

New Caney Independent School District



**Elementary Handbook
2008-09**

Preface

This handbook has been prepared to be informative both to you and to other patrons of the community concerning the policies, practices, and procedures of the elementary schools in the New Caney Independent School District.

Our most important concern is your child as an individual. Therefore, the goal of everything we do is to further the education and the total development of the child. We strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with the information contained in this booklet. We hope this information will serve to aid the continuance of the excellent cooperation that has existed between the home and the school.

Admittance

- A. To be admitted, a student must be of eligible school age and have a permanent residence within the NCISD or must be of eligible school age and be the child of an exempted non-resident employee of NCISD.
 1. A pupil entering Pre-Kindergarten must reach his or her fourth birthday on or before September 1. Prescribed immunizations or an acceptable affidavit in lieu thereof, proof of birth date, address, and social security number must be presented. A pupil must also meet the other requirements pertaining to Pre-K pupils.
 2. A pupil entering Kindergarten must reach his or her fifth birthday on or before September 1, present the required evidence of prescribed immunization or an acceptable affidavit in lieu thereof, furnish proof of birth date, address, and social security number.
 3. A pupil entering the First Grade must reach his or her sixth birthday on or before September 1, present the required evidence of prescribed immunizations or an acceptable affidavit in lieu thereof, furnish proof of birth date, address, and social security number. A pupil must also meet the other requirements pertaining to First Grade students.
 4. If a non-resident employee or a resident of this district obtains legal guardianship or becomes the person having lawful control of a child for the ostensible or primary purpose of sending the child to school in this district, the child will not be entitled to admittance.
- B. For all students who reside within NCISD, the attendance areas in which they live and their grade or program placement will determine the school that they are allowed to attend.

Children of eligible non-resident employees may attend the appropriate school that has the closest proximity to their parents' work station; however, if another school is selected initially by the parents for convenience or other reasons, a subsequent change in schools will not be authorized (except in hardship cases) until the child has completed the program of the school in which he or she was placed.
- C. Continuance
To continue in school after having been admitted, the student must be of eligible school age and comply with the rules and regulations of the school, including the Board's policies on residency, discipline, and health.

Asbestos

ASBESTOS HAZARD EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACT (AHERA) COMPLIANCE DOCUMENTS

The Management Plan for NCISD as required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) and submitted to the Texas Department of Health is available for inspection during normal business hours at the Superintendent's Office in the Administration Building, the Asbestos Program Manager's Office in the Maintenance and Transportation Center, or at each individual school principal's office. Copies of the Management Plan will be furnished for 25 cents per page within five working days of receipt of a written request.

Assemblies

Students are required to conduct themselves in assemblies as they do in class. Students who are tardy and who do not abide by district rules of conduct during an assembly shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Bilingual/ESL Program

An ESL program is available on each campus in accordance with Chapter 89 of the Texas Education Code (TEC). Please refer to the Bilingual/ESL Coordinator at the campus level for more information.

Dual Language Program

Bilingual teachers are in place at all elementary campuses to deliver dual language instruction for grades Pre-K, K, 1st & 2nd.

Compulsory School Attendance

A child is required to attend school, under Section 25.085 of the Public Education Code and Section 51.03(b)(2) of the Family Code, each school day for the entire period the program of instruction is provided. Unless specifically exempted by Section 25.086, a child who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not completed the academic year in which the child's 18th birthday occurred shall attend school. On enrollment in prekindergarten or kindergarten, a child shall attend school. A child is exempt (Section 25.086) from the requirements of compulsory school attendance if the child:

1. attends a private or parochial school that includes good citizenship in its course of study
2. is eligible to participate in a school district's special education program under Section 29.003 and cannot be appropriately served by the resident district
3. has a physical or mental condition of a temporary and remediable nature that makes the child's attendance infeasible and holds a certificate from a qualified physician specifying the temporary condition, indicating the treatment prescribed to remedy the temporary condition, and covering the anticipated period of the child's absence from school for the purpose of receiving and recuperating from the remedial treatment

4. is expelled in accordance with the requirements of law
5. is at least 17 years of age and is attending a course of instruction to prepare for the high school equivalency examination or has received a high school equivalency examination
6. is at least 16 years of age and is attending a course of instruction to prepare for the high school equivalency examination, if the child is recommended to take the course of instruction by a public agency that has supervision or custody of the child under court order.
7. is enrolled in the Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science
8. is enrolled in the Texas Academy of Leadership in the Humanities
9. is specifically exempted under another law.

A child may not have more than three days or parts of days of absence within a four week period or 10 or more days or parts of days of absence within a six month period.

A child that misses more than the specified amount of days or parts of days will have violated the compulsory attendance law and will be subject to prosecution in the justice court of the precinct in which the child resides or in which the school is located. A citation will be issued by the district attendance officer after the 10th day or parts of days of unexcused absences.

The school district will notify the student's parent(s) in writing if, in a six month period, the student has been absent without an excuse five times for any part of the day. If the student is absent without excuse for 10 or more days or parts of days in a six month period, the student's parent(s) will be subject to a citation.

A student required to attend school may be excused for temporary absence resulting from the following causes:

1. An approved note for personal illness
2. Death in the immediate family
3. Student's health related services
4. Approved school trips
5. Documented religious holiday

Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence

Texas Law requires students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and Texas flags each day. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge.

A minute of silence will follow recitation of the pledges. The student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required moment of silence or silent activity that follows the recitation of the pledges.

Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating shall be defined as giving or receiving information on a test or submitting duplicate work for outside assignments. Using technology (e.g., computer, internet, cell phone, PDA, or calculator) to cheat or copy the work of another is prohibited. The penalty for a student found guilty of cheating is a grade of zero on the assignment or test. Plagiarism consists of using another person's ideas or writing as one's own. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and the penalty shall be a zero on the assignment. Students caught cheating will be referred to the office for disciplinary action.

Communicable Diseases

A pupil who has an infectious or contagious disease shall be excluded from school until the danger of transmitting the infection or disease to other students has passed. The pupil's eligibility for readmission to school shall be determined by guidelines established by the State Department of Health or a physician's certificate of readmission.

The following table lists the most common communicable diseases and states the requirements set by the State Department of Health for readmission to school:

Requirements for Disease readmission to school

Chicken Pox	Exclude for 7 days after lesions appear or until all blisters have crusted over.
Bacterial Meningitis	Exclude until given a written release to return by physician.
Head Lice (Pediculosis)	Exclude until nit free.
Hepatitis	Exclude until given a written release to return by physician.
Impetigo	Exclude until under adequate treatment. Lesions must be covered during school.
Mumps	Exclude until clinical recovery or until released by physician.
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)	Exclude until clinical recovery or until given a written release to return by physician.
Ringworm of the Body	Exclude until under adequate treatment. Lesions must be covered during school.
Scabies (Body Lice)	Exclude until under adequate treatment.
Streptococcal Infections	After 24 hours from time antibiotic (including scarlet fever) treatment has begun or until given a written release to return to school by physician.

Rashes of undetermined origin and/or fever (above 100.4 Degrees) will be considered symptoms of a possibly infectious condition. Students displaying either of these symptoms will be excluded from school until their symptoms subside or until permitted by their physician to resume school attendance.

Credit By Exam

Students may be advanced one grade level by passing the credit by exam with instruction with a score of 70 or more and the credit by exam without instruction with a score of 90 or more. Please refer to the campus counselor for more information.

Counseling

A school counselor may be able to help students with a wide range of personal concerns. The counselor is familiar with community resources and may direct students to other sources of information and assistance.

Discipline

Students who violate the District's Student Code of Conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. The District's disciplinary options include using one or more discipline management techniques, suspension, and expulsion. Disciplinary measures are applied depending on the nature of the offense. See Discipline Management Plan.

Dress and Grooming

The District's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, instills discipline, prevent disruption, avoid safety hazards, and teach respect for authority.

Students shall be dressed and groomed in a manner that is clean and neat and that will not be a health or safety hazard to themselves or others. The District prohibits any clothing or grooming that in the principal's judgment may cause disruption of or interference with normal school operations.

1. Clothing, jewelry, patches, tattoos, (body art) or designs on clothing must not reflect or suggest in any manner drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, vulgar language, gang affiliations, violence, death, or satanic ideology.
2. Hair styles must be neat, clean, and well-groomed. No head coverings, curlers, sweatband, cap, or hat shall be worn in the building.
3. Skirts and shorts must extend beyond the length of fingertips when arms hang loosely at the sides. Pants, skirts, and shorts must be properly hemmed and must fit at the waist. Undergarments should not be seen.
4. Excessively oversized or excessively tight garments shall not be worn.
5. Tank tops shall only be worn in conjunction with a sleeved garment. The midriff must not be exposed when a student goes through normal activities of a school day (bending, stretching, reaching, etc.).
6. Revealing garments are not permitted.
7. Proper undergarments must be worn.
8. Appropriate footwear shall be worn. Shower shoes or thongs are not appropriate.
9. Any form of dress, jewelry, or hair that attracts undue attention, disrupts school, or distracts from the learning process is not acceptable.
10. Gang-related apparel is prohibited in school or at any school-related function.
11. Facial piercing will be limited to the student's ears only. Students may be asked to remove jewelry, earrings, etc. if the principal, assistant principal, or teachers feel they are a distraction in the classroom.

Students may be asked to remove jewelry, earrings, etc. if the principal, assistant principal, or teachers feel they are a distraction in the classroom. Students in violation of the dress code will be given an opportunity to correct the violation by changing clothes, shoes, etc. If a change cannot be made, the parent will be notified to have someone bring

him/her proper attire. If the violation is not corrected, the student will not be allowed to go to class.

Any student sent home for dress code violations will receive unexcused absences for the classes missed. The dress code rules shall apply through the last day of school.

Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergency Drills

Students, teachers, and other district employees shall participate in frequent drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students must follow the direction of teachers or marshals quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner. During lockdown drill parents will have no immediate access to students until the drill is completed.

Emergency Medical Treatment

If your child is injured or becomes ill at school, the school will notify you. Therefore, it is imperative for your child that we know:

1. Where to reach you (home, business, and neighbor's telephone).
2. The name, address, and telephone number of your family doctor.

At the beginning of each school year, each student should bring home an Emergency Information Card. Please complete both sides of the card and return it to your child's teacher immediately. Parents are urged to make every effort to keep the information recorded on the emergency cards current. Parents should contact the school nurse if necessary to update these cards during the school year.

Emergency school Closing Information

During the school year, there is always the possibility of emergency situations such as severe weather conditions arising. In the event that such conditions develop during the school day, the student will be kept at school until the regular dismissal time. Parents, however, may pick up their children if they choose. If severe weather conditions develop after the end of the school day or before school opens the next day, listen to the following stations for announcements concerning dismissal of school:

Television:

KPRC (2) KTRK (13) KHOU (11) KNWS (51)

Radio:

KILT (610 AM or 100 FM) KIKK (650 AM or 95.7 FM)

KIKR (880 AM) KPRC (950 AM)

KTRH (740 AM) KKQV-93Q (92.9 FM) KLTN-FM 102.9

Extracurricular Activities

Students will be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities in accordance with UIL rules.

Gifted and Talented Program

This program is available on each campus in accordance with district policy. A parent, teacher, other student, or community member may nominate a student for this program. Please refer to the campus counselor or G/T Coordinator for more information.

Homework

The term “homework” entails any academic activity performed in connection with the school program, and could include “nontextbook-type” activities as well as practice or reinforcement exercises assigned from the textbook.

Homework is assigned to accomplish a definite purpose and on the basis of class need, i.e., when the students are not working up to expectations, when practice is needed to improve a skill; or when absences necessitate homework.

Immunization

For Immunization, see NCISD Discipline Management Plan and Student Code of Conduct.

Insurance

At the beginning of the school year, the District will make available to students and parents a low-cost student accident insurance program. The District shall not be responsible for costs of treating injuries or assume liability for any other costs associated with an injury.

Meals

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers free and reduced-price meals on a student’s financial need. More information can be obtained from the Child Nutrition Department at (281) 577-8690.

Make-up work for excused absence

Students will be permitted one day for make-up work for each day of excused absence.

Medication At School

The school district shall follow state guidelines and mandates with regard to administering medication to students.

1. The school principal has appointed one person (the campus nurse or other school employee) to administer medication to students.
2. Medication must be brought to the clinic by the parent. The student must not carry medication with him/her during the school day or administer it to himself, unless specified by his physician and cleared through the principal’s office.
3. No employee shall administer any medication to a pupil unless the district has received a written request to administer the same from the parent, legal guardian, or other person having legal control of the pupil. The request should include the child’s name, amount of medication to be given, the time it is due, and the date it should be administered.
4. No medication shall be administered to a pupil, unless when administering same, the medication appears to be in the original container and to be properly labeled. This applies to prescription and over-the-counter medicines.

Parties

There will be 3 parties held during the school year at the discretion of the campus principal.

Pest Control

This school periodically applies pesticides. Information concerning these applications may be obtained from New Caney ISD at 281-577-8600.

Physical Education

The school's physical education program is designed to meet the needs of all students who are physically able to attend school. Parent request for excuses covering one to three days at a time are to be given careful consideration, and the instructor will determine if it is advisable for the student to be excused from activity. A physician's statement must be presented if more than **three consecutive days** are involved. The principal of the school in accordance with board policy may grant permanent exemptions from the P. E. program.

Promotion, Retention, and Placement

In grades 1-5, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (**Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills – TEKS**) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in language arts (Language Composite), mathematics, and in either social studies or science.

Loss of credit/promotion

To receive credit in a class or be promoted, a student must be in attendance for at least 90% of the days the class is offered during a semester. A student who is in attendance less than 90% of the days the class is offered in a semester shall not be given credit for the class or promoted unless the attendance committee finds that the absence(s) are the result of extenuating circumstances.

When returning to school after an absence, a student must bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. Verification of any illness may be required if the student's absences are more than three to five consecutive days, or if the reason given is suspect.

District policy considers the following as extenuating circumstances for the purpose of granting credit for a class:

1. An excused absence based on personal sickness, sickness or death in the family, quarantine, weather or road conditions making travel dangerous, or any other unusual cause acceptable to the principal.
2. Days of suspension.
3. Participation in court proceedings of child/neglect investigation.
4. A migrant student's late enrollment or early withdrawal.
5. Days missed as a runaway.
6. Completion of a competence-based program for at-risk students.
7. Late enrollment or early withdrawal of a student under Texas Youth Commission.

8. Teen parent absences to care for his or her child.
9. Participation in a substance abuse rehabilitation program.
10. Homelessness, as defined in law.

An attendance committee will be appointed by each school to hear appeals from students who are in attendance less than 90% of the days the class is offered. The committee will consist of the student's teacher(s), counselor, and the principal or his or her representative. The attendance committee will have the full authority to:

1. Grant excessive absences.
2. Offer alternative ways for students to make up time and school work missed.
3. Deny credit.

A member of an attendance committee is not personally liable for any act or omission arising out of duties as a member of an attendance committee.

If a student is denied credit for a class by an attendance committee, the student may appeal the decision to the board of trustees. The decision of the board may be appealed by a trial de nove to the district court of the county in which the school district's central administrative office is located.

Student Progress

Students progress regarding academics and behavior is reported to parents through the weekly student folder, a mid-grading period progress report when a student is in danger of failing or failing, and a report card at the end of the grading period. Grades are recorded according to the district policy. An explanation of the grading system. (i.e., E, S, N, U, etc.) is explained in the Elementary Folder Grading Policy Insert along with being printed on the report card envelope. A parent conference will be requested anytime a student is failing or in danger of failing. A parent conference is required at the end of the first grading period to review the report card and discuss student progress.

Special Programs

Special services are provided for students on each campus in accordance with Federal and State laws. Please direct all questions in regard to eligibility requirements and specific services to the campus principal or coordinator.

Student Assessment

Students in grades 3-5 are assessed using the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests as mandated by the state. Third grade students take these tests in math and reading. Third graders are required to pass the reading test in order to be promoted. There are three opportunities to pass the test. Fourth grade students take a writing, math, and reading test. Fifth grade students take math, reading, and science tests. Fifth graders are required to pass the math and reading tests in order to be promoted. There are three opportunities to pass the test. Every effort is made at each campus to ensure student success on this Student Success Initiative (SSI). "Tackling the TAKS", a parent resource, is available through the district website.

Student Complaints

Students or parents who have a complaint should first bring the matter up with the teacher. If the outcome of that discussion is not satisfactory, they can request a conference with the principal. If not satisfied at that level, they can request a conference with the Superintendent or designee, and ultimately, appear before the Board of Trustees, in accordance with board policy.

Students and/or parents who have a complaint regarding possible discrimination on the basis of sex should contact the superintendent of schools at (281) 577-8600. Complaints or concerns regarding handicapped students or the district's program for handicapped students should be brought to the attention of the Executive Director of Special Populations at (281) 577-8670.

A formal grievance procedure for students is located in the Board Policy FOA. Board policy books are located in each school office and in the superintendent's office. Complaints or concerns regarding 504 or the district's program for 504 should be brought to the attention of the Executive Director of Special Populations at (281) 577-8670.

* Parents will be notified prior to any surveys being requested of their child.

Student Records

A student's school records are private and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the district until the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is a minor or a dependent for tax purposes, as do students who are 18 years of age or older. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The superintendent of schools is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employees, agents, or trustees of the district, of cooperatives of which the district is a member, or facilities with which the district contracts for the placement of handicapped students, as well as their attorneys and consultants who are:

1. Working with the students;
2. Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or a handicapped student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP);
3. Compiling statistical data; or
4. Investigating or evaluating programs.

Certain other officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. The district forwards a student's records without prior consent on request to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

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

Students over 18 and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights.

If the district refused the request to amend the records, the requester has the right to a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requester has thirty days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and students are not allowed to contest a student's grade in the course through this process. Parents or students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S Department of Education if they feel that the district is not in compliance with the law regarding student records.

Copies of student records are available at a cost of 35 cents per 8 1/2 x 11 inch sheet and 45 cents per 8 1/2 x 14 inch sheet, payable in advance. Parents may be denied copies of a student's records (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of post-secondary education; or (3) if the parent fails to follow proper procedures and pay the copy charge. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price lunches and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written request of the parent, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge.

Tutorials

Tutorials will be offered at each elementary campus. Days and times will be sent home in report cards and on progress reports.

Visitors

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit district schools. All visitors must first report to the front office to show identification. Visits to individual classrooms during the instructional time shall be permitted only with the principal's approval, and such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment.

Withdrawal of Students From School

A student who officially ceases to be enrolled in school before the end of the school year is said to be "withdrawn". A student may be withdrawn only by the parent or guardian. It is desirable that the parent or guardian withdraw the child at the end of the school day, in person after having notified the office as far in advance as possible, in order that the teacher may have an opportunity to prepare necessary records. If the parent or guardian cannot come in person to withdraw the student, a signed note by the parent or guardian should be sent to the school office. The note should authorize the withdrawal of the child from the school and indicate the date and time when this is to be done.

504 and Dyslexia Services

504 and Dyslexia services are provided on each campus in accordance with Federal and State law. Please contact the campus counselor for information regarding eligibility requirements and program specifics.

Civil rights certification

The New Caney Independent School District assures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. The New Caney Independent School District assures that it will comply with:

Elementary Principals

Mike Ogg	Aikin Elementary School	(281) 577-2900
Delinda Neal	Bens Branch Elementary	(281) 577-8700
Sarah Hottman	Crippen Elementary School	(281) 577-8740
Penny Peacock	Kings Manor Elementary School	(281) 577-2940
Betty Wyatt	New Caney Elementary School	(281) 577-8720
Trish Beathard	Porter Elementary School	(281) 577-2920
Trish Musick	Sorters Mill Elementary	(281) 577-8780
Gloria Hammack	Valley Ranch Elementary School	(281) 577-8760

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq. which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended,