



# **TEXAS**

## **ONLINE PREPARATORY**

# **SCHOOL**

**PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2022-2023**

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# 2022-2023 SCHOOL CALENDAR

## 2022-2023 Texas Online Preparatory School Calendar

July 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

August 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

September 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

October 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

November 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

December 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**Texas Online Preparatory School**

1825 Lakeway Drive, Suite 400  
972-420-1404  
Lewisville, Texas 75057

Jul 18-26	New Teacher Training
Jul 27-Aug 10	PL Day/Staff Workday
Aug 11	First Day of School for Students
Sept 5	Labor Day (Student/Staff Holiday)
Oct 7	PL Day (Student Holiday)
Oct 10	Columbus Day (Student/Staff Holiday)
Nov 21-25	Thanksgiving Break (Student/Staff Holiday)
Dec 16	Early Release
Dec 19-Jan 2	Winter Break
Jan 3-4	PL Day/Staff Workday
Jan 5	First Day of Second Semester
Jan 18	MLK, Jr. Day (Student/Staff Holiday)
Feb 17	PL Day (Student Holiday)
Feb 20	Presidents' Day
Mar 13-17	Spring Break (Student/Staff Holiday)
Apr 7	Good Friday (Student/Staff Holiday)
Apr 10	PL Day (Student Holiday)
May 25	Last Day of School/Early Release
May 26	Staff Workday
May 29	Memorial Day (Staff Holiday)
Jun 3	Graduation Ceremony In Fort Worth, TX

Important Calendar Information	
Teacher Calendar Days	192
Student Calendar Days	175
Elementary Calendar Minutes	79,200
MS/HS Calendar Minutes	84,480

TEST DATES**	
Dec 6-9	EOC Retest
Feb 20-Mar 31	TELPAS
Mar 13-Apr 28	STAAR Alternate 2
Apr 18-28	STAAR RLA 3-8, Eng1, Eng 2
Apr 25-May 5	STAAR Sci, SS, Bio, USH
May 2-May12	STAAR Math 3-8, Alg I
Jun 20-Jun 23	STAAR EOC Retest

\*\*Test Dates are subject to adjustment due to adjustments from TEA and/or testing site capacity

January 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

February 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

March 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

June 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Semesters	
Aug 11-Dec 16	First Semester
84	Student Days
91	Teacher Days
Jan 5-May 25	Second Semester
91	Student Days
96	Teacher Days

9-Week Grading Periods	
Aug 11-Oct 14	1st 9 Weeks
Oct 17-Dec 16	2nd 9 Weeks
Jan 5-March 10	3rd 9 Weeks
March 20-May 25	4th 9 Weeks

6-Week Grading Periods	
Aug 11-Sept 23	1st 6 Weeks
Sept 26-Oct 28	2nd 6 Weeks
Oct 31-Dec 16	3rd 6 Weeks
Jan 5-Feb 16	4th 6 Weeks
Feb 21-April 6	5th 6 Weeks
April 11-May 25	6th 6 Weeks

	School Closed
	Early Release
	New Teacher Training

	PL Professional Learning (no school for students)
	Teacher Workday
	Anticipated STAAR Dates

	First & Last Day of School
	Graduation

DOWNLOAD HERE: [TOPS CONTACT GUIDE](#)

## INTRODUCTION

This Parent/Student Handbook sets forth general guidance for parents and students enrolled in the Texas Online Preparatory School (TOPS). TOPS operates under the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) and in partnership with Huntsville ISD and is subject to the rules and regulations of the Texas Education Agency.

### TOPS MISSION

Texas Online Preparatory School provides an innovative learning experience by equipping students for life-long success by cultivating high expectations, delivering challenging instruction, and supporting resilience in a goal-oriented community.

### TOPS VISION

To be a learner-centered preparatory school empowering students for the future

### TOPS MOTTO

Empower to Learn. Equip to Succeed.

## QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

TOPS staff recognizes that life at school does not always run smoothly. As problems arise, school personnel and parents must collaborate to solve them.

Many questions/concerns may be addressed in our **TOPS CONTACT GUIDE**—click here to view: <https://www.smore.com/r2hnb-tops-contact-guide>

Please follow these procedures for general information or for assistance in resolving a problem:

**Step 1:** All concerns should first be directed to the student's teacher via phone or email.

**Step 2:** If the concern is not resolved through phone or email communication, then the learning coach should request a conference with the teacher.

**Step 3:** If the learning coach continues to have concerns, they should address their concerns with the campus administrators. Please send the concern via email to:

- 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade – Mr. Tim Wade; EL Assistant Principal, [twade@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:twade@texasonlineprep.org)
- 6<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> grade – Mrs. Erin Cogburn; MS Assistant Principal, [ecogburn@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:ecogburn@texasonlineprep.org)
- 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> grade – Mr. Travis Johnson; HS Assistant Principal, [tjohnson@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:tjohnson@texasonlineprep.org)
- 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade – Mrs. Juli Laechelin; HS Principal, [jlaechelin@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:jlaechelin@texasonlineprep.org)

**Step 4:** If the concern continues to be unresolved, they should address their concerns with the campus principal. The learning coach or Principal may request a meeting via ZOOM or NEWROW to address the concern.

- Ms. Angie Crow, EL Principal, [acrow@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:acrow@texasonlineprep.org)

- Mrs. Crystal Frost, MS Principal, [crfrost@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:crfrost@texasonlineprep.org)
- Mrs. Juli Laechelin, HS Principal, [jlaechelin@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:jlaechelin@texasonlineprep.org)
- Ms. LarKaya Gant, Career Learning Principal, [lgant@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:lgant@texasonlineprep.org)

**Step 5:** If the concern continues to be unresolved upon meeting with the Principal, either the Principal or the Learning Coach may request an additional meeting with Ms. Kristina Nanini, Executive Director, [knanini@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:knanini@texasonlineprep.org).

## **GENERAL TERMS and ACRONYMS**

Whether it be the virtual or brick-and-mortar public school, educational jargon can be confusing. So, with that in mind, here is a helpful list to guide you through:

### **K12 Specific Terms**

**CC** = Class Connect Session

**LC** = Learning Coach

**OLS** = Online Learning System (Grades 3-5)

**OMS** = Online Middle School (Grades 6-8)

**OHS** = Online High School (Grades 9-12)

**BOT** = Back on Track Plan

**USATP** = USA Test Prep (External platform used for Student Assessment)

**STRIDE** = External Platform for Supplemental Learning and Enrichment

### **General Terms**

**STAAR** = State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

**CBE** = Credit by Examination (used for acceleration of grade-level or course/subject)

**CTE** = Career and Technical Education

**EOC** = End of Course Assessment

**EL** = English Learner

**EB** = Emergent Bilingual student

**ESL** = English as a Second Language

**WD** = Withdrawal

**TEA** = Texas Education Agency

**TEC** = Texas Education Code

**TEKS** = Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (objectives for mastery based on subject and grade-level)

**TAC** = Texas Administrative Code

**TxVSN** = Texas Virtual School Network

### **Special Programs**

**SPED** = Special Education

**IEP** = Individualized Educational Program (Document created in conjunction with ARD meeting, used to modify or implement curriculum and services for students with disabilities)

**ARD** = Admission, Review, Dismissal (meeting used to determine special education and related services for students with disabilities)

**TELPAS** = Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (assessments given to ELL students annually)

**504** = Section 504 (related to accommodations for students with disabilities)

**RTI** = Response to Intervention

**MTSS** = Multi-Tiered System of Supports

## **ADMISSION & ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Student eligibility can be found at this location: <https://tops.k12.com/how-enroll.html>

## **REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS**

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present an affidavit or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized.

For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained online at Affidavit Request for Exemption from Immunization <https://co-request.dshs.texas.gov/> or by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347. The form must be notarized and submitted to the school office. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis; measles, mumps, and rubella; polio; hepatitis A; hepatitis B; varicella (chickenpox). For a student entering the 7th grade: 1 Tdap booster is required when at least 5 years have passed since the last dose of tetanus vaccine and 1 dose of Meningococcal is required on or after the students' 11th birthday. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation. If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. registered and licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or a member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a lifelong condition.

**Note:** [Immunization requirements<sup>i</sup>](#) and the [recommended immunization schedule<sup>ii</sup>](#) are on the TDSHS website. <http://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/default.shtm#requirements>

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

Students enrolled in TOPS are expected to follow the Huntsville School District's student code of conduct, located here:

English: [HISD Student Code of Conduct](#)

Spanish/En Español: [Código de Conducta Estudiantil](#)

## **HISD PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Students enrolled in TOPS are expected to follow the Huntsville School District's policies within its Parent/Student Handbook, located here: [HISD Parent Student Handbook](#)

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All work submitted and/or marked complete in the OLS, OMS, or OHS is assumed to have been completed only by students from their own student account. Students should not have access to the learning coach login credentials. Students are also responsible for observing the standards on plagiarism and properly crediting all sources relied on in the composition of their work. Failure to abide by these standards will be reported to the Principal and will result in a conference with the student's parent and/or Learning Coach. Students who violate this policy are subject to the following consequences.

### **Consequences:**

- First Offense—The parent is informed, and the student will have the opportunity to redo the assignment.
- Second Offense—Conference with teacher. The student will receive a zero on the assignment. If the student fails to attend the teacher conference, the student will be referred to the Assistant Principal.
- Third Offense—The student will receive a zero on the assignment and will be required to attend a conference with their teachers, learning coach, and the Assistant Principal.
- Fourth Offense- Meeting with the Principal to determine next steps, which may include a withdrawal from the program.

### **Plagiarism**

The definition of plagiarism is: Copying or imitating the language, ideas, and thoughts of another writer and submitting it as your own original work. Specific examples of plagiarism that is not tolerated are:

- Copying or rephrasing another student's work.
- Taking material from Internet sources and using it as your own, even if some words are changed.
- Having someone else write an assignment or re-write any part of an assignment.
- Directly copying student aids (for example, CliffsNotes), critical sources, or reference materials in part or in whole without acknowledgment.
- Indirect reproduction of student aids, such as CliffsNotes and SparkNotes, critical sources, or reference materials by rephrasing ideas borrowed from them without acknowledgment.

### **Source Citation**

Many courses require written work in which students need to cite sources. Any direct quotations from a textbook can simply be cited as (Author, Page Number). Any quotations from outside sources require full citations, including author, title, publisher, date of publication, and page number. If a student cites information found on a Web site, he/she provide the complete Web page or site title, URL, author if known, page number if applicable, and publication date of the



site, if available, and date of access. Should a student have any questions about how to appropriately cite a source, he or she should ask the teacher of the course in which he or she is working.

## **ATTENDANCE & TRUANCY POLICY**

### **Attendance & Truancy Policy**

#### ***Per TxVSN Policy 70.1015 (sections a.1 and a.3)***

(a) A student taking a course through the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) statewide course catalog or a TxVSN Online School (OLS) is considered to:

- (1) be enrolled in a TxVSN course when he or she begins receiving instruction and actively engages in instructional activities in a TxVSN subject area or course;
- (3) be, and must be reported as, withdrawn from the TxVSN when the student is no longer actively participating in the TxVSN course or program.

### **Absences/Attendance**

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build a solid academic foundation, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student’s mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences.

### **Compulsory Attendance**

#### ***Age 18 and Older:***

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year. If a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the district may revoke the student’s enrollment. The student’s presence on school property after that would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing.

#### ***Ages 6 to 18:***

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

#### ***Attendance beyond Academic Calendar:***

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

#### ***Attendance for TOPS students is accounted for in the following ways:***

1. Student working in coursework via the Online School (OLS, OMS, or OHS) or Learning Management System (LMS);
2. Student participation in assigned virtual online sessions with state-certified teachers.
3. Student reviews recorded lessons published by state-certified teachers.

4. Completing required assessments such as USATP formative assessments, TEA Interims, Liftoff diagnostic tests, and all other assessments.
5. Attending required in-person state assessments such as STAAR, TELPAS, and STAAR EOC tests.

*Note:*

- Students are required to attend school on each instructional day as determined by the TOPS academic calendar.
- Attendance will not be logged after the last day of the academic year.
- Students may work ahead. However, students are still required to attend school each day.
- Students that complete all coursework prior to the end of any semester may be assigned additional work by campus principal.

### **Excused Absences**

When a parent/legal guardian knows that their student will be absent, it is requested that the parent/legal guardian give the school prior written notice of the upcoming absence.

***Texas Online Preparatory School (TOPS) considers the following factors, as defined by Texas Education Agency (TEA), to be a “reasonable” excuse and will result in an “excused absence” for time missed from school:***

- Religious holy days;
- Maternity/Paternity Leave.
- Bereavement Leave (immediate family).
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student’s arrival or return to campus; and
- For students in the conservatorship (custody) of the state:
  - An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
  - Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student’s participation in the activity outside of school hours.
- Children of military families, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty or is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments.

In addition, absences will be considered by TOPS administration for the following reasons:

- ***Personal Illness:*** When a student's absence for personal illness exceeds three consecutive days, the student shall present a statement from a physician or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. If the student has established a questionable pattern of absences, the TOPS administration may also require a physician's or clinic's statement of illness after a single day's absence as a condition of classifying the absence as one for which there are extenuating circumstances.
- ***Absences for Serving as an Election Clerk:*** Up to two absences in a school year may be exempt from compulsory attendance requirements if the student presents written approval from the parent, obtains written permission from the principal prior to the absences, provides written

documentation of the service performed from a governmental office, and completes all make-up work.

- *Absences for a Military Honors Funeral:* An absence of a student in grades 6-12 for the purpose of sounding “Taps” at a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran also will be excused by the district.
- *College Visitation:* Junior or Senior student’s absence of up to two days related to visiting a college or university will be considered an exemption, provided this has been authorized by the board under policy FEA(LOCAL), the student receives approval from the campus principal, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed.
- *National Guard and Military Enlistment:* An absence will also be considered an exemption if a student 17 years of age or older is pursuing enlistment in a branch of the U.S. armed services or Texas National Guard, provided the absence does not exceed four days and the student provides verification to the district of these activities.

An absence is classified as unexcused until we have received documentation from the parent/legal guardian. Parents may complete an absence form, linked below, in order to document an absence.

<https://na2.docusign.net/Member/PowerFormSigning.aspx?PowerFormId=4f8d3d59-ac0b-4890-964e-4f5a75271635>

The absence forms then get processed by the Truancy Officer.

### **Accumulated Unexcused Absences and Truancy Process**

Students who do not attend the Online School each instructional day will be considered absent without a valid written excuse. Students who do not log in on each instructional day as determined by the TOPS academic calendar will be considered absent. Absences not identified as “reasonable” above will be considered “unexcused.”

#### **As per Texas Education Code (TEC) Sec 25.095 and HISD, FEA (Local)-A:**

**3 or more missed days in a 4-week period,** a 3-day attendance email is sent to the parent/legal guardian

**5 or more consecutive missed School days,** a 5-day attendance email is sent to the parent/legal guardian. The email contains a link to the Truancy Prevention presentation. Please note, if a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, TOPS may revoke the student’s enrollment.

- a) Truancy officer sends list to Executive Director.
- b) Parent/legal guardian is expected to view the Truancy Prevention presentation.
- c) Parent/legal guardian completes (DocuSign) attendance contract (states requirements and allows opportunity for parent/legal guardian to give reason for missed days) stating understanding of attendance requirements and consequences of truancy.

**10 missed School days over a 6-month period,** a Truant Conduct Letter is emailed to the parent/legal guardian. These emails will be sent at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester. *\*Per HISD Handbook, students in grades 6-12 that meet these criteria may be referred to truancy court.*

**10 or more consecutive missed days**, a 10-day attendance email is sent to the parent/legal guardian.

- a) Truancy Officer to send Executive Director a list of students to be reviewed for withdrawal.
- b) Executive Director confirms with Truancy Officer the students that need to be reviewed for withdrawal
- c) Students for withdrawal will have their curriculum locked by Truancy Officer and be given 48 hours to appeal.
  - a. Parents should submit the attendance contract to the appeal.
- d) If no appeal is received, the student will be withdrawn.
- e) Any appeals received are sent to the Executive Director to approve or disapprove.
- f) The parent/legal guardian will be notified of the decision within 72 hours.

\* The student's parents or person standing in parental relation to a student are subject to prosecution for the offense of *Parent Contributing to Truancy*, and the child is also subject to prosecution or referral to the Juvenile Court for the offense of *Failure to Attend School*

If a TOPS student's chronic truancy results from homelessness, the student's enrollment rights at TOPS shall be based on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Please refer to McKinney Vento Section of this handbook for additional information.

### **Disengaged students will be referred to the Assistant Principal.**

The Assistant Principal will determine the appropriate intervention plan and placement necessary to support the student's individual needs. Interventions may include individual meetings, additional required class sessions, or scheduled time with a campus counselor or interventionist. If interventions with the student are unsuccessful, the Assistant Principal may refer the student to the campus Principal for potential withdrawal. Students who are withdrawn due to engagement have been found to be in violation of TAC **70.1015**.

### **Students with Disabilities**

If a student with a disability is experiencing attendance issues, the student's ARD committee or Section 504 committee will be notified, and the committee will determine whether the attendance issues warrant an evaluation, a reevaluation, and modifications to the student's individualized education program or Section 504 plan, as appropriate.

### **Driver License Attendance Verification (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

For a student between the ages of 16 and 18 to obtain a driver license, written parental permission must be provided for the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to access the student's attendance records and, in certain circumstances, for a school administrator to provide the student's attendance information to DPS. A verification of enrollment (VOE) and attendance form may be obtained from the office, which the student will need to submit to DPS upon application for a driver license. Please complete this DocuSign to request a VOE:  
<https://na2.docusign.net/Member/PowerFormSigning.aspx?PowerFormId=d7899428-e154-4c8b-93a7-68ff968c272f&env=na2&acct=19cf31b0-043a-49f2-878e-6b8e17540f09>

## **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND NON-COMPLIANCE**

### **TxVSN Student Engagement Policy (TAC 19 Chapter 70.1015):**

<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter070/ch070aa.html>

“A student taking a course through the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) statewide course catalog or a TxVSN Online School (OLS) program is considered to:

- (1) be enrolled in a TxVSN course when he or she begins receiving instruction and actively engages in instructional activities in a TxVSN subject area or course;
- (2) have successfully completed a course if the student demonstrates academic proficiency and earns credit for the course, as determined by the TxVSN teacher; and
- (3) be, and must be reported as, withdrawn from the TxVSN when the student is no longer actively participating in the TxVSN course or program.”

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Student records are maintained at the TOPS office. Parents/legal guardians may contact the TOPS office to obtain a copy of student records. A copying fee may be assessed. If parents change their address, telephone, e-mail address, or place of employment, they are asked to follow the procedure below.

Further information on Student Records and Accessibility may be found under “FERPA” below, or by accessing HISD’s Student Handbook here: [HISD Student Handbook](#)

## **CHANGE OF CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **Mailing Address**

In the event your address is different and needs to be changed, TWO new proofs of residence are required in order to update your address in the K12 and state systems. TOPS will need two of the documents listed below. Once these documents have been submitted, our administrative office will be happy to update your new address.

### **To confirm your address please follow the steps below:**

- 1) Log into the OLS with your username and password;
- 2) Click “My Account” at the top right of your screen;
- 3) Select “My Account” from the drop-down menu;
- 4) Your address will appear.

Please submit two of the following documents as new **Proof of Residence**:

- Mortgage Statement;
- Lease;
- Utility Bill (gas, water, or electric) – must show service address;
- Property Tax Statement;
- Internet/Phone/Cable Bill – must show service address. If you have a bundle service, please submit your entire bill to ensure the proper information is received.

**Proof of Residence** must be in the name of the parent/legal guardian.

*Note:*

If you are submitting a **Proof of Residence** not in your name, you will need to fill out a form and *have it notarized*. To obtain this form, please contact our office by emailing:

[info@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:info@texasonlineprep.org)

Follow this link to access the **Change of Address survey**: [Change of Address Survey](#)

## **WITHDRAWALS**

If a parent/legal guardian wishes to withdraw their student from TOPS, they should first contact their homeroom teacher or email: [info@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:info@texasonlineprep.org)

Once your email is confirmed, a staff member will forward a **Withdrawal Survey** to the legal guardian to complete the process. After this is received, your student's academic record will be compiled and verified. All academic records are transferred using the state's internal system (TReX).

*Note:*

Simply emailing a wish to withdraw your student may not immediately complete the withdrawal process.

## **ACCELERATION**

### Grades 3-5

For students in grades 3-5 to accelerate in grade level, they must take Credit-By-Examination in all four core subject areas and demonstrate proficiency with a grade of 80 or higher on all examinations.

### Grades 6-12

Students in grades 6-12 may accelerate courses or grade levels in order to achieve their graduation planning. To do so, they must take Credit-By-Examination in the applicable subject area and demonstrate proficiency with a grade of 80 or higher.

Note: TOPS offers Credit-By-Examination twice yearly (*December/June*). To accelerate a grade level, students must take the Credit-By-Examinations in the June offering. Students and parents interested in Credit-By-Examination during the school year will need to contact their counselor.

## **DUAL Credit**

[TOPS Dual Credit Manual Updated July 2022.pdf](#)

## **MANDATORY TESTING INFORMATION**

**Attendance is mandatory at all TOPS testing events.**

*Testing may include the following:*

Readiness Assessments, Benchmark Assessments, Diagnostic Assessments, Formative Assessments, and STAAR testing.

Parents are responsible for transportation to and from all in-person testing, regardless of distance.

A doctor's note is required for missed STAAR testing:

***Vacations, holidays, and/or doctor's appointments cannot be scheduled during any testing dates.***

***There is no "option" to permit your child to opt-out of STAAR testing per TEA: (TEC 26.010: <https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/ED/htm/ED.26.htm>)***

STAAR results from grades 3–8 are used for promotion to the next grade level and are intended to provide schools with an assessment of student understanding in order to guide future instructional decisions for students during the following school year.

Students in grades 5 and 8 and their parents who do not meet the standards on the math and/or reading STAAR test will be required to attend an Accelerated Learning Committee, per the requirements of House Bill 4545. Students that do not pass or do not take any STAAR or EOC test are required to complete 30 hours of remediation or tutoring for each test failed or not taken. Diagnostic assessment at the beginning of the school year that demonstrates mastery of standards can be used to remove this requirement for students that did not take the STAAR or EOC test. This diagnostic assessment cannot be used to remove a student from 30 hours of remediation if they failed a STAAR or EOC test.

Any modified promotion standards for a student receiving special education services shall be determined by the student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee and documented in the student's individualized education program/plan (IEP).

### **STAAR TESTED SUBJECTS (Grades 3-8)**

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Reading &amp; Writing</i>	<i>Math</i>	<i>Science</i>	<i>Social Studies</i>
3	YES	YES		
4	YES	YES		
5	YES	YES	YES	
6	YES	YES		
7	YES	YES		
8	YES	YES	YES	YES

### **END OF COURSE EXAMINATIONS (Grades 9-12)**

<i>Algebra 1</i>	<i>English 1</i>	<i>English 2</i>	<i>Biology</i>	<i>US History</i>
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## **[Link to STAAR TESTING CALENDAR](#)**

[Link to TEA Calendar for STAAR Testing](#)

## **BENCHMARK ASSESSMENTS**

Students in grades 3-12 will be given interim or benchmark assessments two to three times per academic year.

These assessments will be as follows:

- Math: 3-8, Algebra 1
- Reading: 3-8, English I, English II
- Science: 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and HS Biology
- Social Studies: 8<sup>th</sup> and HS US History

***It is critical that both students and learning coaches abide by the Requirements and Expectations outlined below.***

### **Requirements and Expectations**

- Students will be scheduled to take each assessment with a staff member.
- Assessments will be proctored live.
- Students will be asked to be on camera during the assessment.
- Microphones will be turned off.
- Others (parents/learning coaches) are not to interfere or help students with the assessment.
- Do not use outside sources (Google, etc.) during the assessment.
- Testing accommodations will be provided, as aligned to 504, IEP, and RTI documentation.
- Students who are absent or do not take assessment will be rescheduled until the assessment is complete.

## **GRADING POLICY & PROGRESS REPORTING**

Parents can access student grades at any time through their Learning Coach Account login.

Each Tuesday, Learning Coaches are sent an auto-generated “snapshot/progress report” of their student’s grades as of 5 pm the day previous. *Note:* Progress reports are not used to calculate final grades and are not included in your student’s official academic record.

TOPS issues formal report cards every nine weeks (elementary), and six weeks (secondary).

For specific information related to TOPS grading guidelines, please visit the following links:



**Elementary:**

<https://1.cdn.edl.io/FTAKkkBIetuWyYfLmB3DjG6y8UBWZsvqZXi48VVRYP68OQrv.pdf>

**Secondary:**

<https://1.cdn.edl.io/VafVOMxRWUSIDvCwhWsVDO4lJsqTUDIRFe8kmXAlarR7bWZg.pdf>

## **LATE WORK POLICY**

Students should submit all work by the assigned due date. Overdue assignments due to attendance or other matters may be discussed with the classroom teacher. Assignments are locked at the end of each semester and can be locked at mid-semester or at every 6 weeks depending on the policy of that campus. Once the assignments are locked, students will no longer have access to the content and will not be able to submit work.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Graduation requirements vary according to the year of entry into 9th grade and the graduation plan selected by the student and parents. New Students will have their Grad Plans shared within 90 days of enrollment.

### **Valedictory and Salutatory Honors**

The graduate having the highest scholastic rating determined by grade point average (GPA) at the conclusion of the fifth six weeks for local courses and the Spring semester for third-party/dual credit classes shall be declared valedictorian of the graduating class. The second ranking student shall be declared salutatorian under the same conditions. To be eligible for valedictory or salutatory honors, the student must have been continuously enrolled in TOPS for the three (3) semesters preceding graduation and must have completed the Recommended Program or the Distinguished Program for graduation.

## **GRADE APPEAL PROCESS**

Grades issued by a classroom teacher are final and may not be changed unless the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or not consistent with the district grading policy. If you have a question regarding your student's final grade, please contact the teacher to request a conference.

## **PARENT RIGHT TO OPT OUT**

According to TEC Sec. 26.010, a parent or guardian may remove a child temporarily from a class or other school activity that conflicts with the parent's religious or moral beliefs. The parent or guardian must submit to the campus principal documentation requesting removal. ***However, a parent is not entitled to remove the parent's child from a class or other school activity to avoid a test (e.g. STAAR) or to prevent the child from taking a subject for an entire semester.***

## **STATE PHYSICAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENT**

Texas Senate Bill 42 states that students in elementary and middle school grades must have a minimum of 30 minutes of **documented physical activity** each day or a weekly total of 150 minutes. The time requirement is prorated for students enrolling after the first nine weeks. Students are required to complete four (4) semesters of Physical Education in grades six through eight.

Additionally, students must comply and turn in the annual physical examination assessment (**Fitnessgram**) as required by both HISD and TEA.

## **GENERAL CURRICULUM**

Parents/Learning Coaches have complete and total access to all learning materials, teaching tools, and platforms used on each campus.

*These items may include:*

- K12's Online School (OLS)
- K12's Online Middle and High School (OMHS)
- USA Test Prep (Supplemental Assessment Platform)
- Classkick (Supplemental Platform for Writing and Student Portfolios)
- Gizmos (Supplemental Science Labs)
- FlipGrid (Teacher Tool)
- Padlet (Teacher Tool)
- Liftoff (Math & Reading Remediation Platform)
- K12 workbooks and physical materials (mailed at beginning of school year)

Parents/Learning Coaches are able to view student grades, assignments, and graduation plans (Grades 9-12) at any time through their Learning Coach login. For help navigating the platform, please contact your homeroom teacher.

Parents/Learning Coaches may also review each test/unit assessment after it has been assigned and completed. This can typically be done via learning coach login. However, if questions remain, parents/learning coaches may request access or a copy from the appropriate teacher.

## **TEACHER GRADED ASSIGNMENTS**

Students will be required to submit teacher graded assignments (TGAs) as requested by their teachers. TGA due dates will be communicated during Class Connects, in email, and in teacher/principal newsletters for elementary students, and designated in the Online School platform for secondary students.

## **COURSES**

**There are a few important points about the courses:**

- Students in grades 3-5 are required to complete Art, Music, Physical Education, and Health.

- Students in grades 6-8 are only required to complete one year of Fine Arts (Music or Art), two years of Physical Education, and 1.5 years of Health (8<sup>th</sup> graders have the option of enrolling in HS Health upon request)
- Learning coaches can request for electives courses (in grades 6-8 only) to be dropped only within 6 weeks of their enrolment date.
- **Course Selection:** course changes are made in the first ten days of each cohort/start date for MS and HS
- **MS students in Accelerated or HS courses** are required to sign a contract. If not passing, students will be dropped from the accelerated and/or the HS course at six weeks if not passing. More information on course selection and available courses is within the HISD Student Handbook linked below.
- **Third Party:** If Third-Party course is not passed, students cannot take another Third-Party course.
- **Dual Credit** requirements are mandated by each partner college or university. TOPS will not fund additional Dual Credit courses if prior Dual Credit course is not passed.
- **Credit Recovery:** High School students may be offered credit recovery opportunities between semesters and during summer through the TXVSN or locally through TOPS
- **Endorsements and Pathways:** Students may choose from a range of endorsements and pathways, as outlined from page 50 of the HISD Student Handbook.

Resources related to courses, including Physical Activity requirements, Physical Education, Advanced Placement, Dual Credit, and General Coursework may be found here: [HISD Student Handbook](#)

## CLASS CONNECTS

Successful TOPS Students make every attempt to attend live Class Connect Sessions (CCs).

- Teachers will hold Class Connect sessions throughout the week in all courses.
- Students are expected to attend all REQUIRED Class Connect Sessions. These sessions are mandatory, and students may be assigned an attendance grade.
- Student Assessment data and overall grades are considered when scheduling Class Connect Sessions.
- *Students and Learning Coaches should be prepared to see changes to the Class Connect schedule in 9-week intervals.*

\*Based on individual student needs, teachers may assign additional sessions.

## LOCKING CURRICULUM

A student's curriculum may be locked until the following situations/issues are resolved:

- missing or incomplete required assessments (readiness/benchmarks)
- missed required meetings such as scheduled teacher conferences
- missing immunization records or other enrollment documentation

Students should contact their homeroom teacher to unlock their curriculum.

## PARENT/ STUDENT/ TEACHER COMMUNICATION

The teacher is the first point of contact for parents and students with issues related to their course. Email is a primary source of contact between the TOPS teacher and the parents/students. Teachers will respond to student and parent emails within 24 business hours of receipt.

*Note:*

This does not include after-hours, holidays, testing days, or weekends.

*Example(s) of return-email:*

“Parent emails at 7 pm on Monday. Teacher returns email at 8 am on Wednesday.” This is permissible because the teacher would not receive email until Tuesday morning at 8 am.

*Parents/Learning Coaches should use the following format when emailing all TOPS staff:*

<b>Subject:</b> Student ID, Concern
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Greeting,
-----------

Issue/Concern/Question.
-------------------------

-Learning Coach Name, phone number
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*Note:* Learning Coaches should use appropriate language when contacting TOPS Staff. Using excessive exclamation points, foul language, or levying accusations against staff can be construed as harassment. Staff may not respond to emails with inappropriate content.

## MICROSOFT TEAMS USAGE POLICY

Microsoft (MS) Teams allows students in Career Learning courses to communicate with each other and their teacher for the purpose of completing Project-Based Learning assignments together.

Students shall **not**:

- Use MS TEAMS outside the scope of the assigned and intended TEAMS course/student organization, including but not limited to using TEAMS to instant message teachers of other non-TEAMS courses/clubs.
- Violate 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 the district, students, or employees or upload or create computer viruses, including any substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Use any form of electronic communications to threaten district students, employees, board members, or volunteers.
- Send, post, deliver, or possess electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, illegal, or any conduct

that causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment or infringes on the rights of another student.

- Use any electronic communication to engage in or encourage illegal behavior or threaten school safety, including off school conduct that causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment or infringes on the rights of another student at school.

## **CHILD FIND**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act includes the Child Find mandate. Child Find requires all school districts to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities.

Parents who believe their student may have a disability can make a referral through their Homeroom Teacher for academic assistance provided through the Response to Intervention Program and consideration for accommodations provided under Section 504 or Special Education services.

For questions or concerns, please contact TOPS Special Education Manager, Cynthia Cook, [ccook@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:ccook@texasonlineprep.org)

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

TOPS is responsible for providing a free and appropriate education under the federal Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA). Documentation of the student's disability must be secured; including a previous Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and a Full and Individual Evaluation. Special Education professionals assist parents in accessing and coordinating services pursuant to a current Individualized Education Plan. TOPS offers a wide continuum of services which may include: adaptations and modifications to the general education curriculum, specialized instructional strategies, and adjustments in pacing.

### **What to expect:**

- Every special education student will be assigned a special education teacher in addition to their regular education teacher.
- The special education teacher will work with the learning coach on IEP goals; how to modify and adapt the learning environment; and curriculum paths for success.
- The special education teacher, the regular education teacher, and the learning coach will meet together for a conference via Newrow once every quarter.
- The special education teacher will hold Class Connects online to assist students with their specific learning needs.
- The special education teacher is available to be used as a resource for instructional strategies and adaptations and modifications to the curriculum.
- ARD meetings will be held either online or through the use of a conference call line.
- The special education teacher will provide a progress report at the end of each grading period noting progress on the student's IEP goals.

- Special Education students are required to meet the same attendance policies as their peers. The home environment, one on one instruction, and flexible schedule can help the students create a learning environment that meet their specific needs.

For questions or concerns, please contact TOPS Special Education Manager, Cynthia Cook, [ccook@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:ccook@texasonlineprep.org)

## **RELATED SERVICES**

Related services, placement and goals are determined by the ARD Committee. TOPS provides related services through contracts with service providers (speech pathologists, occupational therapists, etc.). It is important for students and parents to attend all related services appointments in order for the student to receive maximum benefit and achieve IEP goals.

We understand that it is our responsibility to provide a free and appropriate public education to each enrolled special education student. Because TOPS is a virtual school of choice, we strive to provide speech and other related services virtually whenever possible. However, we understand that each student's needs are different and the virtual model for related service delivery may not be appropriate for all. Face to face therapy can be considered based on the needs of the individual student. When face to face services are necessary, they will be offered at the nearest office to the family's home or virtually through a licensed provider.

Any questions regarding Special Education services for a specific student should be directed to the student's Special Education Teacher.

For questions or concerns, please contact TOPS Special Education Manager, Cynthia Cook, [ccook@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:ccook@texasonlineprep.org)

## **RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION/MTSS**

Response to Intervention (RTI) Services at TOPS are available for students who have been identified as academically "at-risk".

A student can be determined as "at-risk" if they meet any of the following:

- Significant deficiencies on assessments
- Struggling with the current curriculum
- At-risk identifiers on benchmarks
- Low performance on the STAAR exams
- Some other need found on the Child Find screening
- Or other identified area of concern

RTI is based on the concept of providing evidence-based instructional and behavioral strategies by highly qualified personnel that are matched to the student's needs, and those needs are monitored frequently and as scheduled.

**The goals of RTI at TOPS:**

- Create a productive learning experience for all TOPS students
- Support students in reaching grade-level performance
- Use prevention rather than reaction to address student difficulties

**How to request RTI assistance and what to expect:**

Students can be placed into the RTI program through a referral of a teacher, administrator, or learning coach. Students can also be placed into the RTI program based on their performance on a nationally-normed assessment. TOPS uses the NWEA MAP test for this assessment. The learning coach can make a request through the teacher for RTI support.

The process for RTI requires the student to move through three tiers of intervention for an individualized amount of time. The process includes RTI sessions that are mandatory for the student. We encourage Learning Coaches to monitor these sessions and the progress of their student through each tier.

*For questions or concerns, please contact your **campus principal**.*

## **ADVANCED LEARNERS**

Many TOPS students have participated in Gifted and Talented or Advanced Learner programs before enrolling in our program. If you feel that your student needs enrichment or more challenging work, please speak with your TOPS teacher and they will assist you in determining next steps.

You can also find more information on Gifted and Talented within the HISD handbook: [HISD Handbook](#)

For questions or concerns, please contact Leigh Radichel, TOPS GT Coordinator: [lradichel@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:lradichel@texasonlineprep.org)

## **SECTION 504 PROGRAM**

Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education (such as a public school like TOPS). Under this law, **individuals with disabilities** are defined as persons with a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities. Individuals who have a history of, or who are regarded as having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, are also covered.

Major life activities include caring for one's self, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, performing manual tasks, and learning. Some examples of impairments which may substantially limit major life activities, even with the help of medication or aids/devices, are:



AIDS, alcoholism, blindness or visual impairment, cancer, deafness or hearing impairment, diabetes, drug addiction, heart disease, and mental illness.

“No otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States... shall, solely by reason of his or her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance...” 9 U.S.C. 794(a)

What does this mean? This means if your student has a physical or mental impairment, they may qualify for services under Section 504. This allows TOPS to provide accommodations to help your student better access the curriculum if their physical or mental impairment is preventing them from being successful.

To determine if your student is eligible for Section 504 services, we will need to conduct an evaluation which may include gathering information from teachers, medical professionals, and you as the parent.

You can also find more information on Section 504 within the HISD handbook: [HISD Handbook](#)

If you would like to further investigate your student’s eligibility under Section 504, please contact TOPS 504 Coordinator, Amanda Bohannan, [abohannan@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:abohannan@texasonlineprep.org)

## **TOPS DYSLEXIA SERVICES**

Children learn to read in different ways. When conventional instruction is not working, we must intervene on behalf of that child’s future education. Students who show signs of dyslexia may need intervention to be successful in school. The TOPS Dyslexia Intervention Program is offered for those students who meet program specifications according to the State of Texas. To view a copy of the Texas Dyslexia Handbook and identification process, please go here: <https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/texas-dyslexia-handbook-2021.pdf> (revised 2021). Para ver una copia del Manual de Dislexia de Texas y el proceso de identificación, vaya aquí: <https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/texas-dyslexia-handbook-2021.pdf> (revisado en 2021).

For questions or concerns, please contact TOPS 504/Dyslexia Program Manager, Kristy Decker-Baird, [kdecker-baird@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:kdecker-baird@texasonlineprep.org)

### **Referral to Dyslexia Program:**

Students should be referred to the Dyslexia Program after being identified through RtI as showing characteristics associated with dyslexia.

Common Evidence of Dyslexia can include:

- [Student who] Fails to understand that words come apart; for example, that snowman can be pulled apart into snow and man and, later on, that the word man can be broken down still further and sounded out as /m/ /ă/ /n/
- Has difficulty learning the letter names and their corresponding sounds
- Has difficulty decoding single words (reading single words in isolation)—lacks a strategy
- Has difficulty spelling phonetically
- Reads dysfluently (choppy and labored)



- Relies on context to recognize a word
- Has a history of reading and spelling difficulties
- Avoids reading aloud
- Reads most materials slowly; oral reading is labored, not fluent
- Avoids reading for pleasure
- May have an inadequate vocabulary
- Has difficulty spelling; may resort to using less complicated words in writing that are easier to spell (*The Dyslexia Handbook*, pp 11-12)

The referral should consider that the Texas Education Code (TEC) §38.003 defines dyslexia in the following way:

*(1) Dyslexia means a disorder of constitutional origin manifested by a difficulty in learning to read, write, or spell, despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence, and sociocultural opportunity.*

*(2) Related disorders includes disorders similar to or related to dyslexia such as developmental auditory imperception, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.*

### **Evaluation**

Students can receive services for Dyslexia remediation under the umbrella of Section 504. If a student is referred for a Dyslexia Evaluation, the District must gain signed permission to evaluate from the student's legal guardian. This permission allows the student to be assessed in the suspected deficit areas and allows those assessment results to be used to determine eligibility for an accommodation plan provided through Section 504.

Trained personnel administer the Dyslexia assessment face to face with the student. This assessment typically takes place close to the student's residence and arrangements are made with the student's parents and the assessor.

When the evaluation is completed, a Section 504 meeting will be scheduled in a timely manner with the parent/guardian and school staff to discuss the assessment results and determine eligibility. The 504 committee will discuss a plan of action based on the assessment results and the documented needs of the student. This may include a 504 Accommodation Plan with Dyslexia services.

### **Dyslexia Program**

TOPS' Dyslexia program is much like the pullout classes that are offered for students in a traditional school setting. We offer class connects and an online reading program based in phonics instruction. Dyslexia classes are offered throughout the grade levels (3-12). The dyslexia teacher coordinates office hours and optional classes to help students in other courses as well.

For questions or concerns, please contact TOPS Dyslexia Coordinator, Debbie Kraus, [dkraus@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:dkraus@texasonlineprep.org).

## **FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights regarding the student’s education records. These rights are:

- (1) The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

To request an inspection and review, the parent or eligible student should submit a written request to the Executive Director that identifies the record (s) they wish to inspect. The Executive Director makes arrangements for access and notifies the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

- (2) The right to request an amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate.

Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the Executive Director, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School notifies the parent or eligible student of the decision and advises him/her of his/her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures is provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- (3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA allows disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits the School to disclose information without consent is when the School discloses information to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by or contracted to provide services to or designated by the contractor to provide services to the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board of Directors of the School; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or 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.

- (4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School 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 Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605**

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Texas Online Preparatory School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Texas Online Preparatory School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the **Texas Online Preparatory School** to the contrary in accordance with Texas Online Preparatory School procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Texas Online Preparatory School to include 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, as amended (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. These laws are Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).

If you do not want Texas Online Preparatory School to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the Texas Online Preparatory School in writing by their 10<sup>th</sup> school day after beginning school. Texas Online Preparatory School has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education

records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user

- A student ID number or other unique personal identifier that is displayed on a student ID badge, but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.

If there are certain items the School has chosen to designate as directory information that parents do not want disclosed from their student's education records, without their prior written consent, parents are encouraged to send an e-mail identifying the information they do not want disclosed, the student's name, and the name of the virtual academy or affiliate school in which the student is enrolled to: [topsadministration@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:topsadministration@texasonlineprep.org). This e-mail must be sent within 30 days of the student enrollment date.

Notice of these rights is available, upon request, on audiotape, in Braille, and in languages other than English.

For questions or concerns, please contact TOPS Community Engagement Specialist, Tamara Alexander, [taalexander@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:taalexander@texasonlineprep.org)

## **SCHOOL PROPERTY**

TOPS provides materials, computer (if applicable), printer, books and other curricular supplies. These materials are school property and must be kept in good condition. Parents are responsible for the repair or replacement of all lost, stolen or damaged school property. A list of property that must be returned is provided to parents. All property and equipment must be returned in good, working condition upon withdrawal from the program or completion of the school year. If a piece of TOPS electronic equipment isn't working properly, ***the parent should contact K12 Customer Care: [help.k12.com](http://help.k12.com)*** and troubleshoot with the technical support team. Parents should not repair any of TOPS/K12's equipment. All printed materials are copyrighted and unauthorized copying of that material is a copyright infringement. Materials cannot be sold or transferred and are to be used solely by the student in his/her studies while enrolled in the school. Parents are to comply with this policy and all the terms and conditions of the Use of Instructional Property Agreement submitted with the enrollment materials.

## **REMOVAL FROM TOPS**

Students may be removed from TOPS due to disciplinary action, lack of attendance, multiple core-course failure, persistent disengagement, or attendance in another school.

Students are provided all necessary due process rights before removal.

TOPS Administration will contact the Legal Guardian and provide an appeal form for the parent to document potential reasons or issues for student behavior or lack of active participation in the program. Legal Guardian may request a meeting with the campus principal at this time. The Legal Guardian has **3 days** to respond to the appeal form. No response will result in immediate Withdrawal from the program.

If appeal is granted and the student continues to display behavior unbecoming of the program (i.e.: lack of attendance, continued course failure, unresponsive to intervention support), then the legal guardian will receive a Withdrawal notice. The Legal Guardian has **3 days** to appeal the Withdrawal. No response will result in immediate Withdrawal from the program.

## **IDENTIFICATION AND SERVICES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

TOPS works closely with each family to identify students whose first or primary language is not English. Through the information obtained on a Home Language Survey complete during the initial enrollment process, students are assessed to determine if additional research based instruction and support is warranted for English language instruction.

A LEP (or ELL) student means an individual:

- (A) who is aged 3 through 21;
- (B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;
- (C)(i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;
  - (ii)(I) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and (II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or
  - (iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
- (D) whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual—
  - (i) the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments described in section 1111(b)(3);
  - (ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or
  - (iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society.

Students that meet the definition and qualify for English Language instruction will receive additional support through the English Learner department (EL). Additionally, those students identified for services will receive the support through an Individualizing English Learning Plan. To ensure the student is making growth academically and with their English language skills, annually the students will take the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment.

## **TEXAS ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (TELPAS)**

Title III, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Act requires states to conduct annual statewide English language proficiency assessments for ELLs in grades K–12 in the linguistic domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. TELPAS is designed to assess the progress that limited English proficient (LEP) students make in learning the English language and to drive instruction for ELLs. TELPAS reading, listening, speaking, and writing assessments enable teachers to holistically rate a LEP student's English language proficiency based on interactions and observations of the student during classroom instruction. TELPAS measures English language proficiency in the following domains:

<b>Listening</b> – administered in grades K–12	
<b>Speaking</b> – administered in grades K–12	
<b>Reading (K-1<sup>a</sup>)</b> is holistically assessed. The rater considers how well the student can use the English language to build foundational reading skills.	<b>Reading (2-12)</b> is administered to students as an online assessment that measures annual growth in English language proficiency of ELL students.
<b>Writing</b> – administered to ELLs in grades 2–12	
<b>ARD committee and LPAC Collaboration</b> – In rare cases, it may be determined that an ELL receiving special education services should not be assessed in one or more domains due to the student’s unique learning and/or cognitive disability; students are reported at the time of testing with a score code of “ARD Decision.”	

Student identified with an English Language need will need to take the TELPAS annually or until the student no longer requires English language instruction and is exited from the EL program. Information about testing dates, locations and times will be sent to each family 6-8 weeks prior to the assessment date.

For more information, please contact Ms. Andrea Cano, [acano@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:acano@texasonlineprep.org)

If you need assistance of a language interpreter, please contact Ms. Andrea Cano, EL Manager: [acano@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:acano@texasonlineprep.org) OR call 1-800- 225-5254 and request an interpreter for TOPS.

## **TITLE IX AND NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE**

The District designates the following person to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, for students:

Position: Assistant Superintendent  
 Address: 441 FM 2821 East, Huntsville, TX 77320  
 Telephone: (936) 435-6300

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, Huntsville ISD and TOPS does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law, in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following district representatives have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Amanda Bohannon, 504 Coordinator, [abohannon@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:abohannon@texasonlineprep.org)
- Contact Executive Director, for general concerns regarding discrimination: Mrs. Kristina Nanini, [knanini@texasonlineprep.org](mailto:knanini@texasonlineprep.org)

## **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.

## **PROHIBITED HARASSMENT**

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, age, 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.

## **EXAMPLES**

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.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY AN EMPLOYEE**

Sexual harassment of a student by a District employee includes both welcome and unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

A District employee causes the student to believe that the student must submit to the conduct in order to participate in a school program or activity, or that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the student submits to the conduct; or

- The conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it:
- Affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities; or
- Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment.
- Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and District employees are prohibited. Any sexual relationship between a student and a District employee is always prohibited, even if consensual. [See DH]



## **BY OTHERS**

Sexual harassment of a student, including harassment committed by another student, includes unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct when the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it:

- 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.

## **EXAMPLES**

Examples of sexual harassment of a student may include sexual advances; touching intimate body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Necessary or permissible physical contact such as assisting a child by taking the child's hand, comforting a child with a hug, or other physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature is not sexual harassment.

## **GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT**

Gender-based harassment includes physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the student's gender, the student's expression of characteristics perceived as stereotypical for the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity. For purposes of this policy, gender-based harassment is considered prohibited harassment if the conduct 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.

## **EXAMPLES**

Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES:**

### **STUDENT REPORT**

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct or believes that another student has experienced prohibited conduct should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school counselor, principal, other District employee, or the appropriate District official listed in this policy.

## **EMPLOYEE REPORT**

Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced prohibited conduct shall immediately notify the appropriate District official listed in this policy and take any other steps required by this policy.

## **ALTERNATIVE REPORTING PROCEDURES**

A student shall not be required to report prohibited conduct to the person alleged to have committed the conduct. Reports concerning prohibited conduct, including reports against the Title IX coordinator, may be directed to the Superintendent.

A report against the Superintendent may be made directly to the Board. If a report is made directly to the Board, the Board shall appoint an appropriate person to conduct an investigation.

## **TIMELY REPORTING**

Reports of prohibited conduct shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

## **NOTICE TO PARENTS**

The District official or designee shall promptly notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct by a District employee or another adult.

## **INVESTIGATION OF THE REPORT**

The District may request, but shall not require, a written report. If a report is made orally, the District official shall reduce the report to written form.

## **INITIAL ASSESSMENT**

Upon receipt or notice of a report, the District official shall determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by this policy. If so, the District shall immediately undertake an investigation, except as provided below at CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION.

If the District official determines that the allegations, if proven, would not constitute prohibited conduct as defined by this policy, the District official shall refer the complaint for consideration under FFI.

## **INTERIM ACTION**

If appropriate and regardless of whether a criminal or regulatory investigation regarding the alleged conduct is pending, the District shall promptly take interim action calculated to address prohibited conduct or bullying prior to the completion of the District's investigation.

Complaint Process can be found here: [HISD Student Handbook](#)

Complaint Forms can be found under Required Postings here: [TOPS Contact Guide](#)

## **ADMISSION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

The McKinney Act of 1987, or P.L. 100-77, ensures that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth shall have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth. Under the Act, schools are prohibited from delaying a homeless child's entry into school due to delays in obtaining school records. Rules regarding guardianship must be waived for homeless students living with foster parents or relatives other than their legal guardians.

### **The McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless**

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (per Title IX, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act) defines *homeless* as follows:

The term "homeless children and youths":

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)); and

(B) includes--

- (i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;\*
- (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));
- (iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- (iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

\*Per Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, "awaiting foster care placement" was removed from the definition of *homeless* on December 10, 2016; the only exception to his removal is that "covered states" have until December 10, 2017 to remove "awaiting foster care placement" from their definition of *homeless*.

View the [full text of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#).

Additional information about supports are available by calling the school office at 972-420-1404 and requesting to speak with the School-Based Enrollment Coordinator or McKinney Vento Liaison.

## **FOSTER CARE**

Under Texas law, students in foster care are entitled to immediate enrollment when arriving at a new school or district — regardless of whether they have the necessary documentation and paperwork.<sup>52</sup> CPS caseworkers are required to enroll a child in school within three (3) school

days of the child either: a) being placed in CPS custody; or b) moving to a new school or placement.<sup>53</sup> The caseworker then has up to 30 days to provide all necessary enrollment paperwork to the new school.<sup>54</sup> Follow up to ensure a student:

- Has his or her records requested and received;
- Is placed in the appropriate grade level and classes;
- Receives his or her books; and
- Receives special education services, if appropriate.

Who may enroll a student living in foster care in school? If a child is in a foster care placement, DFPS has legal authority to enroll the child in school. DFPS may delegate that authority to another person, usually the person who will be responsible for day-to-day care of the child, such as the:

- Foster parent or designated caregiver;
- CPS caseworker or other staff;
- CASA or student's guardian ad litem;
- Residential facility staff;
- Child Placing Agency staff, including case manager, or
- Biological parent, in some cases.

For additional information on the necessary items to enroll a youth in foster care in a public, Texas school please refer to <http://tea.texas.gov/FosterCareStudentSuccess/>

Additional information about supports are available by calling the school office at 972-420-1404 and requesting to speak with the School-Based Enrollment Coordinator or Foster Care Liaison.

## **CHILDREN OF MILITARY FAMILIES**

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

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

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

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

Additional information can be obtained by calling the school office at 972-420-1404 and requesting to speak with the School-Based Enrollment Coordinator.

## **PARENT ACCESS TO STAFF CERTIFICATIONS**

Parents may review certifications of Texas Online Preparatory School teachers by visiting the following link:

<http://secure.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/virtcert.asp>

## **COMPLAINT RESPONSE PROCEDURE**

Texas Online Preparatory School is interested in achieving and fostering student/family satisfaction. The following procedure ensures that student/family grievances are addressed fairly and in a timely manner. TOPS prohibits discrimination against students/families on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, or religion.

1. The student and parent(s), custodian(s) or legal guardian(s), address in writing any concern or grievance to the Executive Director.
2. The Executive Director responds in writing within ten (10) working days.
3. If the concern or grievance is not resolved by the Executive Director, the parent(s), custodian(s) or legal guardian(s) may, within ten (10) working days of the Executive Director's response, request in writing a meeting (via phone or in person) with the Executive Director to discuss the concern or grievance. He/she investigates and responds within ten (10) working days.

Additional Information about Complaint Procedures can be found here: [HISD Student Handbook](#)

## **SCHOOL OUTINGS & STUDENT ACTIVITY CLUBS**

TOPS sponsors optional outings for students and families on a regular basis that enhance the K12 curriculum/learning activities. While attendance is not mandatory, it is a wonderful opportunity to meet other school participants and share information about programs and successful practices.

- Parents are responsible for the cost of transportation and any entrance fees associated with optional outings.
- Outings are scheduled in various locations, throughout the state, and where a majority of TOPS students reside.
- Due to the sheer size of the state and TOPS staffing, not all areas will have an outing scheduled.
- Students are expected to dress appropriately and according to HISD Dress Code while attending all TOPS sponsored events, including graduation and prom.

[Link to HISD Dress Code Policy](#)

- TOPS parents and students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately at all outings.
- Parents are responsible for supervision of their children at all times.

## **TECHNOLOGY ISSUES AND USAGE**

All issues regarding K12 computers can be directed to K12 technical support directly. Technical support is available at [help.k12.com](http://help.k12.com) or **866-626-6413** between the hours of 7 am and 7 pm CST.

Access to the Internet via equipment and resource networks provided to families as a result of their enrollment in TOPS are intended to serve and pursue educational goals and purposes.

In addition, parents are to comply with the Use of Instructional Property Agreement completed as part of the enrollment process.

Communications and Internet access should be conducted in a responsible and professional manner, reflective of the school's commitment to honest, ethical and non-discriminatory practice.

Therefore, the following is prohibited:

- Any use that violates federal, state, or local law or regulation.
- Knowing or reckless interference with the normal operation of computers, peripherals, or networks.
- The use of TOPS Internet-related systems to access, transmit, store, display, or request inappropriate materials.
- Any use that is deemed to adversely affect TOPS.
- Violation of TOPS or K12's Terms of Use for any TOPS or K12 website.

## **INFORMATIONAL WEBSITES**

The following websites may prove helpful when computer questions or technical difficulties arise.

- <http://www.google.com> – Widely used search engine
- <http://www.whatis.com> – provides definitions of most technical terms, concepts and ideas
- <http://www.howstuffworks.com> – provides information on how computer hardware and software work in addition to about everything else one could ever want information about
- <http://housecall.antivirus.com> – free online virus scanner that can be used as a “second opinion” to the installed antivirus software
- <http://www.homenethelp.com> – provides information for setting up and troubleshooting a home network environment
- <http://www.computerhope.com> – free computer help for everyone. Drivers, questions & answers, and forums.
- <http://support.microsoft.com> – Microsoft's self-help support web site including data base of common issues and resolutions
- <http://www.webopedia.com> – online dictionary and search engine for computer and internet terms
- <http://www.modemhelp.net> – more advanced site that provides information on error messages and screenshots for troubleshooting technical issues
- <http://www.dslreports.com> – information on DSL, Cable, and other high speed internet connections
- <http://help.k12.com> – K12 website that provides troubleshooting information for common issues experienced by families and download points for technical tools

## **POWER OUTAGE AND CRISIS PLAN**

### **What do I do if my internet goes out?**

Internet is a requirement of TOPS. If your internet temporarily goes out, you will still need to school. We suggest going to a local library, a local business that provides WIFI, or a friend's house to use their internet, while you resolve your internet issues. If your outage is prolonged, please notify your homeroom teacher immediately.

### **How do I change my password?**

1. Log on to your computer.
2. Press the Ctrl, Alt, and Delete keys on the keyboard at the same time and then release them.
3. Select "Change Password" from the menu that appears on the screen.
4. Make sure the user name is correct.
5. Make sure the account in the second box is correct (whether it's a domain account or local computer account).
6. Type your old (current) password in the third box.
7. Type your new password in the fourth box.
8. Type your new password again in the fifth box.
9. Click "OK."
10. Click "OK" to acknowledge the message that your password has been changed.
11. Press the Esc button, or click "Cancel" to return to the Windows desktop.

### **Where can I go to get more help?**

K12 Customer Care is the first point of contact for parents and students who need computer help. Call 1-866-626-6413 to speak with K12 Technical Support or visit [help.k12.com](http://help.k12.com)

## **PARENT TIPS AND TRICKS**

Some of the most valuable tips and tricks are provided by experienced TOPS families.

Below is a list of suggestions and advice compiled by TOPS families and staff members:

### **Starting School:**

- Give yourself time to get familiar with the material, and develop a daily schedule based on due dates and requirements of your student's class schedule.
- Maintain open communication with teachers and make schooling your priority.
- Persevere as a family. Do not allow yourself or your family to become overwhelmed. Work cooperatively and patiently to troubleshoot challenges (i.e., computer or software problems, lifestyle change, etc.).
- Understand that some families need 6 months or more to become completely comfortable with the virtual public school model.
- Keep in mind that parents who have no experience attending public school at home may be surprised to discover that it is time consuming—particularly in the first two or three months as everyone acclimates to the new arrangement. Nevertheless, the reward of knowing that the nature of TOPS' program leads to high-quality education far outweighs the challenges.

- Check email daily and thoroughly read the information sent. This is our main form of communication, and you will have correspondence from many departments.

**Organization:**

- Don't be overwhelmed when your school materials arrive. Open those boxes, set aside what is for second semester, and stick to the basics.
- Organize your workspace as early as possible.
- Establish a reward system based on daily attitude and activity.
- Daily schedules are imperative for your child's online learning success. Establish a schedule and stick to it
- Obtain a notebook and write down questions for discussion with the teacher. Leave space to record responses.

**Coaching:**

- Strive to begin school each day at a specified time. Stay on top of your schedule. Catching up can be challenging.
- You might choose to post a motto in the classroom area of your house to motivate.

**General:**

- Attend a Learning Coach Assembly or Orientation Sessions.
- Attend as many outings as possible. Meeting other families and students helps families create a sense of community and belonging, and provides them with the opportunity to share experiences.
- Make the scheduled teacher conferences a priority. Your teacher is an important component of this program and can really contribute a lot. Please take advantage of their professionalism and willingness to help.

**TOPICS and RESOURCES**

<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>LINK</b>
FERPA, Pupil Rights, Privacy, Graduation Requirements, Required Courses, Medical and Emergency Information, Title IX, Graduation Requirements, School Counseling, Technology-Use, Bullying, Immunization Requirements, Enrollment and Attendance Requirements	<a href="#">HISD Student Handbook</a>
Student Due Process, Overall Discipline, Suspensions, DAEP Placements, Expulsions, Level System of Discipline	<a href="#">HISD Student Code of Conduct</a>
Complaint Forms, VOE forms, Transcript Requests, Change of Address, School Contact Info, Calendar, Required Postings	<a href="https://www.smore.com/r2hnb-tops-contact-guide">https://www.smore.com/r2hnb-tops-contact-guide</a>
Spanish Versions of Handbook and Code of Conduct Here:	<a href="https://www.huntsville-isd.org/Page/797">https://www.huntsville-isd.org/Page/797</a>



## **I UNDERSTAND AND AGREE**

The purpose of this section is to set expectations for both TOPS Learning Coaches and TOPS Students. To be successful at TOPS, it is important that LCs and students understand and agree with the following:

- I understand that my student is enrolled in a public school within Huntsville Independent School District.
- I understand and agree that as a student enrolled at TOPS, a public-school within HISD, my student may not be enrolled in any other full-time or part-time private or public schools. This may include affiliated correspondence and dual credit programs. Students found to have duplicate enrollments will be immediately withdrawn.
- I understand and agree to supervise my student in using K12 curriculum. Supervision may include:
  - maintaining and creating a daily schedule
  - monitoring course progress
  - logging attendance
  - reviewing assignments
  - troubleshooting technical difficulties

***We do not encourage students be left home alone or unsupervised during the school day.***

- I understand and agree that for students to be successful at TOPS, they must:
  - Pass all coursework
  - Regularly attend Class Connect Sessions
  - Log-in and work each day
  - Check email twice-daily
- I understand that my student should complete all assessments and assignments listed in the OLS/OMS/OHS platforms by the assigned due date.
- I understand that as public-school students, TOPS Students are under the guidance of certified public-school teachers. As such, Learning Coaches agree to partner with their student's teachers for their student's success.
- I understand and agree to attend STAAR/EOC testing as a requirement of enrollment in Texas public schools, and I understand that I am required to provide transportation to all testing sites regardless of distance.
- I understand my student is to fully participate in all Benchmark/STAAR/EOC testing.
- I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to secure an Internet service provider, and I understand that failure to secure working Internet may result in withdrawal from the TOPS program.

- I understand that if my student receives special or related services, they may not be provided at home, and therefore I am required to provide transportation regardless of distance.

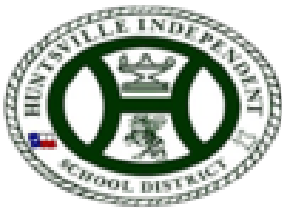
## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THIS DOCUMENT**

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*Note:*

**This handbook is a “living” document and may be changed, amended, or edited to reflect policy or procedural updates at any time. Parents/Learning Coaches will be notified of changes**



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