director. Additionally, if anyone else believes that someone else has been a target of bullying or has observed bullying, that individual should immediately notify the student support counselor, a dean of students, principal or school director.

Students who witness, or are made aware of, such situations are expected to report the incident immediately to a school administrator. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

## Attendance Policies and Procedures

Absenteeism may affect the final grade a student receives in any class. All students are expected to maintain regular attendance. Students who miss class excessively often struggle to maintain grades and

overall academic success. Excessive tardiness or a pattern of unwarranted absenteeism is cause for loss of credit, disciplinary action, and/or suspension.

**At YES Prep Public Schools, students are subject to lose credit for a class or be retained for the year if they miss more than 10 percent of the instructional time regardless of whether or not the absences are excused during a semester or year (for students 19 and older, see Attendance Policy just below).** This also applies to students who are continually late to school or frequently leave early. For example, a middle or high school student who misses his or her first period class more than nine times within one semester will automatically forfeit the credit in the class, even if s/he has a passing average. Students may appeal to the school director for credits to be restored; credits can be restored only for classes where the student's average is 70 percent or higher. To avoid appeals, all students are strongly encouraged to clear any unexcused absence before final exams begin (see paragraph 1 under *Excused Absences* for procedure). Appeals must be made through the school administrator. Regular attendance and punctuality are the responsibilities of the student and parent. Falsely representing a parent/guardian and/or his or her signature in any way will result in disciplinary action.

## Attendance Policy

Compulsory Attendance: Children ages 6-18 (up to the student's 19<sup>th</sup> birthday) are required to attend school. Older students are those students who voluntarily enroll in or voluntarily attend school after their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, are subject to Compulsory Attendance laws and can have enrollment revoked for more having more than five unexcused absences in a semester. As an alternative to revoking enrollment on older students, the school may impose a behavior improvement plan.

At the beginning of each school year, parents will receive notice on Compulsory Attendance for students who are absent. During the school year, if a student has been absent without excuse on three days or parts of days within a four-week period, a warning notice will be issued to the parent/guardian informing them that the student is subject to truancy prevention measures. Truant conduct occurs if a student is absent from school without excuse on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year (please see Truancy section of handbook)

## Absence Procedures

A student's absence will be considered excused only if the absence meets the criteria defined under the excused absence section of this handbook **and** when verified by a written note from a parent, a guardian, or a doctor, as appropriate - this documentation becomes a part of the student's attendance record. Failure to bring written documentation may result in the appropriate level of discipline.

- Absences must be cleared **on the day of the student's return**. Students who are absent for more than three days in a row must provide the FRONT OFFICE with a doctor's note or other official documentation before they may return to class.
- If absences are not excused **upon return**, the student will receive an unexcused absence slip. Students must remember that it is their responsibility to have their parents excuse absences the day they return to class.
- If a student is going to be out for a week or more due to hospitalization, please notify the Manager of Health and Wellness immediately (For extended absences, please see Home Bound Section).
- Specific absences are outlined in section 3.6.3 of the Student Attendance Accounting Handbook (SAAH) published each year by TEA, may be counted as "present" with the proper

documentation. Documentation for such absences should follow the guidelines defined in the SAAH, contact the campus Registrar for details. Where the SAAH references local policy, documentation will be determined at the School Director's discretion.

## **Excused Absences**

It is the student's responsibility to arrange for all make-up work following an excused absence. The YES Prep Public Schools defines **excused absences** as absences due to one or more of the following:

- Illness
- Medical/dental-related, including appointments
- School-sanctioned activities
- Absences related to the legal system
- Family emergency
- Bereavement/Funeral for immediate family members
- Religious observances
- Short-term suspensions or other disciplinary actions resulting in an absence.
- Any other absence that is protected under State or Federal law.

**If a student is absent for three (3) days or more as a result of any of the absences listed above, the student must provide written documentation signed by the parent/guardian/doctor upon student's return to school.**

## **Opportunities for Make-up Work during an Excused Absence**

A student will be given the opportunity to make up work missed due to an excused absence. However, it is the responsibility of the student, **immediately upon his or her return to class from an absence**, to request and complete an absentee form with any assignments or tests missed because of the absence. Teachers will have regular make-up policies already in place and printed on the course syllabus, and students should be aware of those requirements. Remember that make-up work is the responsibility of the student. It is not the teacher's responsibility to track down students to administer make-up tests and collect homework. The teacher will schedule make up assignments and assessments at a time convenient for both parties.

## **Unexcused Absences**

An absence from school is unexcused if it does not meet the criteria categorized as an excused absence. A student whose absences are unexcused may not be allowed to make up work for the days missed. All graded activities shall be treated as if the student had chosen not to participate in them. This type of absence is also defined as truancy. (Please see Truancy section of handbook.) The progressive forms of discipline for excessive unexcused absences may include short-term and long-term suspensions. Failure to provide documentation as to excused absences will result in loss of credit restoration privileges if the student exceeds the 10 percent absence limit.

Students missing a bus must make every effort to get to school by their own means. A missed bus, missed ride, or car problem is not a valid excuse for an absence. The school will take into account extenuating circumstances before applying any disciplinary action. Punctual transportation to and from school are both a student's and a parent's responsibility.

## **Truancy**

Students are expected to be at school every day, unless he or she has received permission to be absent or has an excused absence and it is the duty of the parent or legal guardian of the student to monitor the student's school attendance and require the student to attend school. If a student fails to attend school without excuse on **10 or more days or parts of days** within a six-month period in the same school year, the student is considered **Truant**. The parent/guardian will be notified in writing and by phone if a student is considered truant. Please note, YES Prep is required to file a complaint against the student's parent/guardian with the court for an offense of contributing to nonattendance. Also, students are subject to a referral to a truancy court. The parent/guardian may be required to have a conference with the school director.

## **Tardy to School**

Consequences for excessive tardies can include disciplinary actions such as marks, demerits, detentions, and/or suspension. Excessive tardies also may require a parent meeting.

## **Tardy to Class**

A student is considered tardy to class if s/he arrives to class after the bell has rung and without a note from a teacher or administrator. Being more than five minutes late to class without a pass may result in a student being referred to the school administrator.

## **Before School**

Students arriving to school before the beginning of the school day are required to be supervised at all times. The student needs to remain in the space designated by YES Prep staff until the first bell rings. Students are absolutely prohibited from wandering the campus, hanging out on decks or in hallways without permission, or being in a classroom unsupervised, and may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

## **After School**

Students who remain after school for study hall, tutorials, or other meetings are required to be in a supervised area at all times. If a student is waiting for a ride, s/he needs to remain in the space designated by YES Prep staff until the ride arrives. Students are absolutely prohibited from wandering the campus, hanging out on decks or in hallways without permission, or being in a classroom unsupervised, and may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

## **Early Dismissal**

Early dismissals for appointments or illness must be arranged prior to departure. All students leaving school early for such appointments must be signed out in the front office prior to departing campus. Also, the adult picking up the student must show proper identification to front office staff and must appear on the student's emergency contact card authorized by the student's legal guardian.

## **Emergency School Cancellation**

In the event of particularly dangerous weather conditions, YES Prep Public Schools will either cancel or delay the opening of school. Such announcements will be made on major news channels. In general, YES

Prep will follow Houston ISD's lead on any cancellation or delays; however, students enrolled at YES Prep Northbrook should follow Spring Branch ISD's lead and YES Prep Hoffman should follow Aldine ISD's lead.

## **Withdrawal from School**

A student under the age of 19 withdrawing from school must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. The family must meet with a school administrator prior to withdrawing. Parents/guardians or students who are 19 years of age or older should not expect to receive the necessary withdrawal paperwork before the completion of one business day. Upon completion of the withdrawal sheet, all fees and fines must be paid, and all school-owned materials must be returned in appropriate condition. YES Prep Public Schools reserves the right to hold appropriate student records until all fees and fines have been paid and all materials have been returned. Any student who withdraws from YES Prep Public Schools solely in order to attend another school district and wishes to return to YES Prep Public Schools will be required to apply for re-entry through the lottery system as appropriate.

## **Student Change of Address**

Parents/guardians must give the registrar written notification of a student's change of address or phone number within seven days of the change so that the school can provide information to the family on a timely basis.

## **Returning Students and No Show Students Policy**

### ***Part 1: No Show Policy***

YES Prep is committed to serving the maximum number of students possible throughout Houston, and to prepare these students to graduate from college. To meet this goal, YES Prep asks that students return to school in August on the first day of school for YES Prep. The first day of school for YES Prep is published in the YES Prep yearly calendar, is communicated through parent notes, and is available on the website.

Students who do not return for the first day of school in August are deemed "no-show students". After the last Friday in August, all no-show students officially lose their spot at YES Prep. The spots formally occupied by no-show students will then become available to students on the YES Prep waiting list if the applicable campus has openings in that grade level.

If the no-show student seeks to return to YES Prep after the last Friday in August, the student will not be allowed to enroll immediately. Instead, the student must complete an application in the lottery to reenroll. The student will be offered a spot if and when the student moves to the top of the waitlist for the applicable campus.

### ***Part 2: Transfer Policies***

YES Prep has the following transfer policies in place for its families:

- **Non-Sibling/No Change of Address Requests:** Transfer requests for families that are NOT moving out of their primary zone may be submitted from the second Monday in March of the current school year through the last Friday in August pertaining to the school year for which the transfer is being requested. Requests may be approved or denied.
- **Non-Sibling/Change of Address Requests:** Transfer requests for families that DO move out of their primary zone and into the primary zone for a different YES Prep campus will be received at *all times* throughout the school year. Requests may be approved or denied.



- **Sibling Transfer Requests:** Definition: Requests for siblings to attend the same YES Prep campus in situations where one or more siblings reside in the primary zone for a different YES Prep campus. Sibling transfer requests may be submitted from the time the lottery opens in November of the current school year through the last Friday in August pertaining to the school year for which the transfer is being requested. Requests may be approved or denied.
- **Who to contact to make transfer requests:** All transfer requests should be communicated to the front office of the school in which the student is currently enrolled or the school for which the student has been accepted for the following year.

## Extra-curricular Activities and Competitions

The school administrator will ensure that the eligibility requirements outlined in this section will be applied consistently to all clubs, classes, sports, and student organizations for which students are required to study, practice, perform, or compete outside the usual school day. Students who are failing one or more classes at an eligibility check point will remain ineligible until the next eligibility check. The eligibility checks will occur according to the state-approved guidelines. Generally, these occur during the third and sixth weeks of a six-week grading cycle.

As it is a privilege to represent YES Prep in any performance or competition, the school reserves the right to revoke the privilege when student athletes/performers do not meet the standards set forth in this agreement. This responsibility not only exists while the athletes/performers are involved in their chosen activity, but also while at school and competitions. All students are invited and encouraged to take part in athletic and performance programs. Program participants should be prepared to follow all rules and regulations as determined by the athletic and performance staff, administrators, and Board of Trustees. Those not willing to comply with rules and regulations will not be permitted to participate in the program.

Excellent physical and mental preparation is essential for a successful athletic/performance program. A student athlete must be ready for the physical and mental rigors of the contest. This is done through participation in practice sessions planned by each coach/sponsor and by the observance of certain training rules and regulations.

A student athlete/performer is expected to be a positive contributor to YES Prep Public Schools. Every student-athlete/performer is expected to:

- Display dedication to hard work in practice
- Display sportsmanship in defeat, as well as in victory
- Display a respect for authority
- Display a spirit of cooperation
- Display a high standard of social behavior

A student athlete must be in attendance for at least 50% of the academic day in order to participate in a game or performance that same day.

## **Student Athlete/Performer Rights and Responsibilities**

Students participating in the interscholastic program or any competition/performance are to be governed by the rights, protections, and responsibilities prescribed by the YES Prep Public Schools. Students who participate in the Texas Christian Athletic League program or competition/performance are required to meet the eligibility requirements and follow the rules of TCAL and YES Prep Public Schools, and are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and sporting manner toward all persons associated with the athletic program (i.e., conduct becoming to an athlete—such as fairness, courteous manner, and graceful acceptance of results).

## **Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities**

All students participating in co-curricular or extra-curricular activities are required to conduct themselves as role models, to demonstrate good citizenship, and to comply with all rules and regulations of the YES Prep Public Schools or be subject to suspension or expulsion from school and/or the activity involved. Coaches or advisors may apply additional, reasonable, and necessary rules unique to the particular activity for which they have responsibility and which have been approved by the school administration in advance and shared with the participating students. All competition activities will follow the eligibility rules outlined above.

## **School-Sponsored Activities**

YES Prep Public Schools holds dances and other school-sponsored activities (for example Field Day, Prom, Commencement, etc.) for the enjoyment of YES Prep students and their guests. There are parameters for school-sponsored activities.

- All campus rules are in effect at all school-sponsored activities (on or off-campus).
- For some events, the school administration may allow each YES Prep student to invite one non-YES Prep student as a guest. All non-YES Prep students who are guests to the activity must register with the supervising administrator at least 24 hours prior to the activity. The accompanying YES Prep student must provide the name, age, and working telephone number of his/her guest prior to the activity. Once a guest is registered, no substitution is allowed. All non-YES Prep students must have a “pre-sale” ticket to enter the activity. The administrator reserves the right to deny a person entrance into the activity and schools reserve the right to limit events solely to YES Prep students or any specific audience therein.
- Students leaving prior to the end of the activity for any reason may not re-enter the activity.
- YES Prep Public Schools students and their guests may be asked to leave an activity if they conduct themselves in an inappropriate manner or violate any rules set forth in this handbook. No money will be refunded.
- The dress code for each event will be determined by the school administration. Students and guests who do not meet the dress code expectations will not be allowed to attend the event.
- Students who are absent from school are not allowed to attend or participate in any school-sponsored events (athletic competitions, school dances, theater performances, etc.) held on the day they were absent.
- Students expelled from a YES Prep school are not permitted to attend YES Prep sponsored activities.

## YES Prep Standards of Conduct and Behavior

Each student is expected to behave in a manner that exemplifies dedication, discipline, desire, honesty, loyalty, and respect. Students will be held responsible and accountable for behavior that conveys these principles. Proper behavior is expected at all school-sponsored activities both during and after the regular school day. Students who consistently or repeatedly fail to uphold the YES Prep standards of conduct and behavior may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

**Expected behaviors are taught directly.** Behavior is taught using the same instructional principles that guide academic instruction. Displays of problem behavior are considered opportunities to teach appropriate behavior.

**Learning should be personalized for student.** The basis of personalization is embedded in creating a culture of strong, healthy, and positive relationships among students, teachers, and staff that invites and values student participation, preferences, and interests.

**Administrators are key in providing visible leadership.** School administrators are active participants in leading these efforts by demonstrating support and providing active guidance to their staffs.

**Discipline is a tool.** Discipline is an instrument to enhance a student's academic and social success. Staff members look beyond consequences and reactive strategies. This philosophy challenges educators to embrace discipline as a set of practices that is supportive for students and staff.

**Effective discipline is proactive.** Staff members actively create environments that support appropriate behavior in each setting. The actions and modeling of adults are critically important components.

**Rights & Responsibilities of Parents.** Parents, which for the purposes of this Handbook shall include mother, father, legal guardians or persons having lawful control of the student, have the right/responsibility to:

- Provide for the physical needs of their child;
- Be knowledgeable of school policies and academic requirements of school programs;
- Cooperate with school administrators and staff;
- Encourage their child to pay attention and obey the rules;
- Have their child attend school regularly and promptly report and explain absences and tardies to the school;
- Notify school authorities of any learning problems or condition that may relate to their child's education;
- Participate in meaningful parent-teacher conferences to discuss their child's school progress and welfare;
- Review educational records;
- Return signed cards and school assignments with their child;
- Maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers and other pertinent information at the school;
- Ensure that their child is appropriately dressed at school and school-related activities;
- Encourage their child to develop proper study habits at home;

- ensure that their child attends a school tutorial program when required or as the need arises;
- Attend parent training workshops when available;
- Participate in school-related organizations;
- Control their child (under Family Code 33.01, a student's parent is legally liable for property damage proximately caused by (a) the negligent conduct of the student if such conduct is reasonably attributable to the negligent failure of the parent to exercise that duty, or (b) the willful or malicious conduct of a student who is at least 12 but under 18 years of age.);
- Pick up their child from school when requested by school authorities for disciplinary or other reasons;
- Provide adequate supervision for their children during periods of suspension or expulsion;
- Submit a signed statement that they understand and consent to the responsibilities outlined in this Handbook ; and
- Receive a copy of all discipline reports that are given to an administrator.

### **Rights & Responsibilities of Students.**

- Contribute to a positive learning environment at school or at school related activities;
- Attend all classes, daily, and on time in conformity with the compulsory attendance laws of the State of Texas
- Be prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments;
- Be properly attired;
- Exhibit respect toward others;
- Conduct themselves in a responsible manner;
- Pay required fees and fines, unless they are waived;
- Refrain from violations of the Student Code of Conduct;
- Obey all school rules, including safety rules;
- Seek changes in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner through appropriate channels;
- Report threats to the safety of students and staff members as well as misconduct on the part of any students or staff members to campus administrators, staff or another adult.
- Cooperate with staff in the investigation of disciplinary cases; and
- Deliver all school correspondence, including discipline reports, to parents;

### **Rights & Responsibilities of Teachers.**

- Use discipline management techniques developed in the YES Prep's Code of Conduct
- Ensure good student discipline by being in regular attendance and on time;
- Be prepared to perform their teaching duties with appropriate preparation, assignments and resource materials;
- Comply with YES Prep and school policies, rules, regulations and directives;
- Maintain an orderly classroom atmosphere conducive to learning;
- Teach to the standards of performance required by the YES Prep;
- Establish rapport and an effective working relationship with parents, students and other staff members;
- Teach students to strive toward self-discipline;
- Encourage good work habits that will lead to the accomplishment of personal goals;
- Serve as appropriate role models for their students, in accordance with the standards of the teaching profession; and

- Remove a student from class who is so unruly, disruptive or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn, or is behaving in a manner in which the continued presence of the student in the classroom threatens the safety, interests and/or rights of other students or staff or will be detrimental to the educational process

### **Maintaining an Environment Conducive to Learning**

All students are entitled to enjoy the basic rights of citizenship recognized and protected by law for persons of their age and maturity. YES Prep shall foster a climate of mutual respect for the rights of others. Each student is expected to respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers and YES Prep staff. Students shall exercise their rights responsibly, in compliance with rules established for the orderly conduct of YES Prep's educational mission. YES Prep rules of conduct and discipline are established to achieve and maintain order in the school. Students who violate YES Prep or school rules shall be subject to disciplinary measures designed to correct the misconduct

### **Standards for Student Conduct**

Each student is expected to:

- Demonstrate courtesy, even when others do not.
- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline.
- Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
- Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
- Meet YES Prep and campus standards of grooming and dress.
- Obey all campus and classroom rules.
- Respect the rights and privileges of students, teachers, and other YES Prep staff and volunteers.
- Respect the property of others, including YES Prep property and facilities.
- Cooperate with and assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.
- Adhere to the requirements of the Student Code of Conduct.

### **General Conduct Violations**

The categories of conduct below are prohibited at school, in vehicles utilized to transport students by YES Prep, and at all school-related activities, but the list is not exhaustive. Any offense, however, may be severe enough to result in removal from the regular educational setting.

#### **I. Disregard for Authority**

Students shall not:

- Fail to comply with directives given by school personnel (insubordination).
- Leave school grounds or school-sponsored events without permission.
- Disobey rules for conduct on YES Prep vehicles.
- Refuse to accept discipline management techniques assigned by a teacher or school administrator.

#### **II. Mistreatment of Others**

Students shall not:

- Use profanity or vulgar language or make obscene gestures.
- Fight or scuffle. (For assault see glossary)

- Threaten a YES Prep student, employee, or volunteer, including off school property when such conduct occurs, if the conduct causes a disruption to the educational environment.
- Engage in bullying, harassment, inappropriate conduct (as those terms are described in this Handbook, or making hit lists. (See glossary)
- Engage in conduct that constitutes sexual or gender-based harassment or sexual abuse, whether by word, gesture, or any other conduct, directed toward another person, including a YES Prep student, employee, board member, or volunteer.
- Engage in conduct that constitutes dating violence. (See glossary)
- Engage in inappropriate or indecent exposure of private body parts.
- Participate in hazing. (See glossary)
- Cause an individual to act through the use of or threat of force (coercion).
- Commit extortion or blackmail (obtaining money or an object of value from an unwilling person).
- Engage in inappropriate verbal, physical, or sexual conduct directed toward another person, including a YES Prep student, employee, or volunteer.
- Record the voice or image of another without the prior consent of the individuals being recorded or in any way that disrupts the educational environment or invades the privacy of others.

### **III. Property Offenses**

Students shall not:

- Damage or vandalize property owned by others. (For felony criminal mischief see Expulsion.)
- Deface or damage school property—including textbooks, technology and electronic resources, lockers, furniture, and other equipment—with graffiti or by other means.
- Steal from students, staff, or the school.
- Commit or assist in a robbery or theft even if it does not constitute a felony according to the Texas Penal Code.

### **IV. Possession of Prohibited Items**

Students shall not possess or use:

- Weapons
- Firearms
- Fireworks of any kind, smoke or stink bombs, or any other pyrotechnic device;
- A razor, box cutter, chain, or any other object used in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury to another person;
- A “look-alike” weapon;
- An air gun or BB gun;
- Ammunition;
- A stun gun;
- A pocketknife or any other small knife;
- Mace or pepper spray;
- Pornographic material;
- Tobacco products; cigarettes; e-cigarettes; and any component, part, or accessory for an e-cigarette device;
- Matches or a lighter;
- A laser pointer for other than an approved use; or

- Any articles not generally considered to be weapons, including school supplies, when the school director or designee determines that a danger exists. (For weapons and firearms see Level IV.)

**V. Possession of Telecommunications or Other Electronic Devices**

Students shall not use a telecommunications device, including a cellular telephone, or other electronic device in violation of YES Prep and campus rules.

**VI. Illegal, Prescription, and Over-the-Counter Drugs**

Students shall not:

- Possess, use, distribute, sell, buy a controlled substance, a dangerous drug, or marijuana
- Possess or sell seeds or pieces of marijuana in less than a usable amount. (For illegal drugs, alcohol, and inhalants see Expulsion.)
- Possess, use, give, or sell paraphernalia related to any prohibited substance. (See glossary for “paraphernalia.”)
- Possess, use, abuse, or sell look-alike drugs or attempt to pass items off as drugs or contraband.
- Abuse the student’s own prescription drug, give a prescription drug to another student, or possess or be under the influence of another person’s prescription drug on school property or at a school-related event. (See glossary for “abuse.”)
- Abuse over-the-counter drugs. (See glossary for “abuse.”) Be under the influence of prescription or over-the-counter drugs that cause impairment of the physical or mental faculties. (See glossary for “under the influence.”)
- Have or take prescription drugs or over-the-counter drugs at school other than as provided by YES Prep policy.

**VII. Misuse of Technology Resources and the Internet**

Students shall not:

- Violate the YES Prep Responsible Use Guidelines, policies, rules, or agreements signed by the student or the student’s parent regarding the use of technology resources.
- Attempt to access or circumvent passwords or other security-related information of YES Prep, students, or employees or upload or create computer viruses, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Attempt to alter, destroy, or disable YES Prep technology resources including but not limited to computers and related equipment, YES Prep data, the data of others, or other networks connected to YES Prep’s system, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Use the Internet or other electronic communications to threaten YES Prep students, employees, board members, or volunteers, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Send, post, or possess electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another’s reputation, or illegal, including cyberbullying and “sexting,” either on or off school property, if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

- Use e-mail or websites to engage in or encourage illegal behavior or threaten school safety, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

### **VIII. Safety Transgressions**

Students shall not:

- Possess published or electronic material that is designed to promote or encourage illegal behavior or that could threaten school safety.
- Engage in verbal (oral or written) exchanges that threaten the safety of another student, a school employee, or school property.
- Make false accusations or perpetrate hoaxes regarding school safety.
- Engage in any conduct that school officials might reasonably believe will substantially disrupt the school program or incite violence.
- Throw objects that can cause bodily injury or property damage.
- Discharge a fire extinguisher without valid cause.

### **IX. Miscellaneous Offenses**

Students shall not:

- Violate dress and grooming standards as communicated in the student handbook.
- Cheat or copy the work of another.
- Gamble.
- Falsify records, passes, or other school-related documents.
- Engage in actions or demonstrations that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with school activities.
- Repeatedly violate other communicated campus or classroom standards of conduct.
- Skip Class/Out of Designated Area
- Accumulate Excessive Tardies

YES Prep may impose campus or classroom rules in addition to those found in the Student Code of Conduct. These rules may be posted in classrooms or given to the student and may or may not constitute violations of the Code.

YES Prep allows students to drive vehicles on school property if they are properly licensed but considers violations to the Vehicle Code, posted below, to fall under the miscellaneous offense category.

### **X. Vehicle Code**

- Students are required to abide by State Law and Campus Driving and Parking Regulations. Any failure to do so will be considered a violation of the Vehicle Code.
- Reckless driving is not permitted.
- Students may park in the designated student parking lot only, if available. Parking in a fire lane shall be considered the same as parking in a “No-Parking” zone.
- Cars illegally parked or without stickers are subject to tow and drivers may be given a Saturday class assignment.
- Students must have a valid driver’s license before they are issued a parking sticker.
- Students riding or driving in private cars will not be permitted to sit in the cars or to use them after arriving on campus.



- Students must enter the building immediately after the car is parked, and they may not return to the car during the school day without a valid pass from a school administrator.
- Students may not ride in the back of trucks on YES Prep school property.
- Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of YES Prep.
- Any car parked on school property is subject to search by YES Prep administrators or law enforcement without the presence of the vehicle's owner or driver. An administrator may conduct the search with student consent or reasonable suspicion and a law enforcement officer may conduct a search with student consent or probable cause.
- Students who receive parking passes consent to have their vehicles searched by YES Prep school administrators for violations of the Student Code of Conduct.
- Students will be held responsible under the Student Code of Conduct for any prohibited objects or substances contained in their cars such as alcohol, drugs, and/or weapons and may also be subject to criminal sanctions.

### **Discipline Management Techniques**

Discipline shall be designed to improve conduct and to encourage students to adhere to their responsibilities as members of the school community. Disciplinary action shall draw on the professional judgment of teachers and administrators and on a range of discipline management techniques, including restorative discipline practices. Discipline shall be correlated to the seriousness of the offense, the student's age and grade level, the frequency of misbehavior, the student's attitude, the effect of the misconduct on the school environment, and requirements listed in the Code of Conduct. Because of these factors, discipline for a particular offense, including misconduct in a YES Prep vehicle owned or operated by YES Prep, unless otherwise specified by law, may bring into consideration varying techniques and responses.

#### **Techniques**

The following discipline management techniques may be used alone, in combination, or as part of progressive interventions for behavior prohibited by the Student Code of Conduct or by campus or classroom rules:

- Verbal correction, oral or written.
- Cooling-off time or "time-out."
- Seating changes within the classroom or vehicles owned or operated by YES Prep.
- Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process.
- Rewards or demerits.
- Behavioral contracts.
- Counseling by teachers, school counselors, or administrative personnel.
- Parent-teacher conferences.
- Grade reductions for cheating, plagiarism, and as otherwise permitted by policy.
- Detention, including outside regular school hours.
- Placement on RISE (Restoring Individual Student Excellence, see campus appendices for specific information) for a determined period of time.
- Sending the student to the office or other assigned area, or to in-school suspension.
- Assignment of school duties such as cleaning or picking up litter that are natural consequences of the offense (i.e. graffiti, etc.)

- Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in extracurricular activities, eligibility for seeking and holding honorary offices, or membership in school-sponsored clubs and organizations.
- Penalties identified in individual student organizations' extracurricular standards of behavior.
- Restriction or revocation of YES Prep transportation privileges.
- In and Out-of-school suspension, as specified in the Student Code of Conduct.
- Expulsion, as specified in the Expulsion section (Level IV) of the Student Code of Conduct or Alternative Placement, if available at a campus.
- Other strategies and consequences as determined by school administrators.

## **Code of Conduct**

The following code of conduct is intended to place parents and students on notice of behavioral expectations and consequences for specific acts of misconduct.

### **General Discipline Guidelines for Assessing Penalties**

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

1. Discipline shall be administered when necessary to protect students, school employees, or property and to maintain essential order and discipline.
2. Students shall be treated fairly and equitably. Discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case. Administrators should use caution and should ordinarily consider developmentally appropriate interventions for children who engage in misconduct. Factors that may be considered in each decision concerning suspension, or expulsion, include such factors as:
  - a. seriousness of the offense
  - b. student's age and intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct
  - c. student's disciplinary history
  - d. student's attitude
  - e. potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment
  - f. whether the offense requires or provides a consequence according to the code of conduct
  - g. whether the facts of the case warrant consideration of self-defense as a mitigating factor in the assessment of any punishment
  - h. whether the student has a disability that substantially impairs the student's capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student's conduct
3. Serious offenses are those that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with the orderly process in the classroom, YES Prep transportation, the school, or any school-related activity and may include persistent misbehavior of Level II misconduct. Persistent shall be defined as more than one instance of misconduct. Finally, a finding that a student has engaged in any offense listed as an offense under Level III or Level IV constitutes a finding that the student has engaged in serious misbehavior.

### **Level I Violation of Classroom, School or Transportation Rules**

Please see campus appendices for specific information at a particular campus.

## **Level II Acts of Misconduct**

Level II acts of misconduct are those for which an administrator may suspend the student. The school director or other appropriate administrator makes the disciplinary determination. The period of the suspension is limited to up to three days per occurrence.

Level II acts of misconduct include such behaviors as:

- Possession or use of matches or a lighter except as part of an instructional program
- Conducting private business, selling or buying unauthorized items
- Damaging or vandalizing school property or property belonging to others (not felony level)
- Verbal assault that does not rise to the level of extreme intimidation or disrespect
- Failing to provide appropriate or relevant information to school administrators, which results in mental or physical harm to another individual
- Cheating or copying the work of another on a state standardized test (or MAP, SAT/PSAT, AP) or YES Prep Common Assessment or allowing another to cheat or copy on a state standardized test or YES Prep Common Assessment
- Violation of the YES Prep Academic Dishonesty, student(s) involved in plagiarism or academic dishonesty on a unit exam test, quiz, projects, or essay
- Failing to attend assigned detention two times for the same behavior
- Skipping class(es) or activities scheduled during the regular school day (advisory, all school meetings, etc.)
- Leaving school grounds without permission of an appropriate school administrator
- Using any type of gang sign, symbol or representation while at school, involvement in a public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society, including participating as a member or pledge, or soliciting another person to become a pledge or member of a public school fraternity, sorority, secret society while at school.

## **Level III Acts of Misconduct**

Level III acts of misconduct for which an administrator may suspend the student, or if the administrator finds the Level III misconduct to be severe may recommend the student for expulsion. The school director or other appropriate administrator makes the disciplinary determination on the basis of the severity of the misconduct. The period of the suspension is limited to up to three days per occurrence.

Level III acts of misconduct include such behaviors as:

- Assault of, or threats to, another person, including any physical, verbal, emotional and written forms (non-felony)
- Throwing objects that can cause bodily injury or property damage
- Any verbal abuse of others, including slurs, name-calling, or derogatory statements to another person because of that person's race, color, religion, national origin, disability, physical/personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression.
- Possession or sale of stolen property (non-felony)
- Stealing, theft, or robbery (non-felony) in an amount under \$750
- Burglary of a YES Prep facility
- Behaving in such a manner that the continued presence of the student in the classroom threatens the safety, interests and rights of other students or staff, or will be detrimental to the educational

process or engages in unruly, disruptive or abusive behavior that seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn

- Verifiable evidence of crimes (Non felony) charged for conduct committed on-campus or off-campus determined to have one or more of the following effects:
  - (a) Disrupting the learning environment;
  - (b) Providing a negative example to other students; or
  - (c) Creating a dangerous and unsafe environment for students or school personnel.
- Cases of extortion, intimidation, or disrespect of another student, staff member, or campus visitor
- Engaging in inappropriate physical or sexual conduct (consensual)
- Engaging in conduct that constitutes sexual harassment, including but not limited to verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature
- Taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd or otherwise illegal images or other content, including but not limited to sexting.
- Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of an offense of public lewdness or indecent exposure
- Use or possession of fireworks, including stink bombs
- Intentionally discharging a fire extinguisher or activating a fire alarm, except in an emergency
- Starting or building a fire on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event, except as part of an instructional program
- Possessing, distributing, selling, using, or smoking tobacco or tobacco products, smokeless cigarettes, e-cigarettes, any other nicotine delivery device, or any substance for consumption containing nicotine.
- Possessing, distributing, selling, or using medications that are available **with** or without a prescription in a manner that is not consistent with the medicine's intended use as indicated on the manufacturer's label, or with school rules concerning the handling of such medications
- Selling, giving, delivering to another person, using or being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage (non-felony)
- Using, in a manner inconsistent with the manufacturer's instructions, or being under the influence of glue, aerosol, paint, and other inhalants
- Possessing drug paraphernalia
- Possessing or selling items attempted to be passed off as illegal drugs or contraband
- Engaging in assault/fight that does not result in physical harm
- Making a hit-list
- Possession, distribution, carrying, exhibition, or use of a knife, which includes a switchblade knife, razor blades, utility knives, or other bladed instruments. (See Level IV offenses related to illegal knives) Possession of ammunition or bullets
- Discharging or spraying mace or pepper spray, which results in a school disturbance
- Gambling or participating in gambling activities
- Failure or refusal to cover up while on campus or at a school-related activity any tattoo that is inappropriate, obscene, offensive, vulgar, or gang-related
- Engaging in bullying/hazing including cyber-bullying

- Inappropriate or illegal use of the school's electronic communication systems, including the Internet, or abuse of the Technology Use Policy, referenced in this Handbook.

#### **Level IV Expellable Offenses**

Level IV acts of misconduct include serious misbehaviors and/or illegal acts including those that threaten to impair the educational efficiency of the school and/or that most seriously disrupt the orderly educational process in the classroom and/or the school. Students may be expelled for any violation listed under this section. Expulsion means removal of a student from school not to exceed one calendar year. For administrative removal see section below.

#### **Level IV Acts of Misconduct:**

- A. If a student engages in the following conduct on school property, within 300 feet of school property, or at a school related activity the student may be expelled:
- a) Aggravated assault
  - b) Sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault
  - c) Murder, capital murder, criminal intent to commit murder or capital murder
  - d) Indecency with a child
  - e) Engaging in arson
  - f) Aggravated kidnapping
  - g) Aggravated robbery
  - h) Manslaughter
  - i) Criminally negligent homicide
  - j) Continuous sexual abuse of a young child
  - k) Unlawfully carrying on or about the student's person a handgun, an illegal knife (see glossary), a club (see glossary)
  - l) Possessing, manufacturing, transporting, repairing, or selling a prohibited weapon including the following:
    - An explosive weapon;
    - A machine gun;
    - A short-barrel firearm; or
    - A firearm silencer
    - Knuckles
    - Armor-piercing ammunition;
    - A chemical dispensing device;
    - A zip gun;
    - A tire deflation device
  - m) Deadly conduct (see glossary)
  - n) Possesses a firearm (see glossary)
  - o) Conduct that contains the elements of a felony offense or is punishable as a felony
  - p) Inappropriate physical or sexual conduct (non-consensual which includes situations in which the student is not of the age of consent or the actor is not able to assert the defense of similar age under the Texas penal code)

- q) Possessing, using, being under the influence, giving or delivering to another person or buying, or attempting to buy, selling or attempting to sell marijuana, controlled substances or a dangerous drug
- r) Selling, giving or delivering to another person, committing a serious offense while under the influence of alcohol, or possessing, using or being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage if punishable as a felony.
- s) Any assault that results in any physical harm. This could include a fight that results in physical harm
- t) Conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to abusable volatile chemicals
- u) Use, exhibition or possession (even if not being carried on or about the student's person) of a club (see glossary), illegal knife (see glossary), or handgun (see glossary).
- v) Possession, distribution, exhibition, or use of any, pellet gun, ammunition, air gun, replica firearm or bomb, electronic stunning device, and other dangerous item including any weapon listed or referenced in "Level IV Acts of Misconduct" Section of this Code of Conduct

**B. Regardless of the location, a student may be expelled**

- If the student commits the offenses listed in Section A, a-k against an employee or volunteer in retaliation for or as a result of the person's employment or affiliation with YES Prep.
- If the student commits an assault under 22.01(a)(1) against an employee or volunteer in retaliation for or as a result of the person's employment or affiliation with YES Prep.
- If the student makes a terroristic threat (see glossary), false alarm or report (see glossary) including but not limited to bomb threats
- if the student engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of criminal mischief under 28.03 of the Penal Code if punishable as a felony
- If the student retaliates against a school employee or other person
- If the student engages in conduct that contains the elements of one of the following offenses against another student: aggravated assault, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, murder, capital murder, criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder, aggravated robbery
- If the student engages in conduct that involves accessing a computer, computer network, or computer system owned and operated on behalf of YES Prep Public Schools and knowingly damaging or deleting YES Prep school property or information or committing a breach of any other school computer, computer network or computer system

**See Section of the Handbook on Federal Firearms Act, which requires expulsion if a student brings onto school property, possesses at school, including any setting that is under YES Prep's control or supervision or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property, a firearm as defined by federal law.**

**If an offense falls within both Level III and Level IV, the school director has the discretion to impose consequences for either a Level III or Level IV.**

## **Academic Dishonesty**

YES Prep students participate in a rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum, and therefore are held to collegiate standards when it comes to academic honesty. Colleges and universities do not tolerate

plagiarism or cheating in any scenario, and we expect YES Prep students to hold themselves to standards that are beyond reproach. Students who plagiarize papers or projects or are involved in any other form of academic dishonesty on class work or assignment will be subject to the following policy. Cheating or copying the work of another student on a state standardized test (or MAP, SAT/PSAT, AP) or YES Prep Common Assessment or allowing another student to cheat or copy on a state standardized test or YES Prep Common Assessment will result in the student receiving a **three day suspension**. The student(s) involved in plagiarism or academic dishonesty on a unit exam test, quiz, projects, or essay will receive a minimum recorded grade of 50% on the assignment with a retake opportunity offered to earn a maximum recorded grade of 70% and s/he will receive a one-day, out-of-school or in-school suspension that will be reflected on official school records; the student also may be subject to other disciplinary action as determined by the school administration. The school administrator will send home written notice informing the parents of the violation and giving parents the option of setting up a meeting between the parents, students, and grade level teachers.

For other possible academic dishonesty incidents, such as cheating or plagiarizing homework, please see campus individual supplement section for disciplinary consequences.

School administrators reserve the right to take all necessary steps to investigate alleged academic dishonesty; including but not limited to requiring a student to retake an exam or quiz or rewriting portions of a paper. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, YES Prep Public Schools reserves the right to suspend.

## **Forgery**

Forging the signature of a parent/guardian, teacher, other adult, or another student on any letter to the school or any school document will result in disciplinary action including but not limited to RISE, detention and/or other disciplinary consequences.

## **Federal Firearms Act**

YES Prep Public Schools, as an open-enrollment charter school, shall expel a student who brings, possesses at school, including any setting that is under YES Prep's control or supervision for the purpose of a school activity, a firearm, as defined by 18 U.S.C. Section 921. The student must be expelled from the student's regular campus for a period of at least one year, except that the superintendent or other chief administrative officer of the school may modify the length of the expulsion in the case of an individual student.

## **Newly Enrolled Students**

YES Prep will decide on a case-by-case basis the placement of a student who is subject to an expulsion order from another district or an open-enrollment charter school upon enrollment in the district.

## **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

The discipline of students with disabilities is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the YES Prep Handbook. To the extent any conflict exists, state and/or federal law will prevail.

## **Alternative School Placement**

Students enrolled at YES Prep Gulfton and Southwest may be subject to placement into their alternative school placement (Praxeum/Recommitment Room) for Level II, and Level III acts of misconduct. Placement means removal of a student from their regular classroom setting for more than ten consecutive days but no longer than ninety days. (See Campus Section for detailed information)

## **Disclosure Policy**

Student discipline at YES Prep is predicated on the fact that learning takes place best in a safe and orderly environment. On those occasions when school rules are violated, the school administration acts in a manner that balances the needs of the learning community with that of the individual. During the college search and application process, YES Prep does not proactively inform colleges of disciplinary records on students; however, the Common Application, as well as those Colleges and Universities that do not subscribe to the Common Application, are explicitly asking students as part of the application whether or not they have been found responsible for a disciplinary violation at an educational institution you have attended from 9th grade (or the international equivalent) forward, whether related to academic misconduct or behavior misconduct, that resulted in your probation, suspension, removal, dismissal, or expulsion from the institution. We encourage students to answer this question honestly and openly. In those instances when the question is answered in the affirmative, counselors will assist families in developing a personal statement that will help contextualize the situation. On the occasions when a college calls YES Prep to inquire about a suspension, we require written permission from families before we would discuss a disciplinary matter.

## **Expulsion as a Consequence for Persistent Misbehaviors: Escalation to Expulsion Policy**

*Misbehaviors in violation of the Student Code of Conduct not otherwise constituting an expellable offense may become a serious infraction subject to expulsion when the misbehavior is persistent.* Students who engage in conduct for which they were suspended four times for a Level III and/or Level IV offense in any academic year must be recommended for expulsion by the campus school director. YES Prep does not distinguish between in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension in the application of this policy. If a student is expelled from YES Prep Public Schools and wishes to return at the end of the expulsion period, s/he will be required to re-apply to YES Prep and participate in the lottery system as appropriate.

## **Administrative Removal:**

In addition to the offenses in this code of conduct for which a student could be suspended as a disciplinary consequence, the school director or designee has the authority to administratively remove a student from school for a period of up to 10 school days for any of the following additional reasons:

- The need to further investigate an incident;
- Pending a recommendation to expel the student or pending the outcome of an appeal of an expulsion decision;
- An emergency constituting endangerment to health or safety.

### **A. Notification to parents/guardians**

If the school director or designee determines the student's conduct warrants an administrative removal during the school day, the school director or designee must notify the student's



parents/guardians of the duration and reason for the removal and the time and place for an opportunity to confer with the school director or designee.

B. Credit during removal

A student shall receive credit for work missed during the period of removal if the student makes up work missed during the period of removal within the same number of school days the student was absent on administrative removal.

## Suspension Process

A. Prerequisites to suspension

Prior to suspending a student, the school director or designee must hold an informal conference with the student to:

- Notify the student of the accusations against him/her;
- Allow the student to relate his/her version of the incident; and
- Determine whether the student's conduct warrants suspension.

B. Notification to parents/guardians

If the school director or designee determines the student's conduct warrants suspension during the school day, the school director or designee must notify the student's parents/guardians that the student has been suspended before the student is sent home on the day the suspension occurs. The school director or designee will notify a suspended student's parents/guardians of the period of suspension, the grounds for the suspension, and the time and place for an opportunity to confer with the school director or designee.

C. Other disciplinary options/responses:

- Restitution or restoration, as applicable for vandalism to property
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities, such as field trips and commencement exercises / award ceremonies.
- Removal of transportation services for up to one year
- Restriction or removal of computer-use privileges for up to one year
- Any other appropriate disciplinary actions determined by the administration

D. Credit during suspension

A student shall receive credit for work missed during the period of suspension if the student makes up work missed during the period of suspension within the same number of school days the student was absent on suspension.

## Expulsion Process

A. Notice

When the school director determines that a student's conduct warrants expulsion, but prior to taking any expulsion action, the school director will provide the student's parents/guardians with written notice of:

- The reasons for the proposed expulsion; and
- The date and location for a hearing before the school director.

The notice shall further state that, at the hearing, the student:

- may be present;
- shall have an opportunity to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses;

- shall be apprised and informed of the school's evidence;
- may be accompanied by his/her parents/guardians; and
- may be represented by an attorney.

#### B. Expulsion Hearing

The school shall make a good faith effort to inform the student and the student's parents/guardians of the time and place for the hearing, and the school shall hold the hearing regardless of whether the student, the student's parents/guardians, or another adult representing the student attends. The meeting will take place in front of a hearing officer. The hearing officer shall ensure that the hearing is audio recorded.

Within 48 hours following the expulsion hearing, the hearing officer will notify the student and the student's parents/guardians in writing of his/her decision. The decision shall specify:

- The length of the expulsion, if any;
- *When the expulsion is not permanent*, the procedures for re-admittance at the end of the expulsion period; and
- The right to appeal the hearing officer's decision to the Heads of Schools.

The notice shall also state that failure to request such a hearing in a timely manner constitutes a waiver of further rights in the matter.

If the expulsion hearing officer determines that the student should not be expelled, the expulsion officer reserves the right to recommend consequences to the School Director. These consequences include, but are not limited to: counseling services, community service hours, removal of all extra-curricular activities or parents picking up the student at a set-time, in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension.

#### C. Appeal of an Expulsion

The student or his/her parents/guardians may appeal the hearing officer's decision. The appeal process is as follows:

- 1) Parents/Guardians will notify the YES Prep Heads of Schools or his designee of a desire to appeal within 48 hours of receipt of the decision.
- 2) The Heads of Schools or his designee will review the evidence presented at the disciplinary hearing. No new evidence may be presented before review. The Heads of Schools or his designee may uphold the decision, overturn the decision, modify the length of the expulsion period, or agree to meet with the parents/guardians in order to hear the appeal. If a meeting is held, the Heads of Schools will hear the appeal and choose to uphold the decision of the hearing officer, overturn the decision of the hearing officer, or modify the length of the expulsion period based upon his/her review of the evidence presented at the disciplinary hearing.
- 3) If the decision of the Heads of Schools is to uphold the expulsion (including upholding the expulsion with a modification of the length of the expulsion period), then the parents/guardians may request a hearing with an Expulsion Review Panel by notifying the Head of Schools in writing within seven (7) calendar days of the date of receipt of the Head of Schools decision. The Expulsion Review Panel will be comprised of one or more members of the Board designated by the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Board. Also, if desired by the

CEO, the CEO or his designee may serve on the Expulsion Review Panel. The Expulsion Review Panel will review the record prepared before the hearing officer and the decisions of the hearing officer and the Head of Schools. The Panel will also give the student, parents/guardians, and Head of Schools the opportunity to make a presentation before the Panel based on the expulsion record. The Panel will determine the length of the presentation based on the complexity of the case, typically not to exceed fifteen (15) minutes. The Panel members may ask questions of the student, parents/guardians, and Head of Schools (or his/her designee), however, the Panel members are not subject to questioning. The student and the Head of Schools (or his/her designee) are required to attend. The student's parents/guardians are encouraged to attend as well.

- 4) In most cases, the Expulsion Review Panel will render its decision at the meeting, but in any event, will do so within five (5) business days after the meeting.
- 5) The Expulsion Review Panel's decision will be limited to upholding or overturning the expulsion. If the decision is to overturn the expulsion, the student may be subject to other consequences as determined by the Head of Schools or his/her designee. These consequences include, but are not limited to: counseling services, community service hours, removal of all extra-curricular activities, parents/guardians picking up the student at a set-time, in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension.

The Head of Schools or his/her designee decides whether consequences will be deferred pending the outcome of an appeal. If the consequences are deferred pending the outcome of the appeal, the Head of Schools has the discretion to administratively remove the student or place the student in another educational setting within YES Prep, including in-school suspension, while awaiting the decision following an appeal.

## **Restrictions During Expulsion**

Expelled students are prohibited from being on school grounds or attending school-sponsored or school-related activities during the period of expulsion. If the expelled student has a sibling at YES Prep with a significant event at school that the parent would like to have the expelled student attend, the parent must first contact the school director receive a one-time approval to attend the event with his/her family.

## **Reporting Crimes**

School administrators will report crimes as required by law and may contact local law enforcement at their discretion. Reports to law enforcement may be made in addition to the disciplinary consequences described in this Handbook and Code of Conduct.

## **Tobacco Free**

YES Prep Public Schools promotes and maintains a tobacco-free environment. Regardless of age, students are prohibited from smoking, using tobacco products, or having tobacco in possession at any time during the school day or at any school-sponsored activities. Students in violation of the tobacco/smoking regulation will be subject to disciplinary action. (See section on Code of Conduct)

## **School Property**

All students are expected to respect and care for all property of YES Prep Public Schools including building facilities, desks, dry erase boards, books, restroom facilities, lockers, etc. Any student damaging or defacing

school property will be required to pay for the damage or loss. Willful destruction or defacement of school property at any time is just cause for disciplinary action and may result in expulsion.

At the end of each school year, all students are required to return all school-issued materials (textbooks, novels, athletics uniforms, calculators, etc.) in good condition. Students who fail to do so must reimburse the school the replacement cost of these items. Failure to do so will result in the school holding all student records from release to the parent, student, or other organizations as legally permitted.

## **Student Property**

**YES Prep Public Schools assumes no responsibility for any loss to students' personal property or for items such as (but not limited to) iPads, iPods, radios, cameras, cellular phones, smart watches, camcorders, hand held game systems, toys, and cards.** Students must put these items away whenever on campus or when requested to do so by school personnel or volunteers.

Parents and students are advised that it is a violation of school code to use cell phones, smart watches or other portable communication devices during school hours. Items will be confiscated and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. All items that are prohibited and/or deemed unacceptable for the school environment will be confiscated and stored in the appropriate administrators' office until a parent retrieves those items after speaking with the school administrator. The school is not responsible at any point for items that are prohibited on campus.

The following items will be immediately confiscated if brought to campus: skateboards, skates, roller blades, televisions, electronic game systems (PS2, Game Cube, etc.), flat irons, curling irons, or aerosol cans (hair spray, deodorant, etc.). *This is not an exhaustive list.* Inappropriate items will be returned to parents at the discretion of the school administrator.

If student property that is traditionally considered confidential (journals, purses) is confiscated, it will be turned over to the school administrator.

## **Other Student or Staff Property**

Any student damaging or defacing property that belongs to another student or staff member will be required to pay for the damage or loss. Willful destruction, defacement, or theft of student or teacher property at any time is just cause for disciplinary action and may result in expulsion.

## **Cell Phone Usage**

During school hours, all student cell phones must be **turned off**. If at any time during the school day, the cell phone is out or in use, the cell phone will be confiscated. An administrative charge of \$15 must be paid by a parent/guardian before the phone can be retrieved. Additionally, in the event this becomes excessive, further disciplinary action may occur. Parents/guardians are encouraged to call the school's office number if an emergency arises.

## **Searches**

School administrators have the right to search a vehicle driven to school by a student and parked on school property whenever there is reasonable cause to believe it contains articles or materials prohibited by YES Prep Public Schools. When a dog is used to sniff cars, to determine if articles or materials prohibited by YES

Prep Public Schools is in the car, such activity is not considered a search and school administrators need not have reasonable suspicion to utilize dogs.

YES Prep reserves the right to use other search means, including dogs, to conduct a search for articles or materials prohibited by YES Prep Public Schools.

School administrators may seize any contraband, substance, material, or object, the possession of which is illegal, violates a school rule, or poses a hazard to the safety and good order of the school. Students are not to bring these items to school or to any school-sponsored function.

Authority to Conduct a Search	The law allows school administrators to search students, their lockers, their motor vehicles and their personal property when the administrator has reasonable suspicion that a particular student is in possession of something prohibited by school rules or by law.
General Inspection	School administrators reserve the right to make general inspections of lockers at any time with or without reasonable suspicion that a school rule has been violated. Such general inspections shall not include searching personal items stored in lockers, clothing, bags, or purses unless reasonable and specific suspicion exists.
Locker/Desk/Storage Area Inspections	All lockers and other storage areas provided for student use on school premises remain the property of the school and are subject to inspection, access for maintenance, and search at any time with or without reasonable suspicion. Students may place an approved lock for security reasons on their assigned locker only and must provide a key or combination to School Administrators.
Personal Searches	A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, backpack, etc.) may be searched when school administrator has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized items. Reasonable suspicion is not required to have a dog sniff a student's personal effects.
Motor Vehicle Searches	Motor vehicles driven by students and parked on or near school property during regular school hours or during school activities are subject to being searched when school administrator have reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized items. Reasonable suspicion is not required to have a dog sniff a student's motor vehicle.

Any student who refuses to submit to a reasonable search by school administrator will be subject to disciplinary action. School administrators may detain the student pending the notification and arrival of the student's parent/guardian and/or law officials as appropriate.

## Suicide Threats

YES Prep community members take warning signs and threats of suicide seriously. If a student is identified as being a physical or emotional danger to him or herself, administration works swiftly to ensure the physical and emotional safety of that student. Licensed and trained Student Support Counselors will meet with the student to provide an initial assessment and collaborate with administration to determine a safety plan. Administration will call an immediate emergency family conference to communicate the safety plan and school recommendations/mandates. The safety plan

may include: a formal suicide assessment, psychological/psychiatric evaluation, No-Harm/Safety Agreement, Notification of Emergency Conference, and post-crisis follow-up steps. Follow-up steps may include a requested psychiatric assessment by a licensed physician to ensure that the student receives necessary medical attention and support needed before transitioning back to school. Upon return to school, a safety plan will include measures to have parents and/or guardian involved in the support process. Safety of all students is our priority.

If YES Prep students know a teammate is depressed, hopeless, and has talked about committing suicide, they MUST get help immediately. When someone talks about suicide, it is a cry for help. Do not promise confidentiality. Support your teammate by telling a trusted staff member who can help directly. If you are thinking of suicide, it is important to recognize these thoughts for what they are: expressions of a treatable medical illness. Do not let fear, shame, or embarrassment stand in the way of getting professional help.

Student Support Counselors are able to confidentially provide students and families with a variety of referrals for mental health support.

## **Selling Items at School**

School clubs and organizations may sell items before, after, and during school hours only after they have received permission from a school administrator. Individual students may not sell items without permission from the school director, and disciplinary action may be taken with students who sell items without permission.

## **Distributing Literature**

Students must receive approval from the school administrator or designated campus-based leader prior to distributing any flyers, literature, etc., for non-school sponsored activities. For school sponsored activities, such as pep rallies, dances, student government campaigns, etc., students who wish to post advertising materials for these events must have each copy signed or initialed by a school administrator.

## **Glossary**

The glossary provides legal definitions and locally established definitions and is intended to assist in understanding terms related to the Student Code of Conduct.

**Abuse** is improper or excessive use.

**Aggravated robbery** is defined in part by Texas Penal Code 29.03(a) when a person commits robbery and:

1. Causes serious bodily injury to another;
2. Uses or exhibits a deadly weapon; or
3. Causes bodily injury to another person or threatens or places another person in fear of imminent bodily injury or death, if the other person is:
  - a. 65 years of age or older, or
  - b. A disabled person.

**Armor-piercing ammunition** is handgun ammunition used in pistols and revolvers and designed primarily for the purpose of penetrating metal or body armor.

**Arson** is:

1. A crime that involves starting a fire or causing an explosion with intent to destroy or damage:
  - a. Any vegetation, fence, or structure on open-space land; or
  - b. Any building, habitation, or vehicle:
    - 1) Knowing that it is within the limits of an incorporated city or town,
    - 2) Knowing that it is insured against damage or destruction,
    - 3) Knowing that it is subject to a mortgage or other security interest,
    - 4) Knowing that it is located on property belonging to another,
    - 5) Knowing that it has located within it property belonging to another, or
    - 6) When the person starting the fire is reckless about whether the burning or explosion will endanger the life of some individual or the safety of the property of another.
2. A crime that involves recklessly starting a fire or causing an explosion while manufacturing or attempting to manufacture a controlled substance and the fire or explosion damages any building, habitation, or vehicle; or
3. A crime that involves intentionally starting a fire or causing an explosion and in so doing:
  - a. Recklessly damages or destroys a building belonging to another, or
  - b. Recklessly causes another person to suffer bodily injury or death.

**Assault** is defined in part by Texas Penal Code §22.01(a)(1) as intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury to another; §22.01(a)(2) as intentionally or knowingly threatening another with imminent bodily injury; and §22.01(a)(3) as intentionally or knowingly causing physical contact with another that can reasonably be regarded as offensive or provocative.

**Bullying** is when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by YES Prep and a YES Prep's school board of trustees or the board's designee determines that the behavior:

1. Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

This conduct is considered bullying if it:

1. Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator who is engaging in bullying and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and
2. Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

**Chemical dispensing device** is a device designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of causing an adverse psychological or physiological effect on a human being. A small chemical dispenser sold commercially for personal protection is not in this category.

**Club** is an instrument specially designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death. A blackjack, mace, and tomahawk are in the same category.

**Criminal street gang** is three or more persons having a common identifying sign or symbol or an identifiable leadership who continuously or regularly associate in the commission of criminal activities.

**Cyberbullying** is the use of any electronic communication device to engage in bullying or intimidation.

**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 another person in the relationship. Dating violence also occurs when a person commits these acts against a person in a marriage or dating relationship with the individual who is or was once in a marriage or dating relationship with the person committing the offense, as defined by Section 71.0021 of the Family Code.

**Deadly conduct** occurs when a person recklessly engages in conduct that places another in imminent danger of serious bodily injury, such as knowingly discharging a firearm in the direction of an individual, habitation, building, or vehicle.

**Delinquent conduct** is conduct that violates either state or federal law and is punishable by imprisonment or confinement in jail. It includes conduct that violates certain juvenile court orders, including probation orders, but does not include violations of traffic laws.

**E-cigarette** means an electronic cigarette or any other device that simulates smoking by using a mechanical heating element, battery, or electronic circuit to deliver nicotine or other substances to the individual inhaling from the device. The term includes any device that is manufactured, distributed, or sold as an e-cigarette, e-cigar, or e-pipe or under another product name or description and a component, part, or accessory for the device, regardless of whether the component, part, or accessory is sold separately from the device.

**Explosive weapon** is any explosive or incendiary bomb, grenade, rocket, or mine and its delivery mechanism that is designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury, death, or substantial property damage, or for the principal purpose of causing such a loud report as to cause undue public alarm or terror.

**False Alarm or Report** occurs when a person knowingly initiates, communicates, or circulates a report of a present, past, or future bombing, fire, offense, or other emergency that he or she knows is false or baseless and that would ordinarily:

1. Cause action by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
2. Place a person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury; or
3. Prevent or interrupt the occupation of a building, room, or place of assembly.

**Firearm** is defined by federal law (18 U.S.C 921 (a)) as:



1. Any weapon (including starter gun) that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
2. The frame or receiver of any such weapon;
3. Any firearm muffler or firearm weapon; or
4. Any destructive device, such as any explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, or grenade.

Such term does not include an antique firearm

**Firearm silencer** means any device designed, made, or adapted to muffle the report of a firearm.

**Graffiti** are markings with paint, an indelible pen or marker, or an etching or engraving device on tangible property without the effective consent of the owner. The markings may include inscriptions, slogans, drawings, or paintings.

**Hazing** is an intentional or reckless act, on or off campus, by one person alone or acting with others, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization.

**Hit list** is a list of people targeted to be harmed, using a firearm, a knife, or any other object to be used with intent to cause bodily harm.

**Illegal knife** includes a knife with a blade over five and a half inches and also includes hand instruments designed to cut or stab by being thrown (martial-arts stars), a dagger, including but not limited to a dirk, stiletto, and poniard; a bowie knife; a sword; or a spear Possesses a firearm (see glossary)

**Knuckles** are any instrument consisting of finger rings or guards made of a hard substance and designed or adapted for inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with a fist enclosed in the knuckles.

**Machine gun** is any firearm that is capable of shooting more than two shots automatically, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger.

**Mandatory** means that something is obligatory or required because of an authority.

**Paraphernalia** are devices that can be used for inhaling, ingesting, injecting, or otherwise introducing a controlled substance into a human body.

**Possession** means to have an item on one's person or in one's personal property, including but not limited to clothing, purse, or backpack; a private vehicle used for transportation to or from school or school-related activities, including but not limited to an automobile, truck, motorcycle, or bicycle; telecommunications or electronic devices; or any other school property used by the student, including but not limited to a locker or desk.

**Public school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang** means an organization composed wholly or in part of students that seeks to perpetuate itself by taking additional members from the students enrolled in school based on a decision of its membership rather than on the free choice of a qualified student.

Educational organizations listed in Section 37.121(d) of the Education Code are exempted from this definition.

**Self-defense** is the use of force against another to the degree a person reasonably believes the force is immediately necessary to protect himself or herself.

**Short-barrel firearm** is a rifle with a barrel length of less than 16 inches or a shotgun with a barrel length of less than 18 inches, or any weapon made from a rifle or shotgun that, as altered, has an overall length of less than 26 inches.

**Terroristic threat** is a threat of violence to any person or property with intent to:

1. Cause a reaction of any type by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
2. Place any person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury;
3. Prevent or interrupt the occupation or use of a building; room, place of assembly, or place to which the public has access; place of employment or occupation; aircraft, automobile, or other form of conveyance; or other public place;
4. Cause impairment or interruption of public communications, public transportation, public water, gas, or power supply or other public service;
5. Place the public or a substantial group of the public in fear of serious bodily injury; or
6. Influence the conduct or activities of a branch or agency of the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision of the state (including YES Prep).

**Tire deflation device** is defined in part by Section 46.01 of the Penal Code as a device, including a caltrop or spike strip, that, when driven over, impedes or stops the movement of a wheeled vehicle by puncturing one or more of the vehicle's tires.

**Under the influence** means lacking the normal use of mental or physical faculties. Impairment of a person's physical or mental faculties may be evidenced by a pattern of abnormal or erratic behavior, the presence of physical symptoms of drug or alcohol use, or by admission. A student "under the influence" need not be legally intoxicated to trigger disciplinary action.

**Use** means voluntarily introducing into one's body, by any means, a prohibited substance.

**Zip gun** is a device or combination of devices, not originally a firearm, but adapted to expel a projectile through a smooth-bore or rifled-bore barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance

## Other Provisions

### Field Lessons

Each field lesson is a privilege for YES Prep students, not a right. This includes the fall and spring trip taken by students in grades six through eleven. Teachers at the grade level have discretion to determine eligibility criteria for field lessons. These criteria may include, but are not limited to, good academic performance and effort, number of Wall Street incidents, number of detentions assigned, number of suspension days,

outstanding service hours, compliance with academic probation plans, total number of absences (excused as well as unexcused) during the academic year, overall attitude, and past field trip behavior.

Students who are eligible to participate on school-sponsored spring trips and fail to participate without properly notifying the school will be responsible for paying any unrecoverable expenses incurred by the school.

Students ineligible to attend a field lesson are still expected and required to attend school that day and complete all work left by their teachers. These students will be placed with another grade level for the duration of the field lesson and are still held to the same academic and behavioral standards as the students in that grade level.

## **Fall/Spring Trips**

Trips are a privilege for YES Prep students. When determining a student's fall or spring trip eligibility, the following factors are taken into consideration (but are not limited to):

- the students' grades for all preceding grading periods,
- number of marks, detentions and/or RISE referrals given to the student during the academic year, and
- the total number of absences (excused as well as unexcused) during the academic year
- **Behavior, responsibility, and academic performance.**
- In addition, all other criteria considered for other field lessons will be taken into account for fall or spring trips.

Students who are eligible to participate in school-sponsored fall or spring trips and fail to participate without properly notifying the school will be responsible for paying any unrecoverable expenses incurred by the school.

## **Telephones**

All office and classroom phones are reserved for school business purposes. Students will not be called out of class to receive telephone calls or messages. Students will only be allowed to use the phone in the office during school hours if given permission from a staff member.

## **Guest(s)**

A student may bring a guest on campus only if a YES Prep student has presented the school administrator a written request or has completed the required school forms no less than 24 hours prior to the event, **and** permission has been granted by the school administrator. If a student has not accomplished the above, the guest will not be allowed to attend an event. YES Prep Public Schools may refuse a guest at any time or for any reason.

## **Service Hours**

As part of the YES Prep experience, students may be expected to complete community service hours off campus. These service hours are an opportunity for students to give back to their communities. Each campus's administration will determine the number of community service hours to be completed by students in each grade level. With the assistance of the service coordinator, students must document

that these hours have been completed. Students who do not complete the needed service hours may lose eligibility for certain YES Prep privileges, including but not limited to, school-sponsored activities, spring trips, and Field Day.

## **School-Sponsored Transportation**

Students are encouraged to appreciate and take full advantage of the free transportation provided by YES Prep Public Schools. Free transportation at YES Prep is a privilege and not a right. It is important for all bus riders to accept and acknowledge that this privilege will only be continued if their behavior on the school bus is reasonable and safe. Students who choose to engage in unacceptable behaviors on a school bus create a risk for themselves as well as other students, the bus driver, the motoring public, and pedestrians. Students should be aware that all the rules contained in this handbook are applicable to their conduct while riding school-provided transportation. When the term “on school property” is used in the Code of Conduct it includes school transportation. There are additional expectations about riding the bus that are listed below and any violation of these expectations may result in disciplinary action as well as loss of the privilege of being able to use the school bus.

- Observe the same conduct rules as in the classroom while riding a school bus.
- Be at the bus stop at least 10 minutes before the scheduled arrival time for the bus.
- Do not engage in inappropriate or disruptive behavior at the bus stop.
- Do not run toward the bus upon its arrival at the stop.
- Use appropriate language and be courteous to the bus driver and other passengers.
- Do not eat, drink, chew gum, or smoke while on the bus.
- Do not throw objects in the bus, out the window, or litter.
- Sit in assigned seats (if applicable) and remain seated at all times until the bus is at its final destination.
- Obey the directives of the bus driver assigned to the route.
- Keep all body parts inside of the bus at all times.
- Respect property. Students and their parents /guardians will be responsible for any damage caused to a bus.
- Do not enter a place of business where a bus stop is located without a parent/guardian.
- Do not make inappropriate gestures or comments to passing motorists or others outside of the bus.

## Photographing or Filming Students

Throughout the school year, YES Prep Public Schools and its organizations (yearbook students, the webpage designer, etc.), as well as outside media representatives (newspaper, television stations, etc.) may be on campus to videotape and/or photograph students in school-related activities or events (YES Prep Photos).

***By signing this Student Code of Conduct you are giving YES Prep permission to take your child's photograph and to use that photograph and YES Prep Photos.*** Please notify the school administrator in writing to request that your child's picture **not** be used for these purposes or indicate so when you sign this Student Code of Conduct.

## Student Accident and Health Insurance

YES Prep Public Schools carries student accident insurance for all of our students. The guidelines for coverage are:

- Students with health insurance **must** use that insurance first.
- Accidents on campus or during a school sponsored event off-campus may be covered.
- This insurance will not cover any medication costs.
- A student must be seen by a pre-approved provider.

For information about health insurance for uninsured children, call 1-800-647-6558 or visit the TexCare Partnership website.

## Medical Care at School

The school will contact parents or a designated relative or family friend if a student becomes ill or suffers an injury. **Be sure to list all emergency telephone numbers on your child's enrollment information, and update them whenever they may change. Also, make sure to provide information on any food allergies or severe food allergies that your child has if in your judgment YES Prep should be aware of this information to enable YES Prep to take any necessary precautions regarding your child's safety. Make sure you specify the food the child is allergic to and the nature of the allergic reaction.**

Subject to specific rules related to self-administration of prescription asthma or anaphylaxis medication, prescription medication can be administered at school **only** when advance written parental and physician permission is on file. Only personnel designated by the school administrator may administer prescription to a student during the school day. For additional information, please contact the school director or the health coordinator.

Over-the-counter medication must be sent with a written parental consent and turned in to a school official in the main office immediately. Any over-the counter medication found on a student will be confiscated, and disciplinary action may follow.

Both prescription and over-the-counter medication must be sent in the original package. The name and medication must match the student's information. The prescription or written instructions from the student's physician need to be in the student's file.

## Required Immunizations

Parents must update their child's immunizations. When enrolling your child in school, be sure to bring a signed record of your child's current immunizations, signed to enroll provisionally if the required immunization process has begun. For more information about required immunizations see the Immunization Fact Sheet or call Health Services at (713) 349-7423.

Some organizations offer free immunizations to eligible children through their regular healthcare providers such as Texas Vaccinations for Children. Others, like a few branches of the Houston Public Library, offer free immunizations during specific hours on certain days of the month.

## Head Lice

Based upon specialized training and the professional judgment of the medical assistant and/or designated staff, students with live lice or signs of active infestation will be excluded from school. Students who have been sent home should receive prompt treatment for lice and are expected to return to school the following day, free of live organisms. Parent/Guardian should check their child weekly for head lice. If head lice are found, the hair must be treated before the child returns to school on the following day. Upon return to school, the student and parent/guardian must report directly to the front office, provide information about the treatment utilized and have the student's hair checked before reporting to class. Chronic cases and instances of non-treatment will result in unexcused absences and referral to the school attendance office.

## Texas Nutrition Policy

In accordance with the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy: Parents may provide for **their own child's** consumption lunch or snacks, which may include FMNV - (Foods of minimal nutritional value). However, they **may not** provide these same items to **other children** at school. This is a policy from the State of Texas, and YES Prep Public Schools abides by such policy. Any questions or concerns regarding the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy may be directed to:

Texas Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Division  
P.O. Box 12847, Austin, Texas 78711  
1.888.TEX.KIDS  
Or [Squaremeals@agr.state.tx.us](mailto:Squaremeals@agr.state.tx.us)

## Technology Use Policy

The following policies apply specifically to the use of computers, the Internet, and other technology at YES Prep. **Please note that violation of this policy may result in the loss of any technology privileges at YES Prep. Serious violations may lead to expulsion depending on the severity of the situation.**

### Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources

Students are prohibited from sending, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition applies to conduct off school property, whether the equipment used to send such messages is YES Prep owned or personally owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment. Any person taking, disseminating, possessing, transferring, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as "sexting," will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and may, in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement.

Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child <http://beforeyoutext.com>, a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology.

In addition, any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the YES Prep's computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of expulsion.

### **Student Agreement to Use All Technology Appropriately and Lawfully**

As a student at YES Prep, you understand and agree that you must use computers and other technology appropriately. Appropriate use includes following all laws of the State of Texas laws and the United States.

It is inappropriate, and may be illegal to do any of the following:

- "Hacking" or attempting to access computer systems without authorization,
- Sending emails that could be viewed as harassing, cyber bullying, cyber stalking, child pornography,
- Vandalizing and/or tampering with any YES Prep computer or technological systems
- Publicly defaming people by publishing material on the Internet, using email, or any other transmission of defamatory information.
- Copying, selling, or distributing copyrighted material without the express written permission of the author or publisher (you should assume that all materials available on the Internet are protected by copyright)
- Engaging in plagiarism (using others' words or ideas as your own)
- Disclosing, using, disseminating or distributing personal information regarding minors

### **Network Resources**

The use of YES Prep's network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. You are personally responsible for his/her actions when utilizing YES Prep's computer resources.

### **Privacy**

Network storage areas are the property of YES Prep and its administrator may review any storage area of the network to maintain system integrity and to ensure students are using the system responsibly.

### **Copying/Downloading**

You are not permitted to download or install any software, shareware, or freeware onto YES Prep's computers. You are not permitted to copy others' work or intrude into others' files.

## **Monitored Use of Electronic and Web-Based Accounts**

Electronic mail transmissions (e-mails) and other use of the electronic communications system by students shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated YES Prep staff to ensure appropriate use for educational or administrative purposes. Suspected violations of acceptable use by students shall be reported first to the campus school director and, if necessary, by the campus school director to the Head of Schools.

## **Responsible Use for Any Technology Equipment (Personal or YES Prep-owned) in YES Prep Public Schools**

YOU AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:

- Notify a school administrator immediately if you encounter materials which violate this agreement, even if it is by accident.
- Not to allow others to use your account names and passwords or try to use those of others.
- YES Prep network and email accounts are owned by YES Prep and are not private.
- Use technology resources responsibly.
- Not to retrieve, save, or display hate-based, offensive or sexually-explicit material using any of YES's computer resources.
- Not pursue any material that could be considered hate-based, derogatory, combative, hostile, or sexually explicit.
- Be polite and use appropriate language in email messages, multi-user role-playing and/or virtual learning environments (e.g. Second Life), online postings, and other digital communications with others.
- Refrain from using profanity, vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language as determined by school administrators.
- Use email and other means of communications (e.g. blogs, wikis, podcasting, chat, instant messaging, discussion boards, virtual learning environments, etc.) responsibly.
- Not use computers, handheld computers, digital audio players, cell phones, personal digital devices, or the Internet to send, post, or possess electronic messages that are lewd, vulgar, defamatory, abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, discriminatory, abusive, damaging to another's reputation or illegal, including but not limited to hate or harassing mail, pornography, cyber bullying and "sexting," at school or at a school related activity, or outside of school or a school-related activity that reasonably anticipates disruption to the school environment.
- Understand that you may be held responsible for how you represent yourself or YES Prep on the Internet.
- Understand that masquerading or pretending to be someone else is forbidden. This includes, but is not limited to, sending out email, creating accounts, or posting messages or other online content (e.g. text, images, audio or video) in someone else's name as a joke.
- Use technology resources productively and responsibly for school-related purposes.
- Avoid using any technology resource in such a way that would disrupt the activities of other users.
- Refrain from attempting to bypass, or circumvent, YES Prep security settings or Internet filters; or interfere with the operation of the network by installing illegal software or web based services and software.
- Understand that vandalism is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to modifying or destroying equipment, programs, files, or settings on any computer or other technology resource.
- Obey copyright guidelines.



- Not plagiarize or use others' work without proper citation and permission.
- Refrain from the use of or access of files, software, or other resources owned by others without the owner's permission.
- Use only those school network directories that are designated for your use or for the purpose designated by your teachers.
- Follow all guidelines set forth by YES Prep and/or your teachers when publishing schoolwork online (e.g. to a website, blog, wiki, discussion board, podcasting, or video server).
- Understand the Internet is a source for information that is both true and false; and that YES Prep is not responsible for inaccurate information obtained from the Internet.
- Understand that YES Prep administrators will deem what conduct is inappropriate use if such conduct is not specified in this agreement.
- Agree to abide by all Internet safety guidelines that are provided by YES Prep and to complete all assignments related to Internet safety.
- Agree to save only school-related work and information to data storage folder(s) provided by YES Prep.
- Agree not to distribute personal information about yourself or others; this includes, but is not limited to, last names, personal addresses and telephone numbers.

### **Digital Citizen**

The YES Prep Public Schools uses information and technology in safe, legal, and responsible ways. A responsible digital citizen is one who:

- Respects Others. Users will refrain from using technologies to bully, tease or harass other people.
- Protects One's Self and Others. Users will protect themselves and others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications.
- Respects Intellectual Property. Users will suitably cite any and all use of websites, books, media, etc.
- Protects Intellectual Property. Users will request to use the software and media others produce.
- Respects One's Self. Users will select online names that are appropriate and will consider the information and images that are posted online.

### **YES Prep-issued Student Email Accounts**

You may be provided access to a YES Prep-issued email account at school. If you have access to the Internet from home, then you will be able to access this email from home. Email accounts may be created for all YES Prep students and used when an academic need is identified by teacher. The goal of student email will be to enrich educational excellence. Email exchanges might include, but not be limited to, correspondence with field experts or mentors, students in other locations, classroom teachers (to submit questions or allow the teacher to send home assignments); subscribing to listservs; or transmitting class documents from home to school. You may not access personal email accounts during the instructional day.

Please keep in mind that email accounts are the property of YES Prep and as such are not private. You are responsible for maintaining the security of your own files by not sharing your password with others. Use of the student email account is a privilege and as such access may be used for educational and research purposes only. Misuse may result in school disciplinary action and in loss of email privileges.

While using a YES Prep email account, you agree that you WILL NOT:

- Send electronic mail inappropriate for educational purposes
- Subscribe to inappropriate newsgroups
- Use inappropriate language
- Reveal personal information about yourself or another person
- Participate in illegal activity
- Engage in activity which may pose a risk to anyone
- Use email for commercial, political, or advertising purposes
- Allow others to use your account name or password
- Access your personal email accounts during the instructional day

### **Acceptable Student Use of Personally Owned Devices**

YES Prep Public Schools adopts this policy in order to maintain a safe and secure environment for students and employees.

A personally owned device shall include all existing and emerging technology devices that can take photographs; record audio or video; input text; upload and download media; and transmit or receive messages or images. Examples of a personally owned device shall include but is not limited to: MP3 players and iPods; iPads, Nooks, Kindle, and other tablet PCs; laptop and netbook computers; personal digital assistants (PDAs), cell phones and smart phones such as BlackBerry, iPhone, or Droid, as well as any device with similar capabilities.

Educational purposes include classroom activities, career development, and communication with experts, homework, and limited high quality self-discovery activities. Students are expected to act responsibly and thoughtfully when using technology resources. Students bear the burden of responsibility to inquire with school administrators and/or teachers when they are unsure of the permissibility of a particular use of technology prior to engaging in the use.

During school activities, teachers and other staff will guide students towards appropriate materials. Furthermore, it is the policy of YES Prep Public Schools that students will be actively monitored by an adult staff member at all times when students use a YES Prep Public Schools owned laptop or the student's personal device.

Inappropriate communication includes, but is not limited to, the following: obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language or images typed, posted, or spoken by students; information that could cause damage to an individual or the school community or create the danger of disruption of the academic environment; personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks; harassment (persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person) or stalking of others; knowingly or recklessly posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization; and communication that promotes the destruction of property, including the acquisition or creation of weapons or other destructive devices. If a student is told to stop sending communications, that student must cease the activity immediately.

Examples of an unacceptable device in this policy shall include but is not limited to gaming devices or consoles, laser pointers, modems or routers, and televisions.

Personally owned devices are permitted for use during the school day for educational purposes and/or in approved locations only.

YES Prep shall not be liable for the loss, damage, misuse, theft of any personally owned device brought to School.

YES Prep reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, and review a personally owned device or file when administration has a reasonable suspicion that a violation has occurred.

Students may not use any technology to harass, threaten, demean, humiliate, intimidate, embarrass, or annoy their classmates or others in their community. This is unacceptable student behavior known as cyber bullying and will not be tolerated. Any cyber bullying that is determined to disrupt the safety and/or well-being of YES Prep is subject to disciplinary action.

### **Overall Guidelines**

These guidelines apply to stand-alone computers as well as computers connected to the network/Internet. YES Prep makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the services it is providing and is not responsible for any damages suffered by users. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its negligence or user errors or omissions. YES Prep is not responsible for phone/credit card bills or any other charges incurred by users. Use of any information obtained via the network/Internet is at the user's own risk. YES Prep specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services. 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 YES Prep. YES Prep will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of YES Prep's electronic communications system.

### **Carpool and Driving to School**

Any parent/ guardian dropping or picking up a student must adhere to all traffic guidelines detailed in the Individual Campus Supplement portion of this handbook or as posted on each applicable campus. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in the police being called for assistance. Any traffic violations are subject to police investigation. The individual responsible for any damage caused to school property or other vehicles on campus property will be responsible for their actions.

Any student driving to school must adhere to all campus traffic guidelines and be cleared by campus administration to be able to park on campus. To be cleared, the student must have written permission (in the form of a pass or letter) by the front office to park on campus. To obtain clearance to park on campus the student must bring the following, as well as any other documentation requested by the campus front office: valid driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance. Being granted permission to park onsite is based on space available and submitting the requested documentation does not guarantee that the student will be granted a spot on campus. Please see the Individual Campus Supplement portion of this handbook for additional campus-specific traffic and parking instructions and guidelines. Unauthorized vehicles will be towed at the owner's expense. Students that do not adhere to campus driving policies will be subject to disciplinary actions such as but not limited to losing their driving privileges.

## Notification of Rights under FERPA for YES Prep Public Schools

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day YES Prep Public Schools receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school director a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school director will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask YES Prep Public Schools to amend a record should write to the school director, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, others are listed below, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by YES Prep as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by YES Prep Public Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

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

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student.

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

YES Prep Public Schools also may disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without written consent, unless you have advised the YES Prep to the contrary in accordance with YES Prep procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow YES Prep to include this type of information from your child’s education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student’s role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student’s information disclosed without their prior written consent.