

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK  
2023-2024



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## PREFACE

Students and Parents:

Welcome to the El Paso Leadership Academy (EPLA)! Our mission is to educate and empower students with tools essential to achieve their self-actualization, academic potential, and success. For this to happen, we must all work together: students, parents, faculty and staff. This Student/Parent Handbook (“the Handbook”) is designed to help us accomplish this goal.

The Handbook is an overview of our school’s goals, services, and rules. It is an essential reference book describing what we expect of our students and parents, what they can expect of us, and how we will achieve our mission. Please note that the term “parent” is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

The Handbook contains, among other things, general information regarding school policies and procedures, including opportunities for parent involvement, important health and safety information, academic policies and the Student Code of Conduct, which is required by state law and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. Both students and parents need to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct. The Student Code of Conduct is also available in the Main Office and is posted on the school’s website.

The Handbook is divided into six sections. The first section includes general information regarding school policy and procedures. The second section is especially for parents, with information regarding parent rights and expectations. The third section provides important health and safety information, while the fourth section provides information about academics and grading. The fifth section is the Student Code of Conduct, which is required by state law and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. Finally, the sixth section contains important notices regarding student information, computer resources, and electronic communication devices.

This Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board Policy. Please be aware that the Handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy and procedure that affect Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters and other communications. In case of conflict between board Policy and any provision of this Handbook, the provision that was most recently adopted by the Board of Directors will be followed.

We ask our parents to review the entire Handbook with their students and to keep it as a reference during the school year. Parents or students with questions about the material in this Handbook should contact the Executive Director-- Daniel Valdez for the East campus and Principal—Esther Alonso, for the Flagship campus.

On behalf of the entire El Paso Leadership Academy staff and community, best wishes for a great  
2023-2024 school year!

## SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

### **HISTORY OF EL PASO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY, INC.**

El Paso Leadership Academy, Inc. - 2010

El Paso Leadership Academy Charter Approval - 2013

El Paso Leadership Academy Middle School Opens Doors - 2014

### **EL PASO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Matt Kerr, President	Justine Miranda, Member
Allan Lindstrom, Secretary	Soledad Basoco, Member
Manny Jemente, Member	Toni Mizdal, Member
Maggie Asfahani, Member	

### **MISSION AND VISION**

El Paso Leadership Academy is a Texas open enrollment charter school whose mission is to educate and empower students with tools essential to achieve their self-actualization, academic potential, and success.

Our vision is to create a nurturing environment as an elite and collaborative organization, that shapes independent thinkers and people ready to make their own rules.

El Paso Leadership Academy ensures college-readiness for all students through a comprehensive approach that includes academics, social development, and exposure to a wide-range of extracurricular opportunities.

### **PILLARS**

EPLA believes that all children have an extraordinary capacity to learn and that the school has the ability to ensure student mastery of the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in college and a career. The key elements of the school that will ensure mastery are:

High Expectations for Students—

students, parents, teachers, and staff creating and reinforcing a culture of high achievement and the expectation that all students will attend college upon graduation.

Strong School Leadership—

effective organizational and academic leadership that creates a school environment that promotes learning and success.

Efficient Instructional Time—

targeted class time for students behind in core academic classes and mandatory intervention/tutoring to ensure that students are on grade level and poised to tackle rigorous preparatory curriculum.

Rigorous College Preparatory Curriculum—a content rich, standards-based curriculum that is aligned with the TEKS and Texas College and Career Readiness Standards.

Ongoing Assessment—nationally-normed diagnostic assessments and interim assessment every nine-weeks in order to analyze student achievement and adjust instruction accordingly.

Immediate Intervention for Struggling Students— identifying struggling students and intervening appropriately in a timely manner

Character and Leadership Development —

The skills necessary for success in college and in the workplace are often overlooked within standardized curriculum. Students must be equipped with the ability to work collaboratively, critically problem solve, utilize public speaking skills, garner effective time management, and learn character attributes like resilience, respect, and independence.

Teachers as Leaders — Teachers are empowered to shape our curriculum and school culture, and to take personal responsibility for providing the best possible education for each student.

Parents as Partners — Parents are viewed as partners in their child’s education. Parents are regularly updated about their student’s progress and presented with opportunities to participate both at home and at school.

Safe and Nurturing Community — El Paso Leadership Academy provides a safe, welcoming environment where students can focus on learning.

## SCHOOL STAFF

### EAST SIDE CAMPUS

#### Campus Administrators

Daniel Valdez	Executive Director
Christopher Gibson	Director of Academics
Karla Cruz	Director of Operations
Paola Ochoa Flores	Dean Operations
Enrique Avalos	Dean of Instruction
Trekenia Waters	Dean of Special Services
Auburn Elliott	Social Worker
Dania Vance	Dean of Students & Culture
Terry Cannon	Dean of College Career Readiness
Lorenzo Borjas	Deputy Director of Sports, Transportation & Recruitment

#### Support Staff

Oscar Maldonado	Facilities Manager
Sonia Gomez	Registrar/PEIMS Clerk



Lucia Torres	Attendance/Nutrition Clerk
Karina Garcia	ESL Aide
	SpEd Aide Paraprofessional
Jazmin Ortega	SpEd Aide

## Teachers

<b>Middle School</b>	
Juan Rodriguez	6th grade English Language Arts
Carlos Mejia	6th grade Mathematics
Jennifer Lopez	6th grade Science
Liliana Garcia	6th grade Social Studies
Jesus Olivas/Logan Rucker	6th grade PE
	6th grade Accelerated Intervention Teacher 6/7th Shared
Abraham Samaniego	7th grade English Language Arts
Jannette Espinoza	7th grade Mathematics
Jessica Chavez	7th grade Science
Andrew Hernandez	7th grade Social Studies
	7th grade Music
	7th grade Accelerated Intervention Teacher 6/7th Shared
Hector Lujan	8th grade English Language Arts
Alejandra Saavedra	8th grade Mathematics/Algebra I
Lorena Lara	8th grade Science
Kristine Martinez	8th grade Social Studies
	8th grade College/Career Readiness/Accelerated Interventions
Jesus Olivas/Logan Rucker	8th grade PE
	8th grade Music
<b>High School</b>	
Karen Castro-Rodriguez	English I
	English II

	English III
	Algebra I/Geometry
	Geometry/Algebra II
Brenda McGarry-Rivera	Biology
	Chemistry
	Environmental Systems
Brandi McGinnes	World History(potential 1 section of Government/Econ)
	United States History
Brenda Villarreal	Spanish I
Diana Guzman	Spanish II
Rocky Ramos	PE
Nicholas Waters	Speech/Health
Pedro Delgado	Music I
Tiffany Hafemeister	Digital Media
	Principles of Business, Marketing and Finance
Sarah Ramos	Entrepreneurship I
Alezzandra Diaz	Principles of Applied Engineering
	Engineering Science
	Digital Electronics
	Path College Career I
	Path College Career II

## FLAGSHIP CAMPUS

### Campus Administrators

Esther Alonso	Principal
Sandra Holguin	Asst. Principal of Instruction
Rebeca Reade	Asst. Principal of Special Education
	Asst. Principal of Operations
Cynthia Hurtado	Social Worker

### Support Staff

Nick Gomez	Facilities Manager
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Erica Flores	Registrar/PEIMS Clerk
Cindy Alonzo	Attendance/Nutrition Clerk
Connie Gyenis	ESL tutor
Nahim Lozano	SpEd Paraprofessional

Teachers

<b>Middle School</b>	
	6th grade English Language Arts
Beth Gallardo	6th grade Mathematics
Justin Lockett	6th grade Science
Cristian Prado	6th grade Social Studies
	6th grade PE
	6th grade Accelerated Intervention Teacher 6/7th Shared
	7th grade English Language Arts
Antonio Baca	7th grade Mathematics
Maritza Schlak	7th grade Science
Deborah Leal	7th grade Social Studies
Liana Moralez	7th grade Art
	7th grade Accelerated Intervention Teacher 6/7th Shared
Amanda Saucedo	8th grade English Language Arts
Mariana Luna	8th grade Mathematics/Algebra I
Rodolfo Soto	8th grade Science
Cynthia Valdez	8th grade Social Studies
	8th grade College/Career Readiness/Accelerated Interventions
	8th grade PE
	8th grade Music

Omar Yanar	CEO/ Superintendent/Founder
Dianne Jones	Chief Academic Officer

**DISTRICT SUPPORT STAFF**

Jose Macias	Federal Programs Director
Arielle Bejar	Network Administrator
Miriam Martinez	PEIMS/Special Programs Coordinator/School Nutrition Director
Yesenia Mendez	Finance Manager/School Nutrition Manager
Sergio Blanco	Data Fellow/District Test Coordinator
Angel Torres	Recruitment/Athletic/Transportation Director

**STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

El Paso Leadership Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, physical, academic, artistic or athletic ability, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status or the district the child would otherwise attend under state law or in providing educational services, activities, and programs, including vocational and career technology programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these requirements:

Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex: Rebeca Reade, Assistant Principal of Special Services for the Flagship Campus and Trekenia Waters, Dean of Special Services for the East Side campus.

Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Rebeca Reade, Assistant Principal of Special Services for the Flagship Campus and Jose Macias, Dean of Special Services for the East Side campus.

**ADMISSIONS POLICY**

STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

Admission and enrollment of students shall be open to persons who reside within the boundaries of the county of El Paso Texas (primary boundary) and who are eligible for admission based on lawful criteria identified in the charter and in law. The total number of students enrolled shall not exceed the number of students approved in the charter or subsequent charter amendments.

Students residing outside the boundaries of El Paso County Texas may not be admitted filling an available space until all eligible applicants within El Paso County who have submitted a timely application have been offered that vacancy and enrolled.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

When making admissions decisions, El Paso Leadership Academy does not discriminate against students on the basis of sex, race, national origin, ethnicity, religion, physical, academic, artistic or athletic ability, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status or the district the child would otherwise attend under state law.

### EXCEPTION TO ADMISSION

As authorized by §12.111(a)(6) of the Texas Education Code, El Paso Leadership Academy reserves the right to exclude from admission a student who has a documented history a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems under the Education Code, Chapter 37, Subchapter A.

### SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION AND ADMISSIONS LOTTERY

Application Deadline: Applications for admission to El Paso Leadership Academy will be available the first Monday of November. The deadline to return completed applications will be the second **Wednesday of April at 5 p.m.** Applications must either be received by the school or postmarked by 5 p.m. on that date to be considered.

Admissions Lottery: An admissions lottery will be conducted if the total number of applicants exceeds the number of open enrollment spots for each grade or as otherwise required by state and federal law. If an admissions lottery is required, El Paso Leadership Academy will conduct the lottery during the **last week of April** or as otherwise reasonably scheduled by the Board of Directors. Each applicant will be assigned a number, and all numbers will be placed in a container and randomly drawn one number at a time in a public setting. Each applicant whose number is drawn will be offered admission. Notification will be made by a letter, which will include a Letter of Intent to Enroll and Register. An applicant must register at EPLA within 30 calendar days of receipt. Failure to timely register said student will result in forfeiture of the applicant's position in the lottery and application process.

Waiting List: Once all enrollment spots have been filled by the lottery, the remaining numbers will be drawn, and the applicants assigned to those numbers will be placed on the waiting list in the order in which they were drawn. If a vacancy arises before the commencement of the school year, the applicant on the waiting list with the lowest number assignment will be offered admission and then removed from the waiting list. The school will notify applicants on the waiting list by phone, and if unable to do so will notify the applicant on the waiting list by mailed letter, which will include a Letter of Intent to Enroll for the applicant on the waiting list to return to the school within one week. Failure to register the applicant within one week will result in forfeiture of the applicant's position in the lottery and application process.

If an application is received after the application deadline has passed, the applicant's name will be added to the waiting list behind the names of the applicants who timely applied.

Lottery Exceptions: Federal guidelines permit the school to exempt from the lottery students who are already admitted to the school; siblings of students already enrolled in the school; and children of the school's founders, teachers and staff, so long as the number of these students constitutes only a small percentage of the school's enrollment. For definition purposes, "siblings" are two or more children that are related either by 1) birth, by me and of the same father or mother, or by 2) legal adoption.

### **STUDENT INFORMATION**

Based on the student's discipline record the students will be admitted to the school. If the student has any discipline problems, the student will need a meeting with the parent and the dean of students & Culture (East campus) or Assistant Principal (Flagship campus). After a student is admitted to the school, the student must include registration documents (birth certificate, social security if applicable, proof of address, copy of an ID and immunization records).

No later than 10 days after enrolling in the school, the parent and school district in which the student was

previously enrolled shall furnish records that verify the identity of the student. These records may include the student's birth certificate, or a copy of the student's school records from the most recently attended school.

The school will forward a student's records on request to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll without the necessity of the parent's consent.

## **RESIDENCY VERIFICATION**

The Texas Education Code authorizes schools to obtain evidence that a person is eligible to attend public schools. To be eligible for continued enrollment in the school, each student's parent must show proof of residency at the time of enrollment.

Residency may be verified through observation, documentation and other means, including but not limited to:

- A recently paid rent receipt.
- A current lease agreement.
- The most recent tax receipt indicating home ownership
- A current utility bill indicating the address and name of the residence occupiers.
- Mailing address of the residence occupiers.
- Home visits and/or visual inspection of the residence.
- Building permits issued to a parent on or before September 1 of the school year in which admission is sought as evidence of residency for the school year in which admission is sought only.

Falsification of information and documentation concerning residency is a criminal offense.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### SCHOOL OPERATING HOURS

The school's main office is open between 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

### DAILY ATTENDANCE

Regular daily attendance is expected of all students, as frequent absences from school have a critical bearing on their educational and emotional social progress.

If a student is late, the student must enter through the school's front entrance and report to the main office to obtain a late pass.

Appointments with doctors and dentists are recommended to be planned during vacation periods, after school hours or on weekends. If a student has to leave school early, their parent/guardian must sign them out of the front office and later provide a note to justify early release. Students will not be released to anyone that is not listed on the child's enrollment card. Identification will be requested.

In the event of an unforeseeable extreme emergency and/or illness, please reach out to Ms. Cindy Alonzo-Flagship (915-298-3900) or Mrs. Torres -East Side Campus (915-298-3901) to make any type of arrangements that involves, teacher, administrator, student and parents.

### COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

Two state laws, one dealing with compulsory attendance, the other with attendance for course credit, are

of special interest to students and parents:

The state compulsory attendance law requires that a student between the ages of six, or who is younger than six and has been previously enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reached age 18 must attend school and certain school required tutorial sessions unless the student is otherwise exempted or excused. School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent from school without permission – including absence from any class, required special programs, or required tutorials – will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action.

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

Notice to Parents:

Under TEC §25.0915, if a student has three or more unexcused absences for three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period but less than 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period the district shall initiate month period, the district shall initiate truancy prevention measures.

Under Texas Education Code § 25.095(a), you are hereby notified that if a student is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six month period in any one school year, the parent is subject to prosecution under Texas Education Code § 25.093 and the student is subject to prosecution under Texas Education Code § 25.094 or to referral to a juvenile court in a county with a population of less than 100,000 for conduct that violates that section.

#### **ATTENDANCE FOR CREDIT (Only pertains to EPLA-High School)**

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered will be referred to the attendance review committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit, if appropriate.

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

- All absences will be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days.
- If makeup work is completed, absences for religious holy days and documented health care appointments will be considered days of attendance for this purpose.
- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district. For a student transferring into the district after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.
- In reaching a decision about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student's parents could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered

the essential knowledge & skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject. • The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

If credit is lost because of excessive absences, the attendance review committee will decide how the student may regain credit. If the committee determines that there are no extenuating circumstances and that credit may not be regained, the student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the Board of Directors by filing a written request with the Chief Executive Officer within 15 days of the last day of the semester. The appeal will then be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The CEO or designee will inform the student or parent of the date, time and place of the meeting.

#### ATTENDANCE FOR PROMOTION

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered will be referred to the attendance review committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit, if appropriate.

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

- All absences will be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days.
- If makeup work is completed, absences for religious holy days and documented health care appointments will be considered days of attendance for this purpose.
- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district. For a student transferring into the district after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.
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- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student's parents could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge & skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject. • The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

If credit is lost because of excessive absences, the attendance review committee will decide how the student may regain credit. If the committee determines that there are no extenuating circumstances and that credit may not be regained, the student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the Board of Directors by filing a written request with the Chief Executive Officer within 15 days of the last day of the semester. The appeal will then be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The CEO or designee will inform the student or parent of the date, time and place of the meeting.

#### **ABSENCE AND LATENESS**

When a student is absent from class and/or school, the student, upon returning to school— **must bring the appropriate justification note within 3 working days of the absence.** The proper note must be signed by either a parent, legal guardian, emancipated student (if applicable), or if the student is over the age of 18.



## TYPES OF ABSENCES

El Paso Leadership Academy recognizes two kinds of absences: excused and unexcused. Students and parents should read this section carefully to understand the school's expectations. Students and parents should also be aware of the school's policy regarding homework, quizzes, and tests following an absence.

### EXCUSED ABSENCES

An absence will be considered excused if the absence is for one or more of the following reasons:

- Appearing at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the student's legal applications.
- Taking part in a student's United States naturalization oath ceremony.
- Documented health care appointments
- Family emergency in regard to illness or death. (Immediate family: Parents, Step-parents, Legal Guardians, Siblings, Adoptive Parents, or Grandparents)
- Juvenile court proceedings documented by probation officers.
- Observing religious holy days.
- Personal illnesses that do not exceed two consecutive days. Illnesses that extend beyond those two days, will require a doctor's note as of the third day.
  - **Doctor's note after absence for illness:** A student absent for more than three consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school upon returning to school. A doctor's prescription note will **not** be accepted as a justification for an excused absence.
- Required screening, diagnosis, and treatment for Medicaid-eligible students.
- Serving as an election clerk.
- Any approved EPLA after hours school activity (college field trips, field trips, sports, out of town etc.) Students in middle school must be in class by 8:30 am. Students in High school must be in class by 9:30 am.
- COVID: Students who obtain a positive lab test result (not a test at home) will be excused the number of days provided by TEA guidelines.

Any student participating in an activity listed below will be allowed one day's excused absence for traveling to the activity and one day's excused absence for returning from the activity. The school will excuse a student from attending school for travel under the following circumstances:

- Appearing at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the student's legal applications.
- Attending a required court appearance.
- Observing religious holy days.
- Serving as an election clerk

### UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Any absence not listed above will be considered an unexcused absence. Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Car trouble
- Traffic
- Oversleeping.
- Personal business (an event in which the legal guardian/parent or student must handle and will prevent the

student from attending school including non EPLA athletics)

- Personal vacations (parents are encouraged to schedule personal vacations during school intercession, breaks, days off and or summers that are provided throughout the school year)
- Leaving school without the permission of the Campus Administrator or other administrator.

### Lateness

If a student arrives within the first 15 min of class, the student will be marked present. A student arriving after the 15 min mark, will lead to an unexcused absence. Excessive lateness after attendance has been taken will be addressed through a progressive discipline format within the Restorative Justice Practices framework (this is up to the discretion of the campus).

## **MAKE-UP WORK**

A student will be permitted 2 days of make-up work including tests, projects and in class assignments in any class missed due to an excused absence. For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within the 2 day period.

A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted the grade will be marked as **zero**.

## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

Students will be assigned literacy homework to increase language proficiency, which includes reading, writing and speaking. The most positive way parents can assist their student to complete homework is by providing the student with a consistent time and place for study, making supplies available, and helping them develop organizational and time management skills so that students can finish and return their homework to school in a timely fashion. Homework should be student work, but parents should proofread all homework before returning it to their child's teacher.

## **EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

1. Students with 3 unexcused absences for any part of the school day will receive a phone call from the advisory teacher
2. Students with 5 unexcused absences will receive a phone call by the attendance clerk and a truancy letter will be sent out.
3. Students with 7 unexcused absences will receive a home visit from school administration and a truancy prevention plan.
4. Students with 9 unexcused absences will be required to meet with the principal, grade level team lead and attendance clerk. Parents/guardians are required to attend.

**Students who reach 10 consecutive unexcused absences will be withdrawn from the campus and will be notified by the registrar.**

### **HIGH SCHOOL ONLY**

### **Attendance and Loss of Credit**

A student shall not be given credit for a class if the student is not in attendance for 90% of the time. Once a student has exceeded the number of absences to comply with the 90% rule the student will lose credit for that class. A student that falls below 75% will go through committee review prior to completed hours, at that time a decision will be made regarding LOC. The student and parent will meet with the Dean of College and Career Readiness and the Attendance Clerk. On an individual basis a decision will be made regarding tutoring to make up for class time. The tutoring will be during extended instructional hours and, if possible, will be in the subject area in which the student is in danger of losing credit. If the absences are unexcused, that factor will determine whether or not the student is allowed to attend tutoring.

### **Loss of Credit**

**Students that have active loss of credit will not be able to participate in the activities below. In the event that the student has loss of credit due to an extenuating circumstance, only the attendance committee will be able to allow students to participate. (ex: illness, bereavement)**

- **Sporting Events**
- **Prom/Homecoming Dance**
- **Fine Art Events**
- **Field Trips**

### **EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

#### **HIGH SCHOOL**

1. Students with 1 unexcused absence for any part of the school day will receive an email from the teacher
2. Students with 3 unexcused absences will receive a robocall
3. Students with 5 unexcused absences will receive a truancy letter
4. Students with 7 unexcused absences will be required to meet with the principal, grade level team lead and attendance clerk. Parents/guardians are required to attend. **Loss of credit contract will be enforced.**
5. Students with 9 unexcused absences will be sent to court.

**Students who reach 10 consecutive unexcused absences will be withdrawn from the campus and will be notified by the registrar.**

## REGULAR HOURS OF ATTENDANCE

### FLAGSHIP CAMPUS

Students should not arrive on campus before 7:30 a.m. Please pick up students no later than 4:30 p.m. unless they are participating in afterschool programs, tutoring or student clubs. If there is a weather emergency, students must wait until campus personnel opens.

DAILY SCHEDULE *(subject to change with notice)*

Middle School Schedule					
6th Grade		7th Grade		8th Grade	
LC	7:50-8:00	LC	7:50-8:00	LC	7:50-8:00
Period 1	8:00-9:30	Period 1	8:00-9:30	Period 1	8:00-9:30
Period 2	9:32-11:02	Period 2	9:32-11:02	Period 2	9:32-11:02
<b>Period 3</b>	11:34-12:34	Lunch	11:34-12:04	Lunch	12:04-12:34
Period 4	12:36-1:33	<b>Period 3b</b>	12:06-12:34	<b>Period 4</b>	12:36-1:33
Period 5	1:35-2:32	Period 4	12:36-1:33	Period 5	1:35-2:32
Period 6	2:34-3:30	Period 5	1:35-2:32	Period 6	2:34-3:30
		Period 6	2:34-3:30		

### EAST SIDE CAMPUS

#### MIDDLE SCHOOL

Students should arrive on or before 7:30 a.m to campus. The school day begins at 7:45 am and ends at 3:30 pm. Please pick up students no later than 4:00pm. unless they are participating in afterschool programs, tutoring or student clubs.

DAILY SCHEDULE *(subject to change with notice)*

Middle School Schedule					
6th Grade		7th Grade		8th Grade	
LC	7:50-8:00	LC	7:50-8:00	LC	7:50-8:00
Period 1	8:00-9:30	Period 1	8:00-9:30	Period 1	8:00-9:30
Period 2	9:32-11:02	Period 2	9:32-11:02	Period 2	9:32-11:02
Lunch	11:02-11:32	Period 3a	11:04-11:34	Period 3	11:04-12:04
<b>Period 3</b>	11:34-12:34	Lunch	11:34-12:04	Lunch	12:04-12:34
Period 4	12:36-1:33	<b>Period 3b</b>	12:06-12:34	<b>Period 4</b>	12:36-1:33

Period 5	1:35-2:32	Period 4	12:36-1:33	Period 5	1:35-2:32
Period 6	2:34-3:30	Period 5	1:35-2:32	Period 6	2:34-3:30
		Period 6	2:34-3:30		

## **HIGH SCHOOL**

Students who are in High school should arrive on or before 8:00 a.m. The school day begins at 8:15 am and ends at 4:00 pm. If a student is assigned a 0 period course, the school day will begin at 7:05 am and end at 4:00 pm. Please pick up students no later than 4:30 p.m. unless they are participating in afterschool programs, tutoring or student clubs.

### DAILY SCHEDULE (subject to change with notice)

MWF		T/TH	
LC/House	8:15-8:30	LC/House	8:15-8:30
Period 1	8:33-9:53	Period 6	8:33-10:33
Period 2	9:56-11:16	Period 7	10:36-12:36
Period 3	11:19-12:39	Lunch	12:36-1:11
Lunch	12:39-1:14	Period 8	1:14-3:14
Period 4	1:17-2:37	Period 9/AL	3:17-4:00
Period 5	2:40-4:00		

Students should arrive at school on time every day and attend classes as scheduled. Teachers cannot provide an effective instructional program for children who are frequently absent or tardy, as students who arrive tardy for class disrupt the learning process.

### **AFTER SCHOOL RELEASE**

Students may remain on school grounds after dismissal until 4:30 p.m. unless they are participating in a school sanctioned after school activity under the direct supervision of a faculty member.

### **LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY**

Students may leave school early with an excused absence. Refer to the attendance section for more details.

To leave school early the parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult must report to the attendance office to sign out the student with a valid ID. The student will then report to the attendance office to be picked up. The student must return all EPLA technology prior to leaving the campus.

## **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

Students remaining on campus after regular school hours for extracurricular activities must be under the direct supervision of a staff member/sponsor. Students participating in after-school activities must be picked up within 15 minutes of the scheduled completion time for that activity.

Participation in after school and extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right. Students who violate the code of conduct may be prohibited from participating in after-school activities, including but not limited to clubs, sports, dances, pep-rallies, and after school trips

In order to be academically eligible for competitive extra-curricular activities such as sports, a student must be passing all classes with a 70 or above.

## **SPORTS**

### **Rule for No Pass No Play.**

#### **Grades:**

A scholar must have passed after the 1st progress report in the 3 weeks after the start of the current school year. Successively the scholar must be passing all classes on their schedule every 3 week period including the 9 week report card period. There is no exemption for AP or advanced courses. ( No courses are excluded).

If a new scholar is enrolled during one of the 9 weeks period, they are eligible to play until the next progress or report card, whichever comes first after the student attends our school.

At the end of the 9 weeks if the scholar is not passing they may not participate in any contest until the course(s) that they failed are showing a passing grade at the end of the progress report following the 9 week report card.

A scholar must show passing grades in the next progress reports following the 9 week report card to continue eligibility or to gain eligibility if the scholar was not passing at the 9 week period.

If a new scholar is enrolled during one of the 9 weeks period, they are eligible to play until the next report card.

#### **Attendance:**

A scholar must show a 95 % attendance rate at the end of the 3 week period to be deemed eligible for a contest or practice.

#### **Discipline:**

If a scholar is placed on academic probation by a campus administrator, it is the duty of the administrator to notify the athletic department of the probation and the stipulation of the probation contract, this will enable the athletic department to notify the respective coach of the decision made by the school administration.

A scholar may be sanctioned from participating in a contest or practice if school administration decides to do so even on the day of a contest due to a discipline issue. The administration must notify the athletic department immediately of their decision in order to have the athletic department and coach make logistical decisions.

A campus principal makes all final decisions or exemption to a scholar participating in a contest or practice as deemed necessary by the principal only.

Administration has the responsibility of notifying the athletic department of any decision regarding scholar participation in contests or practice and must do so in writing and verbal confirmation 1 hour before the departure to any contest or practice.

## **WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL**

A student under 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent or legal guardian. The school requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. Please note that any student withdrawn will be assigned a leaver code of 98 and considered a drop-out until El Paso Leadership Academy receives documentation that the student has enrolled in another entity. The parent may obtain a withdrawal form from the main office.

On the student's last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to each teacher for current grade averages. The Registrar/PEIMS Clerk will ensure to provide copies of health records, the last report card and course clearance; and finally, to the Executive Director/Principal to obtain a signature. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student, and the original copy will be placed in the student's permanent record. Withdrawals will not be offered to parents who have an outstanding fee balance with El Paso Leadership Academy. Outstanding balances must be fully paid to the EPLA Dean of Operations and written notice of payment must be provided to the Registrar/PEIMS Clerk to proceed with Withdrawal paperwork.

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

## **INVOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL**

The school may initiate withdrawal of a student under the age of 18 for nonattendance under the following conditions:

1. The student has been absent ten consecutive school days; and
2. Repeated efforts to locate the student have been unsuccessful.

## **SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY**

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

As authorized by state law and the school's charter, students are required to wear uniforms to school. The school's uniform policy is designed to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, minimize safety hazard, promote team/class level camaraderie and provide a dress standard that offers flexibility for the parent and student. Students must come to school cleanly and neatly groomed and wearing clothing that will not be a health or safety hazard to the student or others and will not distract from the educational atmosphere of the school. Students are required to arrive in a proper school uniform every day.

Parents are responsible for purchasing and providing their student(s) with the required uniform, except in the case of economically disadvantaged students as provided in the Texas Education Code. The school may provide a uniform for economically disadvantaged students. A request for school assistance for purchasing uniforms must be made in writing to the Office Coordinator or Principal.

A parent may choose for his or her student(s) to be exempted from the requirement of wearing a uniform

if the parent provides a written statement that, as determined by the Board of Directors states a bona fide religious or philosophical objection to the requirement

## UNIFORM POLICY AND GUIDELINES

El Paso Leadership Academy's uniform and dress code policy will represent and promote the core values of the academy by eliminating distractions, creating a sense of teamwork and camaraderie.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

The parent/legal guardian and student will have 3 weeks after their first day of school to have the proper uniform that is described below. After the 3 weeks grace period, if a student does not adhere to any aspect of the school uniform (shirt, pants, or belt), they will be referred to a campus administrator.

#### **Polo Shirt with EPLA Logo**

- Grade level polo shirts with EPLA logos must be tucked in at all times. Excessively baggy or tight shirts are not permitted.
  - 6th grade- black
  - 7th grade- green
  - 8th grade- maroon

#### **Pants**

- Students may wear solid black pants or black denim pants with belt loops. Pants should not sag and should not be excessively baggy or tight. Jogger style pants and leggings are not allowed. Pants may not have rips, holes, or tears
- Girls' slacks pants may be mid-calf or longer. All pants must be worn with a belt at all times

#### **Black Shorts**

- Students may wear black shorts with a belt, as long as shorts do not sag and are not excessively baggy nor tight. The hem of the shorts should not be shorter than one inch above the knee nor longer than one inch below the knee.
- No rips, holes, or tears allowed.
- All shorts must be worn with a belt.

#### **Girls Black Skirts or Skorts**

- Girls may wear black skirts or skorts where the hem or slit is no longer than one inch above the knee- this includes uneven edged skirts, where the shortest edge/slit of the skirt must be no shorter than one inch above the knee.
- Skirts/skorts must have no rips, holes, or tears.
- Leggings may only be worn underneath skirts of the appropriate length
- Leggings CANNOT be worn in place of pants; this includes leggings with pockets. Skirts or skorts do not have to be worn with belts.

#### **Shoes**

- Students must wear acceptable shoes to school. Shoes need to be sturdy and safe for lab participation.
- Shoes must meet the following guidelines:
  - Closed toe Firm bottom
  - Heels must be 1.5 inches or less



- No Crocs
- No open toe shoes (flip flops, sandals, etc.)

### **PE Uniforms**

- Students may only wear shirts and shorts approved by the P.E. department
- Basketball or athletic shorts may be no shorter than mid-thigh length. Shorts cannot be excessively baggy or tight.
- Bicycle shorts may be worn underneath appropriate length athletic shorts
- Athletic shoes are permissible
- All EPLA logo PE material is acceptable and encouraged

Students may only wear the P.E. uniform during P.E class. After class students must change to their uniform.

### **CRSHH T-Shirts**

- Students who earn a CRSHH t-shirt may wear their t-shirt with blue jeans on Fridays or days in which CRSHH assemblies are held.
- Students are required to wear belts or have shirts tucked in with CRSHH shirts. They must adhere to all other aspects of the dress code, however, including size and fit of pants (as well as no rips, holes or tears).

### **Headwear**

- Students are not allowed to wear inside the campus the following headwear,
  - Baseball caps
  - Beanies,
  - Hoods (Raised hoods)
    - Unless in case of Inclement weather it can be discussed with administration

### **Outerwear**

- Students may only wear EPLA official student jackets or hoodies only while in-doors. All other outerwear must be taken off upon entering offices or classrooms. Visit the official website for apparel.

### **Free Dress Day Guidelines**

- Students may earn free dress throughout the school year either through awards for outstanding character or academics or as fundraising efforts. Any free dress must be pre-approved by the Executive Director/Principal or Assistant Principal/Deans
- Shorts must follow usual guidelines of length- The hem of the shorts should not be shorter than one inch above the knee nor longer than 1 inch below the knee.
- All shirts must follow same length and fit guidelines, but additionally must have sleeves (e.g., no tank tops or spaghetti straps- shoulders must not be visible), and does not display inappropriate content (e.g., graphics or content related to drugs, alcohol, sex, violence, gore etc.).

### **Prohibited Items**

- See-through clothing
- Facial piercings are not allowed (lip, cheek, eyebrow, any type of nose ring)
- Sunglasses (unless used with prescription)

## **HIGH SCHOOL**

Students who are in high school are not required to wear uniforms to school. However, they must adhere to the dress code provided below. The following guidelines are to maintain a learning environment that allows for student learning and growth. Students are expected to be dressed and

groomed in a clean and neat manner.

### ATTIRE GUIDELINES

#### Headwear

- Students are not allowed to wear inside the campus the following headwear,
  - Baseball caps
  - Beanies,
  - Hoods (Raised hoods)
    - Unless in case of Inclement weather it can be discussed with administration

#### Shirts/blouses

- All blouses/shirts should be of appropriate length (Shirts/blouses should be able to be tucked in)
- Any display of cleavage is not allowed
- No midriffs/crop tops or any shirt that exposes the abdomen.
- No bare backs or bikinis strings
- No shirts that are altered (ex: cutting sleeves)
- No spaghetti straps are allowed
- No strapless shirts/dresses

#### Pants

- Pants should be worn at the waist level, no sagging and must be covering undergarments.
- Jeans are accepted
- No baggy pants are accepted.
- Ripped pants/jeans are not allowed
  - Pants/jeans may not have rips, holes, or tears
  - Even if the student has patchings, leggings under the hole/tear/ripp they are still considered ripped jeans.
- Leggings, spandex type pants (yoga pants), see through pants, tights, leotards are not acceptable

#### Shorts/skirts

- The length of shorts and skirts cannot be shorter than mid-thigh (Arms at side length).
- Shorts must also be worn at waist level.
- Biker/Spandex are not permitted

#### Shoes

- Students must wear appropriate shoes to school.
  - ○ Sandals or slides without a back strap are not allowed
  - ○ Flip flops, slippers, crocs are not allowed
- In lab participation, closed toe shoes are required
- No bare feet are allowed

#### Accessories/Make-up

- Accessories are allowed as long as they do not cause any safety problems or are disruptive to the classroom environment.
- Make-up should not be applied during class time.
- Campus administrators have the final decision regarding safety issues and classroom disruptions associated with accessories and make-up.

#### Prohibited items:

- Any clothing that has vulgar, obscene or offensive language, drug, alcohol, images or emblems
- Any clothing/accessories indicating affiliation with a gang
- See through or translucent clothing
- Exposed undergarments and underwear
- Excessively baggy clothes,
- Any facial piercings (with the exception of earrings)
  - No Lip
  - No Cheek
  - No Eyebrow
  - Nose ring (studs are allowed-No bigger than 2.7mm)
    - Bridge
    - Third eye piercing
    - Septum
    - No hoops
- Long chains or chains on pants
- Pajamas

### UNIFORM AND DRESS CODE RULES

- Students are expected to be in uniform and comply with the dress code from the moment they arrive on campus each morning until they leave in the afternoon.
- If you are not able to furnish appropriate clothing for your child, please contact the campus counselor

Administration possesses final discretion in determining appropriate dress and appearance. Failure to adhere to established dress and appearance codes will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **STUDENT FEES**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to students. Students are expected to provide their own consumable items, such pencils, paper, pens, erasers, and notebooks. Students may be required to pay certain fees or deposits, including:

- A fee for materials for a class project that the student will keep, if the fee does not exceed the cost of materials.
- Membership dues in voluntary student clubs or organizations and admission fees for extracurricular activities.
- A security deposit for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment.
- A fee for personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel although a student may provide his or her own equipment or apparel if it meets reasonable requirements and standards relating to health and safety.
- A fee for voluntarily purchased items, such as student publications, class rings, pictures, yearbooks, and graduation announcements.
- A reasonable fee, not to exceed the actual annual maintenance cost, for the use of musical instruments and uniforms owned or rented by the school.
- A fee for items of personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that become the property of the student.
- A fee for a lost or replacement of identification card.
- A fee for an optional course offered for credit that requires the use of facilities not available on campus or the employment of an educator who is not part of the school's regular staff.

- A fee for summer school courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A fee, for costs associated with an educational program offered outside of regular school hours through which a student who was absent from class receives instruction voluntarily for the purpose of making up the missed instruction and meeting the level of attendance required for class credit, so long as the fee would not create a financial hardship or discourage the student from attending the program.
- A fee for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- A fee for lost, damaged, or stolen technology that is owned by the campus
- Parking and or towing fee
- A fee for any property damaged on school premises including but not limited to graffiti or marking property, windows, chairs, desks, bathroom partitions, sinks, floors etc.
- A fee specifically permitted by any other statute including, but not limited to, reclaiming student cell phones and/or technology for unacceptable use. A fee between \$20- \$50 will be required for claiming the technology.

**Middle School**

- 1st offense- \$20/30
- 2nd offense- 40
- 3rd offense- \$50

**High School**

- a. 1st offense- \$20/30
- b. 2nd offense- 40
- c. 3rd offense- \$50
- d.

The school may waive any fee or deposit if the student and parent are unable to pay. A request for such a waiver must be made in writing to the Registrar/PEIMS Clerk and include evidence of the inability to pay.

**CURRICULUM MATERIALS**

Curriculum materials are provided free of charge for each subject or class. Materials must be treated with care and used as directed by the teacher. A student who is issued damaged materials should report the damage to the teacher.

Students must return all materials to the teacher at the end of the school year or when the student withdraws from school. Any student failing to return issued materials in an acceptable condition loses the right to free educational materials until the damages are paid for by the student and/or parent. However, a student will be provided materials for use at school during the school day. The school may reduce or waive the payment requirement if the student is from a low- income family. The release of student records, including official transcripts, will be delayed pending payment for lost or severely damaged materials.

**LOST BOOKS**

Students should check the lost and found to see if a book was returned. If the student is unable to locate the book, he or she must inform the main office. The main office will then advise the student of the replacement price of the book. Payments must be made to El Paso Leadership Academy and handed to the Front Office Coordinator.

**STOLEN BOOKS**

Students should follow the procedure listed above for lost books if a textbook is stolen. Books left in the lunch area or on school grounds are not considered stolen.

## DAMAGED BOOKS

Textbooks will be inspected by teachers and administrators upon return by a student. The teacher and administrator in charge will assess any damage and inform the student in writing of the amount of any fine-the maximum amount being the full cost of the textbook.

Any book, technology or instructional item issued to the student, is the student's responsibility. Therefore, a fine will be issued based on the level of damage occurred. If a student has not paid the fine, a hold will be placed in the withdrawal and transcript records until full payment is made.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

The Lost and Found is located in the main office. It is recommended that all removable items, such as clothing, lunch boxes and books are labeled with your child's name. Unclaimed items will be donated at the end of each month.

## **FOOD SERVICES**

El Paso Leadership Academy participates in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs and offers nutritionally balanced breakfasts and lunches. Guidelines set by the Texas Department of Agriculture ("TDA") and United States Department of Agriculture ("USDA") are followed to meet the nutritional needs of all students. Menus may be obtained at the main office with the front office staff. Information about a student's participation is confidential. All scholars are entitled to a free breakfast and lunch if qualified.

If your child has special dietary needs, please communicate those needs to the Nutrition Clerk at the student's campus. If you bring lunch to your student during the day, you must drop it off in the office. Parents and students may not deliver meals directly to them such as "uber eats, doordash, postmates, any fast food delivery etc. If the lunch arrives after your child's scheduled lunchtime, the student must generally wait until after school to eat the lunch.

Parents and/or students are not permitted to order food from outside the school, but students can bring lunch on their own.

## STATE-MANDATED NUTRITION GUIDELINES

The TDA places strict limits on any food or drink provided or sold to students other than through the school's food and nutrition services. More detailed information may be obtained at the school office or online at [www.squaremeals.org](http://www.squaremeals.org).

## **TELEPHONE**

Students are allowed to use the telephone in the main office for urgent matters only! Forgetting lunch or homework is not considered an urgent matter. Students who use their cell phone are violating the Acceptable Use Policy and will have their cell phones revoked. They can be reclaimed by parents/guardians ONLY and will be assessed a \$15 fee.

## **ELECTRONICS (INCLUDING CELLULAR PHONES, MP3 PLAYERS, IPODS, VIDEO SYSTEMS AND GAMES, CD PLAYERS, ETC.)**

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

The use of electronic devices during school hours is **absolutely prohibited**. All electronic devices must be turned off and turned in to the AM advisory teacher or upon arrival to campus. Devices include but are not limited to:

- Cell phones
- Wireless headphones
- Smart watches
- Video Game consoles
- MP3 players
- Ipods
- Video systems
- CD players

Cell phones may be used to communicate with parents after they are formally dismissed (e.g., after class, tutoring and clubs). If a school employee observes a student using any electronic or telecommunications device (including a cell phone) during the school day, the employee will collect the item and turn it into the main office. School administrators may power on and search the device if there is a reasonable cause to believe that the device has been used in the transmission or reception of communications prohibited by law, policy, or regulation. The device may be held for up to 30 days and will be returned only to a parent with a fee.

- 1st offense- \$20/30
- 2nd offense- 40
- 3rd offense- \$50

Note: It is a violation of the school's code of conduct to refuse to surrender a cell phone or other electronic device requested by a school principal, teacher, or administrator.

El Paso Leadership Academy will not be responsible for damage, loss or theft of cell phones/ electronic devices or any personal items not secured in the main office. Classroom teacher will secure all confiscated items and turn them into the main office for further security.

## HIGH SCHOOL

The use of electronic devices during school hours is **absolutely prohibited**. All electronic devices must be turned off and turned in to the AM advisory teacher or upon arrival to campus. Devices include but are not limited to:

- Cell phones
- Wireless headphones
- Smart watches
- Video Game consoles
- MP3 players
- Ipods
- Video systems

- CD players

Cellphones and other features (camera, apps etc.) are prohibited in the following areas unless expressly authorized by a staff member for educational purposes: Classrooms, laboratories, bathrooms, physical education areas, changing rooms, and administrative areas of the school. Students must adhere to instruction from EPLA staff members, which can include, but are not restricted to, terminating phone calls and maintaining an acceptable voice and device volume.

Cell phones may be used to communicate with parents after they are formally dismissed (e.g., after class, tutoring and clubs). If a school employee observes a student using any electronic or telecommunications device (including a cell phone) during the school day, the employee will collect the item and turn it into the main office. School administrators may power on and search the device if there is a reasonable cause to believe that the device has been used in the transmission or reception of communications prohibited by law, policy, or regulation. The device may be held for up to 30 days and will be returned only to a parent with a fee.

- 1st offense- \$30
- 2nd offense- \$40
- 3rd offense- \$50
  - After the third offense the fee will continue to be \$50.

Note: It is a violation of the school's code of conduct to refuse to surrender a cell phone or other electronic device requested by a school principal, teacher, or administrator.

El Paso Leadership Academy will not be responsible for damage, loss or theft of cell phones/ electronic devices or any personal items not secured in the main office. Classroom teacher will secure all confiscated items and turn them into the main office for further security.

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

### SCHOOL MATERIALS

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed with prior approval of the Director of Operations. Such items may include school posters, brochures, murals, etc. The school newsletters and the yearbook are available to all students.

### STUDENT NON-SCHOOL MATERIALS

Students must obtain approval of the Director of Operations before distributing, posting, selling, or circulating written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials on campus.

Non-school literature shall not be distributed by students on school property if:

- The materials are obscene, vulgar, or otherwise inappropriate for the age and maturity of the audience.
- The materials endorse actions endangering the health or safety of students.
- The materials promote illegal use of drugs, alcohol, or other controlled substances.
- The distribution of such materials would violate the intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or other rights of another person.
- The materials contain defamatory statements about public figures or others.
- The materials advocate imminent lawless or disruptive action and are likely to incite or produce such action.
- The materials are hating literature or similar publications that scurrilously attack ethnic, religious, or racial groups or contain content aimed at creating hostility and violence, and the materials would interfere with school activities or the rights of others.

- There is reasonable cause to believe that disruption of the non school literature would result in interference with school activities or the rights of others.

Any student who posts material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

#### NONSTUDENT NON-SCHOOL MATERIALS

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials over which El Paso Leadership Academy does not exercise control shall not be sold, circulated, or distributed by persons or groups not associated with the school or a school support group on school premises unless the person or group obtains specific prior approval from the Executive Director/Principal or designee. To be considered, any non- school material must include the name of the sponsoring organization or individual. The requestor may appeal the Executive Director/Principal or designee's decision in accordance with school policy.

#### **FUNDRAISING**

Student clubs or classes, outside organizations, and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fundraising drives for approved school purposes. An application and proper documentation for permission must be submitted to the Director of Operations with final approval being at the discretion of the school's principal, at least ten days before the event. Fundraising activities not approved by the principal are not permitted on school property.

Once the fundraiser has been approved, all money collected should be accounted for. The lead individual responsible for tracking all sales and inventory. All money must be submitted to the Director of Operations or designee. For every \$100, there should be a deposit made by the end of the day (4:00pm). If money is missing or there is suspicious activity, the fundraiser will be stopped and disciplinary action will be taken. receipt

#### Sales

No sale is permitted without the approval of the Executive Director/Principal. If illegal selling of products is found during school hours (7:30 am-4:00pm), items will be confiscated and not returned. Further disciplinary action will be taken.

#### Advertising

Advertising may be permitted for approved school related activities. This may include school newspapers, yearbooks, and other fundraising projects. Advertising material that promotes the use of alcohol and/or tobacco is strictly prohibited. No person may display, solicit, or sell any item or service to students or school personnel while on school property, at school-sponsored events, or on school transportation without the written permission of the Principal/Executive Director.

#### DEMONSTRATIONS OR MEETINGS ON SCHOOL PREMISES (NON-SCHOOL SPONSORED)

Any student who wishes to promote, organize or participate in a non-school sponsored demonstration or meeting on school premises must obtain prior written approval from Omar Yanar, Chief Executive Officer, at least three days prior to the requested activity. This three-day period does not include the day of the request or the day of the activity. The school may prohibit demonstrations or meetings that materially and substantially interfere with school activities or the rights of other students or teachers; are vulgar or profane; might



reasonably be perceived to advocate drug or alcohol use, irresponsible sex, or conduct otherwise inconsistent with the shared values of a civilized order; inappropriate for the maturity level of the audience; associates the school with a non-neutral position on matters of controversy; and/or the school demonstrates reasonable cause to believe that the expression would create material and substantial interference with its educational program.

## **SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION**

### FLAGSHIP CAMPUS

The El Paso Leadership Academy provides transportation to students for the Flagship Campus. Parents must provide written consent for students to board the bus. There are no individual routes created, only pick up and drop off points assigned.

### EAST SIDE CAMPUS

El Paso Leadership Academy will provide transportation for students who will be attending school on the East side Campus. Parents must provide written consent for students to board the bus. There are no individual routes created, only pick up and drop off points assigned.

Students must adhere to the following conduct and safety rules:

- Students should be at their bus stop **ten minutes before pick-up time.**
- Students should stay on the sidewalk and away from the curb while waiting for pickup.
- Please do not litter on the bus or at the bus stop.
- For the safety of all passengers, no large items, including but not limited to skateboards, bicycles, scooters, or oversized bags, will be allowed on the bus.
- Buses come equipped with seatbelts and they are required to be secured at all times while the bus is moving.
- Remain seated while the bus is in motion. Once the bus stops fully, students may get up and walk to the front door.
- Emergency door at the rear of the bus is only to be used for emergencies, not for boarding or departing the bus.
- Please do not mark or deface the bus or its equipment. Driver will inspect seats and surfaces before and after each bus run.
- Students shall be respectful and not use profane language.
- Students shall not bring tobacco, drugs, or alcohol on the bus.
- Students shall not throw food, trash, or objects in the bus or out the windows.
- Students shall keep their arms, legs and heads inside the bus at all times.
- Boarding rules and seating arrangements will be implemented at the driver's discretion. The driver is responsible for

safety and discipline. Violations by students will be reported to the Principal who will take any necessary actions.

- Bus drivers and passengers are subject to audio and/or video recording.
- Riding a school bus is a privilege. The EPLA District has the right to deny transportation to students whose behavior jeopardizes the safety of others.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Parent permission for field trips and the emergency care consent form and emergency card must be completed prior to your child's participation in any field trip. A note detailing each trip will be sent home to parents.

Students attending field trips must recognize that they represent El Paso Leadership Academy and are expected to follow all of the rules of the school. Violation of those rules and expectations on the field trip will lead to disciplinary action and the student will not be allowed to attend subsequent field trips.

## **PART 2: ESPECIALLY FOR PARENTS**

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Schools have the potential to galvanize the energy and spirit of the community. Specifically, EPLA will strive to have parents and community leaders working with the teachers inside and outside the classroom providing extra teaching support during class or helping teachers find outside resources to make lessons more diversified and engaging.

Having the school serve this purpose will allow our students to experience working directly with community organizations on after school projects and allowing them to apply the problem solving and critical thinking skills they learned in their classes to real life situations. Through these efforts, EPLA can be a symbol of progress, hope and renewed vigor for the community. As a result, parents are openly welcome to visit EPLA.

### **PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

Parents are strongly encouraged to volunteer each school year in support of the school, its mission, and activities. More information on how to volunteer including guidelines and volunteer responsibilities, please contact our Assistant Principal of Operations/Dean of students & culture.

### **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK**

All volunteers, including parent volunteers, are subject to a criminal background check prior to volunteering with the school. More information regarding the background check and the required authorization is available through our Assistant Principal of Operations/Dean of students & culture.

As volunteers you are an essential part of EPLA. The time and energy you give to our school greatly benefits all students. Volunteers do many tasks that give our teachers more time to teach and provide our students with increased individual attention. Volunteering is a bridge in building understanding and communication between our school and our community.

The purpose of our volunteer program is to provide positive adult role models and support for students in classrooms, give individualized assistance, and enrich our student’s educational experiences.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer at EPLA. It is asked that parents agree to the following guidelines when volunteering:

“As a parent volunteer at El Paso Leadership Academy, I agree that it is my responsibility to preserve and protect the right of privacy of any child that I observe or have contact within the course of my work at school . I will protect the confidentiality of children by not discussing them with others. I will contact only the child ’s teachers if I have pertinent information that must be shared.”

## **PARENT TEACHER STUDENT ORGANIZATION (PTSO)**

Parent Teacher Student Organization meetings will be held monthly to keep all stakeholders informed of information and events occurring on campus. It is also scheduled to coordinate with EPLA Board of Directors Meetings, which take place the last Wednesday of each month.

### **PTSO PARTICIPATION**

The purpose of the PTSO is to promote close cooperation and unity of spirit among parents, faculty, administration, staff, and students, for the express benefit of the El Paso Leadership Academy. Parent’s opinions and participation is very important to us. We need your feedback and input. Our belief is that EPLA parents are invaluable assets, and their participation is essential to improving student achievement. This organization will allow parents to work collaboratively in leadership roles and share their talents and skills with all stakeholders. The minimum requirements to participate include, but are not limited to attending PTSO meetings, chairing a committee or serving on a committee, providing a few service hours monthly to EPLA and of course that you are a parent/guardian of an EPLA student. If you are interested in participating in the PTSO please contact Dean of Students & Culture for the East Side Campus and Assistant Principal of Operations for the Flagship Campus.

### **SURVEYS AND ACTIVITIES**

Students will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation – funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education – that concerns:

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

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

### **“OPTING OUT” OF SURVEYS AND ACTIVITIES**

Parents have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for their child's participation in:

1. Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
2. School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing or selling that information.
3. Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law.

## **SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM VISITS**

El Paso Leadership Academy will continually seek to involve parents and other family members in every aspect of their child's educational process, including visits to the school or your student's classroom. However, to ensure an orderly school and educational program, we ask you to please observe the following rules when present in the school:

1. Parents should always report to the office when entering the campus during the day.
2. Enter and leave the room quietly.
3. Do not converse with the teacher during class time.
4. If you wish to confer with the teacher, please schedule a conference.

## **CONTACTING YOUR CHILD**

It is the policy of EPLA to take messages for teachers and students while they are in class. Calling a teacher or student out of class is disruptive to the learning process. If you wish to speak with your child's teacher, suggest times when the teacher may return your call. In cases of emergency, a staff member will pass on a message and your child will return your call as soon as possible. DO NOT contact your child via his/her cell phone during regular school hours.

## **VISITORS**

All visitors must sign in with the receptionist in the main office and wear a visitor's badge that is visible at all times while on campus. Upon departure from the school, all visitors must sign-out at the central administrative office and return the visitor's badge.

All visitors—including parents—must present a form of identification (driver's license or other form of identification issued by a governmental entity containing the person's photograph). School personnel shall verify whether the visitor—including parents and volunteers—is a sex offender registered with the computerized central database maintained by the Department of Public Safety or any other database accessible by the school. Any visitors identified as a sex offender shall be escorted by school personnel at all times during a school visit and shall have access only to the front lobby of the campus.

Visitors participating in special programs that have been invited to the school (college representatives, military recruiters, etc.) are required to comply with the school's rules and policies regarding visitors.

## **NOTIFICATION OF TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

At the beginning of each school year, the school will notify the parent of each student attending with information regarding the professional qualifications of their student's classroom teachers. The school

will also provide this information upon request from a parent. The notification will include, at a minimum:

1. Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
3. Undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree; and
4. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

## **PARENT OR STUDENT CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS**

When a parent, student or guardian of a student has a complaint regarding El Paso Leadership Academy the individual shall first bring their complaint or concern in writing to the student's advisory teacher. The complaint must be brought within 10 school days of the date that the complainant knew or should have known of the alleged harm. The complaint must be specific, and where possible suggest a resolution. The advisory teacher must hear the complaint, attempt to remedy the complaint in the best interest of the affected parties, and document the outcome. If the complaint garners administrative attention, the Assistant Principals/ Deans will be notified of said complaint and assist with resolution. The advisory teacher or Assistant Principals/ Deans must respond to the complainant within 10 days of the receipt of the complaint.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

El Paso Leadership Academy will provide a superior educational opportunity to your students. Our success is dependent on many factors, one of which stresses parental involvement in all aspects of the school. The extraordinary volunteer effort of the parent body will be a key component of the success of EPLA and will continue to contribute to the school's success.

The parents of EPLA are the most important and effective ambassadors for the school to reach out to current parents, community members, community organizations, foundations, corporations, and friends. The information contained here is designed to help you be more effective in representing the school and answer basic questions you may have.

Omar Yanar, the Superintendent or his designee, will serve as the primary spokesperson with the media for El Paso Leadership Academy on all matters of school interest.

## **SECTION 3: STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **ALCOHOL-FREE SCHOOL NOTICE**

In order to provide a safe and alcohol free environment for students and employees, all alcoholic beverages are prohibited on school property at all times, and at all school-sanctioned activities occurring on or off school property. Student violators are subject to the disciplinary terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

### **TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOL NOTICE**

Smoking, vaping and using smokeless tobacco are not permitted in school buildings, vehicles, school parking lots or on or near school property, or at school-related or school-sanctioned events off school property. Students may not possess tobacco products at any of the locations or activities listed above. All violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law. Additionally, student violators are subject to the disciplinary terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

## **DRUG-FREE SCHOOL NOTICE**

The school believes that student use of illicit drugs is both wrong and harmful. Consequently, the school prohibits the use, manufacture, sale, possession, or distribution of illicit drugs or a controlled substance by students on school premises or any school activity, regardless of its location. Student violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law, as well as the disciplinary terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

## **ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986 (AHERA) requires all School Districts to notify parents, students, faculty, and other employees annually of the presence of asbestos in our school building and to inform them as to how the Asbestos is being managed. AHERA also requires that the district's Asbestos Management Plan be approved by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

All El Paso Leadership Academy school facilities built after 1986 have adequate documentation to prove that they are free of Asbestos Containing Building Materials and ACBM's are banned from being used in any renovation work as well.

El Paso Leadership Academy's Asbestos Management Plan, for the school facility built prior to 1986, was written and approved in 2022. The plan has been reviewed and updated to include condition assessments, every three years, by a licensed and accredited Asbestos Inspector/Management Planner as required by law. A copy of the District's Asbestos Management Plan is available for review, during normal business hours, in the office of the Compliance Coordinator at 1918 Texas Avenue. The individual Asbestos Management Plan for each school facility is also available for review within 5 working days of request, during normal business hours, in the office of the respective school.

El Paso Leadership Academy will periodically contract with consulting services and an abatement contractor for removal and disposal of Asbestos Containing Building Materials in designated locations as needed, during summer months. Detailed information is available to review in the Management Plans.

If you wish to know more about how El Paso Leadership Academy is managing asbestos in our school facilities or report potential asbestos exposure or concerns, please contact El Paso Leadership Academy's Compliance Coordinator.

## **AHERA**

EPA requires schools to be responsible for a number of asbestos-related activities, including the implementation of a plan for managing asbestos-containing building materials (ACBM) in the school buildings and compliance with the federal asbestos regulations. Under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), schools are required to appoint an Asbestos Manager, called the "AHERA Designated Person."

## **INFORMATION ON ASBESTOS**

Asbestos has been used in thousands of products, largely because it is plentiful, readily available, cheap, strong, does not burn, conducts heat and electricity poorly, and is resistant to chemical corrosion. Products made with asbestos are often referred to as asbestos-containing materials (ACM). Asbestos proved particularly useful in the construction industry. Building materials that contain asbestos are referred to as asbestos-containing building materials (ACBM). Commercial usage of asbestos products in the construction industry was most common from about 1945 to 1980. Some of the most common uses of ACBM include:

- Fireproofing material
- Insulation material
- Acoustical or soundproofing material
- Miscellaneous materials

## **EPA POLICY FOR ASBESTOS CONTROL IN SCHOOLS**

EPA bases its policy for asbestos control in schools on the following premises:

- Although asbestos is hazardous, the risk of asbestos-related disease depends upon exposure to airborne asbestos fibers.
- Based on available data, the average airborne asbestos levels in buildings seem to be very low. Accordingly, the health risk to most building occupants also appears to be very low.
- Removal is often not a building owner's best course of action to reduce asbestos exposure.
- EPA only requires asbestos removal to prevent significant public exposure to airborne asbestos fibers during building demolition or renovation activities.

Asbestos that has been identified will pose little risk if it is well maintained under an operations and maintenance program. EPA requires a pro-active, in-place management program whenever ACM is discovered and is not removed.

- All abatement and removal is conducted according to rules and regulations set forth by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS).
- Not every pipe, floor tile, floor tile mastic, and ceiling tile contains asbestos material, but whether it does or not cannot be determined by the naked eye. Samples of the suspect material (collected by licensed workers) are analyzed under a microscope in a certified laboratory. Every suspect sample is considered positive until proven otherwise.
- Asbestos is removed only when required for renovation, remodeling or maintenance. This usually involves moving ceiling tile, repairing plumbing, replacing flooring or anything else that contains asbestos. It is the responsibility of maintenance operations personnel or contractors to [arrange for inspection and/or removal of asbestos](#).
- Abatement is done inside enclosures to prevent fibers from spreading. Air handling units serving the affected area are turned off until the work is completed to keep the fibers from spreading to other areas. Workers wear respirators and disposable coveralls to protect themselves while working. To prevent any attached fibers from getting into the surrounding air, the coveralls are disposed of when the worker exits the enclosure.
- When a job has been completed, samples of the surrounding air are analyzed under a microscope at a certified laboratory. Based on the results, the area is either cleared or re-cleaned and re-sampled. If the area is declared "clear," it is opened to normal occupancy and all warning signs are removed.

During abatement activities, **All warning signs must be observed and followed.**

## **COVID-19**

As information continues to be released by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Centers for Disease Control Prevention (CDC), the El Paso Department of Public Health, EPLA will continue to review and refine internal processes and create the best plan for our employees and scholars.

Note: Currently, staff members, students and guests are required to wear a face covering while on the premises, before entering campus, and while inside the building. Temperature checks and

screening procedures will also be required prior to entry.

For further guidance, please refer to EPLA's COVID-19 safety protocols.

## **BACTERIAL MENINGITIS**

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

### WHAT IS MENINGITIS?

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

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

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

Children (over 1 year old) and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pains, and drowsiness or confusion. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red- purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body. The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results.

### HOW SERIOUS IS BACTERIAL MENINGITIS?

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

### HOW IS BACTERIAL MENINGITIS SPREAD?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing, sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes). The germ does not cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become carriers of the germ for days, weeks, or even months. The bacteria rarely overcome the body's immune system and cause meningitis or another serious illness.

### HOW CAN BACTERIAL MENINGITIS BE PREVENTED?

Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of people you kiss. While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include when there is a disease outbreak in a community or for people traveling to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. Also, a vaccine is recommended by some groups for college students, particularly freshmen living in dorms or residence halls. The vaccine is safe and effective (85–90 percent). It can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven to ten days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five years.

### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOU OR A FRIEND MIGHT HAVE BACTERIAL MENINGITIS?

You should seek prompt medical attention.

### WHERE CAN YOU GET MORE INFORMATION?



Your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Texas Department of State Health Services office to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), and the Texas Department of State Health Services, [www.dshs.state.tx.us](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us).

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

To protect other students from contagious illness, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. Parents of students with a communicable or contagious disease should notify the Office Coordinator so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease are alerted. Among the more common of these diseases are the following:

Amebiasis Influenza  
Campylobacteriosis Measles (rubeola)  
Chickenpox Meningitis, bacterial  
Common cold Meningitis, viral  
Conjunctivitis, bacterial and/or viral Mumps  
Fever Pertussis (whooping cough)  
Fifth disease (erythema infectiosum) Ringworm  
Gastroenteritis Rubella (German measles)  
Giardiasis Salmonellosis  
Head lice (pediculosis) Scabies  
Hepatitis A Scurvy  
Infections (wounds, skin, and soft tissue) Shigellosis  
Infectious mononucleosis Streptococcal sore throat and scarlet fever Tuberculosis, pulmonary

## **READMISSION TO SCHOOL AFTER COMMUNICABLE DISEASE AND CERTAIN**

### **ILLNESSES**

Any student excluded from school attendance for reason of communicable disease may be readmitted by one or more of the following methods:

- Certificate of the attending physician, advanced practice nurse, or physician assistant attesting that the child does not currently have signs or symptoms of a communicable disease or to the disease's non infectiousness in a school setting.
- Submitting a permit for readmission issued by a local health authority; or
- Meeting readmission criteria as established by the commissioner of health.

Permission from the Nurse and written permission from a physician are required after surgery, stitches, casts, orthopedic appliances, or previous illnesses requiring hospitalization.

## **COLDS**

A student who shows signs of a cold should be kept at home as a precaution. In this way, extended absence may be prevented, and classmates will be protected. Students running fever must stay home 24 hours after the fever has subsided to make sure they are not contagious.

## **IMMUNIZATION**

The State of Texas requires that every child in the state be immunized against preventable diseases caused by infectious agents, in accordance with an established immunization schedule. To determine the specific number of doses that are required for your student, please read the “2019 / 2020 Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Students.” This document and more information about school vaccine requirements are available at the Texas Department of State Health Services (“DSHS”) Immunization Branch website: (click on the “School & Childcare” link) or the information is posted on the EPLA website at [www.epleadershipacademy.org](http://www.epleadershipacademy.org).

Proof of immunization may be shown through personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

## **PROVISIONAL ENROLLMENT**

A student may be enrolled provisionally for no more than 30 days if he or she transfers from one Texas school to another and is awaiting the transfer of immunization records.

A student may be enrolled provisionally if the student has an immunization record that indicates the student has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate vaccine required by law. To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible and provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school. The school shall review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student every 30 days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccination. If, at the end of the 30-60 day period, a student has not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, the student is not in compliance and the school shall exclude him or her from school attendance until the required dose is administered.

A student who is homeless, as defined by the McKinney Act (42 U.S.C. § 11302), shall be admitted temporarily for 30 days if acceptable evidence of vaccination is not available. The school shall promptly refer the student to appropriate public health programs to obtain the required vaccinations.

## **EXCLUSIONS FROM IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

Exclusions from immunization compliance are allowable on an individual basis for medical reasons, reasons of conscience, and active duty with the armed forces of the United States.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student must present a statement signed by the child’s physician (M.D. or D.O.), duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States who has examined the child, in which it is stated that, in the physician’s opinion, the vaccine required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the child or any member of the child’s household. Unless it is written in the statement that a lifelong condition exists, the exemption statement is valid for only one year from the date signed by the physician.

To claim exclusion from immunization requirements for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, a signed DSHS affidavit must be presented by the student’s parent, stating that the student’s parent declines vaccinations for reasons of conscience, including because of the person’s religious beliefs. The affidavit will be valid for a two-year period. Information for obtaining an affidavit for exclusion from immunization

requirements is available at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/> (click on the “School/Childcare Requirements” link). The official DSHS affidavit form must be notarized and submitted to the school office within 90 days from the date it is notarized. The school will accept only official DSHS affidavit forms developed and issued by DSHS; no other forms or reproductions will be allowed. The student who has not received the required immunizations for reasons of conscience, including religious beliefs, may be excluded from school in times of emergency or epidemic declared by the commissioner of public health.

If a parent seeks an exemption for more than one student, a separate form must be provided for each student.

### IMMUNIZATION RECORDS REPORTING

The school’s record of your student’s immunization history, while private in most instances, may be inspected by the Texas Education Agency, local health departments and the Texas Department of Health and transferred to other schools associated with the transfer of your student to those schools.

### **ILLNESS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

Students becoming ill or injured during the school day are directed to report to the Main Office. Parents or other persons designated on the student’s enrollment application will be contacted as appropriate. Students are only allowed to contact parents through the main office. Students contacting parents through their cell phone will have their cell phone revoked and will result in a \$15.00 fee to retrieve.

### **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

Unless otherwise authorized or described below, school employees and volunteers are prohibited from administering medications to students, including vitamins and food supplements. Medication should be administered outside of school hours, if possible. If necessary, medication can be administered at school under the following circumstances:

1. Nonprescription medication brought to school must be submitted to the school by a parent along with a written request. The medication must also be in the original and properly labeled container.
2. Prescription medications administered during school hours must be prescribed by a physician or advanced nurse practitioner (“ANP”) and filled by a pharmacist licensed in the State of Texas.
3. Prescription medications must be submitted in a labeled container showing the student’s name, name of the medication, reason the medication is being given, proper dosage amounts, the time the medication must be taken, and the method used to administer the medication. Medications sent in plastic bags or unlabeled containers will NOT be administered.
4. If the substance is herbal or a dietary supplement, it must be provided by the parent and will be administered only if required by the student’s Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.
5. Only the amount of medication needed should be delivered to the school, i.e., enough medication to last one day, one week, etc. In cases of prolonged need, send in the amount for a clearly specified period. Extra medication will not be sent home with the student.
6. In certain emergency situations, the school may administer a nonprescription medication to a student, but only in accordance with the guidelines developed by the school’s medical advisor and when the parent has previously provided written consent for emergency treatment.
7. If the substance is herbal or a dietary supplement, it must be provided by the parent and will be administered only if required by the student’s Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.
8. Only the amount of medication needed should be delivered to the school, i.e., enough medication to

last one day, one week, etc. In cases of prolonged need, send in the amount for a clearly specified period. Extra medication will not be sent home with the student.

9. In certain emergency situations, the school may administer a nonprescription medication to a student, but only in accordance with the guidelines developed by the school's medical advisor and when the parent has previously provided written consent for emergency treatment.

Changes to daily medications require written instruction from the physician or ANP and written permission from the parent. Parents are responsible for advising the school Nurse that a medication has been discontinued.

### ASTHMA AND ANAPHYLAXIS MEDICATION

Asthma and anaphylaxis are life-threatening conditions, and students with those conditions are entitled to possess and self-administer prescription medication while on school property or at school related events.

Student possession and self-administration of asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school requires the student to demonstrate his or her ability to self-administer the medication to the student's physician or other licensed health care provider and the school nurse, if available. Requirements also include written authorization from the student's parent and physician or other licensed health care provider on file in the school office indicating the student is capable of independently administering his or her own asthma or emergency anaphylaxis medication. Medication in a student's possession must be in an original container with a prescription label. Please note that most pharmacies will place a label on the inhaler device upon request.

### **FITNESS TESTING**

According to requirements under state law, the school will annually assess the physical fitness of students. The school is not required to assess a student for whom, as a result of disability or other condition identified by rule or law, the assessment exam is inappropriate.

### EXCUSES FROM PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Any child who is to be excused, for reasons of health, from physical education or any other normal school activity, must bring a note from home to the school office stating the reason why and the duration of the excuse. This note will be sent to the appropriate teacher.

### **DYSLEXIA AND RELATED DISORDERS**

From time to time, students may be screened and treated for dyslexia and other related disorders in accordance with programs, rules, and standards approved by the State of Texas. Parents will be notified should the school determine a need to identify or assist a student diagnosed with dyslexia or related disorder.

### **VISION AND HEARING SCREENINGS**

All children enrolled in Texas schools must be screened for possible vision and hearing problems in accordance with regulations issued by the Texas Departments of State Health Services. Students in certain grade levels identified by state regulations shall be screened for vision and hearing problems annually.

Screening records for individual students may be inspected by the Texas Department of State Health Services or a local health department, and may be transferred to another school without parental consent.

Exemption: A student is exempt from screening requirements if screening conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the individual is an adherent or a

member. To qualify for the exemption, the individual or, if the individual is a minor, the minor's parent, managing conservator, or guardian, must submit to the Nurse or before the day of admission an affidavit stating the objections to screening.

## **SPINAL SCREENING**

All children in 6th–9<sup>th</sup> grade must be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. The screening requirement for students entering grade six or nine may be met if the child has been screened for spinal deformities during the previous year.

A parent, managing conservator, or guardian who declines participation in the spinal screening provided by the school must submit to the Nurse documentation of a professional examination, which includes the results of a forward-bend test. This documentation must be submitted to the school during the year the student is scheduled for screening or, if the professional exam is obtained during the following summer, at the beginning of the following school year.

Exemption: A student is exempt from screening if the screening conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the individual is an adherent or member. To qualify for the exemption, the student's parent, managing conservator, or guardian must submit to the Nurse on or before the day of the screening procedure an affidavit stating the objections to screening.

## **FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION**

Statement of Nondiscrimination: El Paso Leadership Academy believes that all students learn best in an environment free from harassment and that their welfare is best served when they can work free from discrimination. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. Employees are expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The Board of Directors has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors. The school prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student on the basis of race, color, religions, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law.

The school also prohibits dating violence, as defined by this policy. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of school policy.

Discrimination: For purposes of this policy, discrimination against a student is defined as conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, 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, gender, national origin, disability, 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.

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 or intimidating 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

In compliance with the requirements of Title IX, the school does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The school does not tolerate sexual harassment of a student by employees or other students. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and school employees are prohibited. Any sexual relationship between a student and a school employee is always prohibited, even if consensual. Sexual harassment of a student by a school 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 school 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.

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 the 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 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.

### DATING VIOLENCE

Dating violence occurs when one partner in a dating relationship, either past or current, intentionally uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other partner. Examples of dating violence against a student may include physical or sexual assaults, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the student or the student's family members or members of the student's household, destroying property belonging to the student, threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship, attempts to isolate the student from friends and family, stalking, or encouraging others to engaged in these behaviors.

For purposes of this policy, dating violence is considered prohibited harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

- Affects the 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.

### RETALIATION

El Paso Leadership Academy prohibits retaliation against a student alleged to have experienced discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, or another student who, in good faith, makes a report, serves as a witness, or otherwise participates in an investigation.

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a school investigation regarding discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is subject to appropriate discipline.

### REPORTING PROCEDURES

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited harassment or believes that another student has experienced prohibited harassment should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, or other school employee. Alternatively, a student may report prohibited harassment directly to one of the officials below:

Reports of discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment, may be directed to the Title IX Coordinator. The Assistant Principal of Special Services/Dean of Special Services is the Title IX Coordinator for the school.

Reports of discrimination based on disability may be directed to the ADA/Section 504 Coordinator. The Dean of Special Services for the Flagship Campus is Rebecca Reade, Dean of Special Services for the East Side campus is Trekenia Waters.

The Principal shall serve as coordinator for purposes of school compliance with all other anti discrimination laws.

A student shall not be required to report prohibited harassment to the person alleged to have committed the conduct. Reports concerning prohibited conduct, including reports against the Title IX Coordinator or ADA/Section 504 Coordinator may be directed to the Assistant Principal of Special Services. A report against the Chief Executive Officer may be made to any member of the Board of Directors. If a report is made directly to the Board, the Board shall appoint an appropriate person to conduct an investigation.

After receiving a complaint of sexual harassment, the school may, but need not, require the student to prepare a written report. Oral complaints will be reduced to written form. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Title IX Coordinator or other authorized school official shall promptly authorize and undertake an investigation. When appropriate, the school may take interim action to avoid additional opportunities for harassment. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the person making the report, the person against whom the report is filed, and any others with knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the allegations.

The investigator will prepare a written report of the investigation. The report shall be filed with the Title IX Coordinator or other school official overseeing the investigation. If the results of the investigation establish that prohibited harassment occurred, the school shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the harassment and prevent its recurrence. The school may take disciplinary action based on the results of an investigation, even if the school concludes that the conduct did not rise to the level of harassment prohibited by law or policy.

Confidentiality: To the greatest extent possible, the school shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation and comply with applicable law.

Appeal: A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the school's grievance procedure. See "Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns," within this Handbook. A student shall be informed of his or her right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

### FREEDOM FROM BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING

El Paso Leadership Academy prohibits bullying as defined by this policy, as well as retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process. Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the school that:

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

Conduct described above is considered bullying if the conduct:

- Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and
- Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the School.

EPLA also prohibits cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of any electronic communication device to engage in bullying or intimidation.

### REPORTING PROCEDURES

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced any form of bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to their teacher, or other school employee. A report may be made orally or in writing. Any school employee who receives notice that a student has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the Assistant Principal or Principal.

### INVESTIGATION OF REPORT

The Principal shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited harassment, and if so proceed under that policy instead. See "Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation," above. The Operations Manager (or designee) shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report, and shall take prompt interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.



The Principal, or designee, shall prepare a written report of the investigation, including a determination of whether bullying occurred, and send a copy to the Principal. If the results of an investigation indicated that bullying occurred, the school shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The school may take action based on the results of an investigation, even if the school concludes that the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying under this policy.

**Confidentiality:** To the greatest extent possible, the school shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

**Appeal:** A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the School's grievance procedure. See "Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns," within this Handbook.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

### QUESTIONING OF STUDENTS

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

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

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

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in Section 262.104 of the Texas Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.

### STAFF NOTIFICATION

El Paso Leadership Academy is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been arrested or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors. •

All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.

## **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING AND PROGRAMS**

El Paso Leadership Academy cooperates with official child abuse investigators as required by law. The school also provides training to its teachers and students in preventing and addressing incidents of sexual abuse of children, including knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a child may be a victim of sexual abuse. Assistance and intervention options are also available.

The school's administration shall cooperate with law enforcement investigations of child abuse, including investigations by the Texas Department of Protective and Family Services. School officials may not refuse to permit an investigator to interview a student who is alleged to be a victim of abuse or neglect at school. School officials may not require the investigator to permit school personnel to be present during an interview conducted at school.

Investigations at school may be conducted by authorized law enforcement or state agencies without prior notification or consent of the student's parent, if necessary.

## **PLAN FOR ADDRESSING SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER MALTREATMENT**

### **STUDENTS WHAT IS SEXUAL ABUSE OF A CHILD?**

The Texas Family Code defines "sexual abuse" as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as, in certain circumstances, failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct harmful to a child.

### **WHAT IS OTHER MALTREATMENT OF A CHILD?**

Under state law, "other maltreatment" of a child includes "abuse" or "neglect," as defined by Texas Family Code sections 261.001 and 261.401.

### **REPORTING OBLIGATION**

Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services ("DFPS"). Reports may be made by contacting one of the following:

- Texas Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 or, in non-emergency situations only, g.
- The El Paso Police Department at 915-832-4400
- Call 911 for emergency situations.

### **METHODS FOR INCREASING AWARENESS REGARDING SEXUAL ABUSE OR OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN**

For Teachers: El Paso Leadership Academy annually trains teachers within content areas addressed in the handbook. Training will include contents of board policy and is provided by campus staff, administrative staff, or outside agencies as determined by the campus administration.

For Students: School staff will address issues to increase awareness regarding sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children and anti-victimization programs with age appropriate conversation and materials no victimization programs with age appropriate converless than once per school year. These discussions will occur in classroom group settings for all students.

For Parents: Parents must be aware of warning signs indicating that their child may have been or is being sexually abused or otherwise maltreated. A child who has experienced s e x u a l abuse or other maltreatment should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware, as a parent or other trusted adult, that evidence of sexual abuse or other maltreatment may be more indirect than disclosures or signs of physical abuse. It is important to remain calm and comforting if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing in coming to you.

The fact that the abuser is a parent or other family member does not remove your obligation to protect the child. Parents who permit their child to remain in a situation where he or she may be injured or abused may also be subject to prosecution for child abuse. And if you are frightened for your own safety or that of your child, you should call 911 or 1-800-252-5400.

Also remember that parents are legally responsible for the care of their children and must provide their children with safe and adequate food, clothing, shelter, protection, medical care and supervision, or arrange for someone else to provide these things. Failure to do so may be considered neglect.

The Principal or designee will provide information regarding counseling options available in your area for you and your child if your child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment. DFPS also provides early abuse intervention through counseling programs. Services available in your county can be accessed at the following web address:

[http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention\\_and\\_Early\\_Intervention/Programs\\_Available\\_In\\_You\\_r\\_County/county\\_prog.asp?findcounty=EL+PASO](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_You_r_County/county_prog.asp?findcounty=EL+PASO)

These websites are also helpful:

- Texas Education Agency – Prevention of Child Abuse Overview: [x?id=2820](#)
- Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs:  
<http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/programs/types/sexualabuse.cfm>
- Promoting Healthy Families in Your Neighborhood: /
- Signs of Child Abuse: [1](#)
- DFPS – How to Stop Child Abuse; Texas Statutes: [1](#)
- DFPS – How to Report Child Abuse or Neglect:  
[http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Contact\\_us/report\\_abuse.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Contact_us/report_abuse.asp)
- Texas Attorney General – What Can We Do About Child Abuse? [https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG\\_Publications/txts/child\\_abuse.shtml](https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/child_abuse.shtml)
- Prevent Child Abuse.org – Texas Chapter: [m?stateabbrev=tx](#)
- Texas Council on Family Violence – Abuse Prevention Links:  
<http://www.tcfv.org/>

## LIKELY WARNING SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OR OTHER MALTREATMENT

Psychological and behavioral signs of possible sexual abuse may include:

- Nightmares, sleep problems, extreme fears without an obvious explanation.

- Sudden or unexplained personality changes; becoming withdrawn, angry, moody, clingy, “checking out” or showing significant changes in eating habits.
- Depression or irritability.
- An older child behaving like a young child, for example, bedwetting or thumb- sucking.
- Developing fear of certain places or resisting being alone with an adult or young person for unknown reasons.
- Resistance to routine bathing, toileting, or removing clothes, even in appropriate situations.
- Play, writing, drawings, or dreams of sexual or frightening images.
- Refusal to talk about a secret he or she has with an adult or older child.
- Leaving clues that seem likely to provoke a discussion about sexual issues.
- Using new or adult words for body parts.
- Engaging in adult-like sexual activities with toys, objects or other children.
- Developing special relationships with older friends that may include unexplained money, gifts, or privileges.
- Intentionally harming him or herself, for example, d r u g /alcohol use, cutting, burring, running away, and sexual promiscuity.
- Thinking of self or body as repulsive, dirty, or bad.
- Becoming increasingly secretive about Internet or telephone use. Physical symptoms of possible sexual abuse or other maltreatment include:
  - Stomachaches or illness, often with no identifiable reason.
  - Difficulty in walking or sitting.
  - Stained or bloody underwear.
  - Genital or rectal pain, itching, swelling, redness, or discharge.
  - Bruises or other injuries in the genital or rectal area.
    - Unexplained soreness, pain or bruises around the mouth, sexually transmitted disease, or pregnancy.

Any one sign does not necessarily mean that a child has been sexually abused or maltreated, but the presence of several signs is the time you should begin asking questions and seeking help. Signs often first emerge at other times of stress, such as during a divorce, death of a family member or pet, problems at school or with friends, or other traumatic or anxiety-inducing events.

#### ACTIONS THAT A CHILD WHO IS A VICTIM OF SEXUAL ABUSE OR OTHER MALTREATMENT SHOULD TAKE

During student awareness sessions concerning sexual abuse and other maltreatment issues, students will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in a private and confidential conversation if they have been a victim of sexual abuse or have been in situations that make them feel uncomfortable in any way. School employees are trained to take appropriate actions to help the child obtain assistance and to follow proper reporting procedures. Older students will also be provided with local crisis hotline numbers to obtain assistance.

#### INTERROGATION AND SEARCHES

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that El Paso Leadership Academy is safe and drug free, school officials may from time-to-time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as time conducts searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

Administrators, teachers and other professional personnel may question a student regarding the student's own conduct or the conduct of other students. In the context of school discipline, students have no claim to the right not to incriminate themselves.

Students shall be free from unreasonable searches and seizures by school officials. School officials may search a student's outer clothing, pockets, or property by establishing reasonable cause or securing the student's

voluntary consent. Express or implied coercion

– such as threatening to contact parents or police – invalidates apparent consent.

A search is reasonable if (1) the school official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will uncover evidence of a rule violation or a criminal violation and (2) the scope of the search is reasonable related to the circumstances justifying the search; i.e., the measures adopted are reasonably related to the objectives of the search and are not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

## **ID USE**

Our top priority is safety for all students, personnel and guests, therefore students are required to have their school ID. Middle and high school students will be provided with student IDs. The ID card will authorize entry to the building, it will provide the ability to check out books, and it will be used in the lunch protocol etc. ID cards convey a sense of professionalism and promote college and career readiness.

Note: Staff and student identification is a security concern that would not be jeopardized.

## **DESK AND LOCKER SEARCHES**

Students should have no expectation of privacy in the contents of their lockers, desks or other school property. Lockers and desks assigned to students remain at all times under the control and jurisdiction of the El Paso Leadership Academy. EPLA will make periodic inspections of lockers and desks at any time, with or without notice or student consent. School officials will remove any item that violates school policy or that may potentially be dangerous.

Students have full responsibility for the security of their lockers and desks, and shall be held responsible for any prohibited items found during a search. The student's parent shall be notified if any prohibited articles or materials are found in a student's locker or desk, or on the student's person, as a result of a search conducted in accordance with this policy.

## **VEHICLES ON CAMPUS**

Vehicles parked on school property and property under school control are under the jurisdiction of El Paso Leadership Academy and may be searched at any time if reasonable suspicion exists to believe that the search will result in evidence that school rules or other laws have been violated. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the owner/driver of the vehicle shall be asked to unlock the vehicle and consent to a search of the vehicle. If the owner/driver refuses to permit the vehicle to be searched, the school may contact the student's parents and/or law enforcement officials. A student or the owner/driver of the vehicle may be held responsible for and in possession of prohibited items found in his or her vehicle parked on school property or at a school-related event .

## **PROCEDURES FOR USE OF RESTRAINT AND TIME-OUTS**

El Paso Leadership Academy employees, volunteers, or independent contractors are authorized to use restraint in the event of an emergency and subject to the following limitations:

- Only reasonable force, necessary to address the emergency, may be used.
- The restraint must be discontinued at the point at which the emergency no longer exists.
- The restraint must be implemented in such a way as to protect the health and safety of the student and others.
- The student may not be deprived of basic human necessities.

At no time, however, may a student be placed in seclusion.

A student with a disability may not be confined in a locked box, locked closet or other specially designated locked space as either a discipline management practice or a behavior management technique.

## **DISRUPTIONS**

In order to protect student safety and sustain an educational program free from disruption, state law permits El Paso Leadership Academy to take action against any person – student or nonstudent – who:

- Disrupts classes while on school property or on public property that is within 500 feet of school property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; entering a classroom without authorization; and disrupting the activity with profane language or any misconduct.
- Interferes with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Interferes with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to school property.
- Interferes with the movement of people in an exit, an entrance, or a hallway of a school building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interferes with the transportation of students in school vehicles.
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving school property without authorization from an administrator.
- Uses force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.

## **FIRE**

Fire drills are conducted at least once a month.

## **LOCKDOWNS**

Lockdown procedures will be performed at least once a semester.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

Generally, the school dismisses classes for weather-related events on the same related events on the same

days as surrounding local independent school districts. Any closures for weather will be broadcast on local television stations.

El Paso Leadership Academy may also need to close during certain emergency situations beyond the control of school officials. The announcement of non-weather-related school closings will be announced through phone calls and will also be posted on the school's website as soon as possible.

### **PEST CONTROL INFORMATION**

El Paso Leadership Academy periodically applies pesticides inside school buildings and on school grounds. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Students may not reenter a treated area inside a building or use an area on school grounds for at least 12 hours following application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application may contact our Director of Operations/Assistant Principal of Operations.

### **WEAPONS PROHIBITION**

El Paso Leadership Academy prohibits the use or possession of any firearm, illegal knife, club, or other weapon while on the premises of the school or any school grounds or building in which a school activity is being conducted.

### **CONCEALED HANDGUN PROHIBITION**

El Paso Leadership Academy prohibits the use or possession of concealed handgun on school campus and property, even if the handgun is carried by a licensed handgun holder.

## **SECTION 4: ACADEMICS AND GRADING**

We believe that every student who attends El Paso Leadership Academy and puts forth the required effort will go on to attend one of the top colleges and universities in the nation. In order to succeed academically, students must be excellent readers, writers, and mathematicians. El Paso Leadership Academy students will study all core subject matters (English, math, science and social studies) and have the opportunity to take fine arts and physical education.

### **GRADING SCALE**

EPLA will be using a "Learning Proficiency Grading Scale"; The first chart will reflect courses that are not a part of the Summit Learning platform; Quarter grades will reflect what the scholar has "learned" during that grading period. Therefore, scholars may be asked to complete projects and redo assignments to demonstrate they have learned the TEKS covered during that quarter, so scholars may be working on different assignments within the same teacher's class. This allows for scholars to "learn" at their own pace

before moving on to another concept. Teachers will be mentoring all scholars and ensuring they are moving forward at an acceptable pace. Content “proficiency” will be used to assign grades. Our goal is to have all scholars performing in the “Meets” category. “Meets” is considered performing at their current grade level.

Proficiency Level	Grade Range	Posts as:
“Masters”	90-100	100 (A)
“Meets”	80-89	89 (B)
“Approaches”	70-79	79 (C)
“Developing”	50-69	69 (D)
“Improvement Needed”	Below 50	49 (F)

### GRADING WEIGHTS

The following charts show the default grading weights for Non Math and Math classes respectively. Teachers may choose to slightly adjust these, but require approval from administrators; weights must be consistent from quarter to quarter.

Non-Math Courses	Math Courses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Projects: 80%</li> <li>● Power Focus Areas: 14%</li> <li>● Additional Focus Areas: 6%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Concept Units: 70%</li> <li>● Portfolio Problems: 10%</li> <li>● Power Focus Areas: 14%</li> <li>● Additional Focus Areas: 6%</li> </ul>

### REPORT CARDS

There are two semester grading periods. Report cards will be issued at two intervals during each semester. These intervals are approximately nine weeks in length. Parents are responsible for monitoring the academic progress of their son/daughter throughout the semester.

### TEACHER CONFERENCES

Informal conferences may be scheduled with teachers at any time during the school year and are strongly encouraged. Conferences are a critical part of the assessment process, where parents and teachers have the opportunity to discuss all the academic, social and emotional growth patterns of young adults, as well as to discuss the areas of strength and weakness. Additionally, EPLA believes that our core principles of teaching leadership involve students advocating for themselves and learning to hold themselves accountable. As a result, there will be two student-led conferences throughout the school year, one in the Fall and the other in the Spring. This is an opportunity for students to explain their work, discuss their strengths/weaknesses and create a plan of action for their own success.

### HONOR ROLL

Students can be awarded status on the honor roll at the end of each quarter. Students may be recognized for earning a place on either the A - Honor Roll or A/ B Honor Roll. Students on the honor roll may be



awarded with a special assembly, lunch, or other award.

The goal of EPLA is to reward the growth of our students not only academically, but through the development of their leadership and character development. While there is ongoing character development and leadership training throughout our classes during the year, we wish to recognize students that are growing, demonstrating and excelling within this capacity.

- Collaboration: The 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace has added a new component to any successful individual's skill set. Students should not only be capable of self-managing and being able to complete their individual work, but must also learn to work with one another in order to create a common goal, divide responsibilities and collaborate efficiently to achieve their goal.
- Responsibility: EPLA student leaders should demonstrate the ability to not only solve their own issues, but accept responsibility for their teammates and the school by identifying areas of improvement, creating small groups to address the issues and working towards resolution. This should exemplify an ability to provide service to the student body, teachers and staff of EPLA.
- "Smarts"/Growth Mindset: The antiquated ideology of a static intellect has become scientifically defunct with scientific work conducted at Stanford. The research has demonstrated that students who take academic risks, make mistakes and learn from their mistakes actually grow their intellectual ability and IQ. EPLA honors the intellectual growth of our students by rewarding those who take risks, are not afraid to make mistakes and work diligently to learn and grow continuously.
- Humility: While we aspire for all our students to acquire an unwavering confidence in themselves and their ability, that confidence should be matched with humility. Students should have an understanding that they are life-long learners, that each individual has something special to contribute and that treating others with kindness, respect and with joy is a fundamental characteristic of great leaders.
- Hunger: With the understanding that learning and growing do not stop, student leaders should demonstrate the desire for continuous improvement. Each individual has unique interests and skill sets, and leaders should strive to have an inherent motivation to achieve individual and collective goals.

Students who demonstrate excellence in character may be recognized at weekly CRSHH assemblies and awarded CRUSHH "Builder" t-shirts that they may wear with jeans every Friday.

## **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

El Paso Leadership Academy is a rigorous college preparatory school. It requires 100% effort at all times. Students who fail (below 70 %) math, ELA, or both courses in the first semester will be required to attend mandatory Saturday in the second semester.

Additionally, any student that did not gain proficiency on the state standardized assessment, STAAR, may be required to attend after-school interventions. Students who are academically ineligible will not be allowed to participate in any competitive extracurricular activities.

## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the

subject matters of the grade level. A student who fails (average below 70%) both math and ELA in both semesters will be retained in their current grade level. A student who fails 2 or more courses (not including a combination of math and ELA) may be retained pending a decision by the principal and an appointed academic committee.

In addition, students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be required to pass state-mandated assessments for their grade level. Parents of students who do not perform satisfactorily on their STAAR exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. These students will have two additional opportunities to pass the exam.

If a student fails after a third attempt, the student may be retained at his or her current grade level. The parent, however, may appeal this decision to the Principal. A decision to promote a student will be made by the Principal and a special academic committee to determine whether the student has demonstrated the ability to move forward to the next grade level. This decision must be unanimous. Regardless of whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year.

## HIGH SCHOOL

A student will be promoted based on the acquisition of credits each year. Graduation is dependent upon completing the 26 required graduation credits and passing all required EOC exams (English I, English II, Algebra, I Biology and US History).

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Upon the recommendation of the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (“ARD”) Committee, a student with disabilities who is receiving special education services may be promoted and/or permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her Individualized Education Program (“IEP”).

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

#### WHAT IS ACADEMIC DISHONESTY?

El Paso Leadership Academy values academic integrity very highly and does not permit dishonesty that unfairly or improperly enhances a student’s grade in any way. The following is a list of behaviors that constitute academic dishonesty. If you have any doubt as to whether a particular act constitutes academic dishonesty, ask a teacher before you do it!

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Cheating on Exams
- 2) Copying from others.
- 3) Having or using notes, formulas, or other information in a programmable calculator or other electronic device without explicit teacher review and permission.
- 4) Having or using a communication device such as a cell phone or electronic translator to send or obtain unauthorized information.
- 5) Taking an exam for another student, or permitting someone else to take a test for you. 6) Asking another to give you improper assistance, including offering money or other benefits. 7) Asking for or accepting money or any other benefit in return for giving another improper assistance. 8) Providing or receiving information about all or part of an exam, including answers (e.g., telling someone in a subsequent period what was on your exam, or being told this information).
- 9) Having or using a "cheat sheet" (a piece of paper with answers, formulas, information, or notes of any kind)

that is not specifically authorized by the teacher.

10) Altering a graded exam and resubmitting it for a better grade.

11) Working together on a take-home exam, unless specifically authorized by the teacher. 12) Gaining or providing unauthorized access to examination materials.

13) Downloading information from the Internet and presenting the work product as your own.

Note: Simply having possession during an exam of any prohibited or unauthorized information or device, whether or not it is actually used, is an act of academic dishonesty and will be dealt with as such.

### PLAGIARISM ON PAPERS AND ASSIGNMENTS

1) Including in any assignment turned in for credit any materials not based on your own research and writing.

This includes:

a) Using the services of a commercial term paper company.

b) Using the services of another student.

c) Copying part or all of another person's paper and submitting it as your own for an assignment.

2) Acting as a provider of paper(s) for a student or students.

3) Submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit in more than one course without consulting both teachers (self-plagiarism).

4) Failing to use quotation marks where appropriate.

5) Failing to properly acknowledge paraphrased materials via textual attribution, footnotes, endnotes and/or a bibliography.

6) Making up data for an experiment ("fudging data").

7) Citing nonexistent sources (articles, books, etc.).

8) Downloading information from the Internet and presenting the work product as your own.

### OTHER

1) Misrepresenting your academic accomplishments, such as by tampering with computer records. 2)

Deceiving a teacher or making up a false reason or excuse to get special consideration on an exam or an extension for an exam or paper.

3) Failing to promptly stop work on an exam when the time allocated has elapsed.

4) Forging a signature.

5) Hoarding or damaging library materials.

Note: Attempted academic dishonesty, even if unsuccessful, will be treated as academic dishonesty.

### **COMMITMENT TIME/POWER HOUR/HOUSE AND ADVISORY**

EPLA believes that all of our scholars can learn and that all of our scholars will succeed as four-year college graduates through dedication and commitment. In order to make this a reality, we ask the following:

1. Scholars commit to completing all homework assignments on a daily basis.

2. Families commit to tracking homework assignments in EPLA daily planners and signing nightly. 3. Advisory teachers will check for completion of all homework assignments during morning advisory, as well as parent/legal guardian signature within the daily planner. If a scholar has not completed all assignments or recorded parent/guardian signatures in their planners, they will automatically be scheduled to attend Commitment Time after school.

4. During Commitment Time, scholars will meet with grade level teachers to complete missing assignments and to get ahead on their next day's assignments.

5. During Power Hour/House and Advisory time scholars class time assignments will be altered/modified per teacher discretion.

Families will receive an automated call if their scholar will be attending CT daily by 10 AM. Families may also receive a notification immediately to their phones.

Scholars may also attend CT on a voluntary basis with parent/guardian approval beforehand or may be invited to attend with family permission in order to make up for missed work.

If a scholar misses CT on the day that it is assigned, they will serve the next available day.

## **BILINGUAL/ESL SERVICES**

In keeping with state and federal law, the school offers Bilingual/English as a Second Language (“ESL”) services at all appropriate grade levels for English language learners who are limited in their English proficiency. The school’s goal is to provide additional English language assistance to students, enabling them to become academically successful in all classes. Students are assessed with state-approved Oral Language Proficiency and Norm-Referenced Tests to qualify for placement in the program. If test results indicate either limited oral or limited cognitive academic English ability, the student (with parent approval) is provided additional English language support.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

The school has the responsibility of identifying, locating, and evaluating individuals with disabilities within each campus. If you know or suspect that your child has a disability, please contact the Director of Special Services for information about available programs, assessments, and services.

Special education services are specifically designed to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. Each student who receives special education services has an Individual Education Plan (“IEP”), which is developed by the student’s Admission, Review, and Dismissal (“ARD”) Committee. The ARD Committee considers the student’s disability and determines appropriate accommodations, supplementary aids, and/or services that are necessary for the student to participate in the general curriculum.

All special education services are provided in the least restrictive environment, which may be special education settings, general education settings, or a combination of both. All students receiving special education services are educated to the maximum extent appropriate with their non-disabled peers as well as participating in all school activities on the same basis as students who are not disabled.

The Notice of Procedural Safeguards –Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities, can be obtained from the Special Education Director or the Texas Education Agency Special Education Website:  
<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/>.

## **OPTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS WHO HAVE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES OR WHO NEED OR MAY NEED SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the Special Education Teacher to learn about the school’s overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system may link students to a variety of support options, including potential referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in a regular classroom must be considered for, and provided service from, all

tutorial, compensatory, and other support services prior to a referral for special education services.

A parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. The school will provide the parent or guardian a copy of Parent's Rights and Responsibilities (provided by APSS). If the school determines the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide written consent for the evaluation. The school must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 days of the date it receives the written consent. The school must meet with the parent to explain the findings of the evaluation and must give a copy of the report to the parent.

If the school determines that an evaluation for special education services is not appropriate, it will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs parents of their rights if they disagree with the school. Additionally, the parent will be provided a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities. The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning disabilities or a referral for evaluation for special education is Perla Gutierrez, Assistant Principal of Special Services for the Flagship Campus and Jose Macias, Dean of Special Services for the East Side campus.

## **SECTION 504 SERVICES**

El Paso Leadership Academy provides a free appropriate public education to each qualified student with a disability, regardless of the nature or severity of the student's disability. A "student with a disability" is one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the student's major life activities, has a record of having such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.

An appropriate education is the provision of regular or special education and related services that are (1) designed to meet the student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of students who do not have disabilities are met; and (2) based on adherence to procedures that satisfy federal requirements for education setting, evaluation, and placement, and procedural safeguards.

Qualified students with disabilities will be placed in the regular educational environment, unless the school demonstrates that education in the regular environment with the use of supplemental aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Should an alternate educational environment be necessary, the school shall comply with all legal requirements regarding least restrictive environment and comparable facilities for students with disabilities. In providing or arranging for nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, the school shall ensure that a qualified student with a disability participates with students who do not have disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate.

To be eligible for services and protections against discrimination on the basis of disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, a student must be determined, as a result of an evaluation, to have a "physical or mental impairment" that substantially limits one or more major life activities. If a student has or is suspected of having a disability, or requires special services, parents or teachers should contact the Special Education Teacher for information concerning available programs, assessments, and services. For further information, please contact Perla Gutierrez, Assistant Principal of Special Services for the Flagship Campus and Jose Macias, Dean of Special Services for the East Side campus.

## **SERVICES FOR TITLE I PARTICIPANTS**

Information regarding the school's Title I program may be obtained from Perla Gutierrez, Assistant Principal of Special Services for the Flagship Campus and Jose Macias, Dean of Special Services for the East Side campus.

## **ASSESSMENT AND TESTING**

Every year in the Fall, Winter and Spring, students take the **MAP (Measures of Academic Progress)** assessment in order to determine the students grade level competency within Reading, Writing and Math.

In the Spring, students are given the STAAR Achievement Test, a standardized, criterion-referenced achievement test mandated by the state of Texas.

Results are used in school wide and classroom instructional program planning and evaluation, to align our curriculum and teaching standards with state and national standards.

Certain students may be eligible for exemptions or accommodations to state-mandated exams.

El Paso Leadership Academy believes in its curriculum. We are fully confident that, in teaching our curriculum, standardized testing will take care of itself. Please do not allow yourself or your child to become overly concerned with the STAAR to the exclusion of a love of learning. While the test is an important measuring tool, it is only one of many utensils used to determine a student's skill set.

## **SECTION 5: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

To function properly, education must provide an equal learning opportunity for all students by recognizing, valuing, and addressing the individual needs of each student. In order for students to benefit from the school's academic program, the school must be safe and orderly. This Student Code of Conduct ("the Code") has been developed to foster an orderly and distraction-free environment.

Adoption of a student code of conduct by a charter school is a legal requirement. This Code has been adopted by the Board of Directors and provides information to parents and students regarding expectations for behavior, consequences for misconduct, and procedures for administering discipline. Both students and parents must become familiar with this Student Code of Conduct.

In accordance with state law, the Code will be posted on campus or will be available for review at the CEO's office. The Code will also be posted on El Paso Leadership Academy website ([www.epleadershipacademy.org](http://www.epleadershipacademy.org)). Parents will be notified of any violation that may result in a student being

suspended or expelled from El Paso Leadership Academy.

All students must be familiar with the standards set forth in the Code, as well as campus and classroom rules.

The Code does not define all types and aspects of student behavior, and EPLA may impose campus or classroom rules in addition to those found in the Code. These rules may be posted in classrooms or given to the student and may or may not constitute violations of the Student Code of Conduct. When students participate in student activities, they will also be expected to follow the guidelines and constitutions that further specify the organization's expectations, student behavior and consequences.

## SOCIAL EVENTS

School rules apply to school social events to which students bring guests. Guests are expected to observe the same rules as students attending the event, and the person inviting the guest will share responsibility for the conduct of the guest.

A student attending a social event will be asked to sign out when leaving before the end of the event; anyone leaving before the official end of the event will not be readmitted. The school cannot assume responsibility for students who leave a school activity without permission.

## **JURISDICTION**

El Paso Leadership Academy has disciplinary authority over a student:

- During the regular school day and while the student is going to and from school.
- During lunch periods.
- While the student is in attendance at any school-related activity, regardless of time or location. •  
For any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location.
- For any mandatory expulsion offense committed while on school property or while attending a school sponsored or school-related activity of another district in Texas.
- When retaliation against a school employee or volunteer occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location.
- When the student commits a felony, as provided by Texas Education Code 37.006 or 37.0081; and •  
When criminal mischief is committed on or off school property or at a school- related event.

Note: In addition to disciplinary consequences, misdemeanor and felony offenses committed on campus will be reported to an appropriate law enforcement agency.

## **STANDARDS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT**

The school must be a safe and secure place for all the students attending. Accordingly, each student is expected to:

- Avoid violations of the Student Code of Conduct.
- Obey all campus and classroom rules.
- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline.
- Cooperate with and assist school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline. •  
Demonstrate courtesy at all times.
- Eat lunch and play in assigned areas.
- Follow rules of games and exhibit good sportsmanship.

- Meet school standards for grooming and dress.
- Refrain from fighting.
- Respect the property of others, including school property and facilities.
- Respect the rights and privileges of other students and of teachers and other school staff.

## **DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES**

Our goal is to provide a positive classroom environment that promotes learning and fosters a safe and caring school experience for students and staff. In order to accomplish this goal, students are made aware of the school's expectations for proper behavior during the first two weeks of the school year.

In general, discipline will be designed to correct misconduct and to encourage all students to adhere to their responsibilities as citizens of the school community. Disciplinary action will draw on the professional judgment of teachers and administrators and on a range of discipline management techniques. Disciplinary action will be correlated to the seriousness of the offense, the student's age and grade level, the frequency of misbehavior, the student's attitude, and the effect of the misconduct on the school environment. "Restorative Justice/ Discipline" practices will be incorporated into addressing any minor disciplinary issue prior to other consequences.

The following discipline management techniques may be used, alone or in combination, for misbehavior violating the Student Code of Conduct, campus rules, or classroom rules:

- Behavioral contracts
  - Character-building activities
  - Cooling-off time or "time out"
  - Campus clean-up
  - Written reflection paper or apology letter
  - Public apology
  - Counseling to determine underlying reason(s) for the behavior
  - Expulsion
  - Grade reductions as permitted by policy
  - Detention minutes
  - Parent communication
  - Suspension
  - Parent-teacher conferences
  - Mandatory parent shadowing
  - Referral to an outside agency and/or legal authority for criminal prosecution
  - Referral to the Student/Parent Liaison
  - Reminder of and positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior
  - Restitution for damage caused to or theft of property or materials
  - School-assessed and school-administered probation
  - School-wide recognition and assemblies
  - Classroom seating changes
  - Sending the student to the Student/Parent Liaison or other assigned area
  - Techniques or penalties identified by student organizations and extracurricular activities •
- Confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process
- Verbal correction
  - Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in extracurricular activities and/or membership in school-sponsored clubs or organizations



- Withdrawal or restriction of bus privileges
- Other strategies and consequences as appropriate and necessary

## **OFFENSES AND CONSEQUENCES**

The following behaviors are prohibited at all school and school related activities. While the list is not exhaustive, it provides a comprehensive overview of all behaviors that violate the Code of Conduct.

They are categorized by three levels of severity and each may result in matching consequences.

Major infractions that potentially threaten the safety or health of students or others (possession of weapons, threats to others, the use of a dangerous instrument, possession of, or use of any illegal drugs, etc.) will be cause for immediate suspension or expulsion.

### LEVEL I OFFENSES:

1. Accessing off-limits areas
2. Cheating or copying the work of another
3. Computer systems violations, including violations of the Acceptable Use Policy
4. Defacing or damaging school property, including, but not limited to, textbooks, furniture, and other equipment, with graffiti or by other means, and causing minor damage.
5. Disobeying conduct rules regarding school transportation
6. Engaging in offensive conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, directed toward another person
7. Engaging in threatening behavior toward another person on or off school property
8. Excessive tardies (up to three in any one semester)
9. Failure to attend class or tutorial sessions
10. Failure to complete assigned homework
11. Failure to report harassment or bullying of students
12. Inappropriate physical contact not defined as a Level II or III offense (i.e., horseplay, hugging)
13. Using a cellular telephone or other prohibited electronic device at school during the school day
14. Participation in extracurricular activities during Academic Probation status
15. Possessing matches, lighters, etc.
16. Possessing or searching for inappropriate material on school computers/personal phones
17. Posting materials or holding student gatherings without administrative approval
18. Profanity or obscene gestures (in general, not directed at another person)
19. Use of a skateboard, scooter, and/or roller blades while on school property
20. Violating dress and grooming standards as communicated in the Handbook

### LEVEL II OFFENSES:

1. Two or more Level I offenses within a semester
2. Abusing prescription drugs, giving a prescription drug to another student, or possessing or being under the influence of another person's prescription drug
3. Cheating or copying the work of another (2nd offense)
4. Falsifying records, passes, or other school-related documents
5. Directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward another person
6. Engaging in any conduct that constitutes sexual harassment (See "Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation," page 24.)
7. Engaging in conduct that constitutes dating violence (See "Dating Violence," page 25.)
8. Failure to comply with directives of school staff (insubordination/defiance)

9. Violations of the school's medication policies. (See "Administration of Medication," page 20.)
10. Fighting
11. Gambling
12. Hazing
13. Verbal harassment or bullying of students
14. Verbal or written abuse – i.e., name-calling, racial or ethnic slurs, or derogatory statements
15. Improperly discharging a fire extinguisher
16. Inappropriate or indecent exposure of a student's private body parts
17. Interference with school activities or discipline
18. Intimidating or harassing others
19. Leaving a classroom, school property, or school-sponsored events without permission
20. Possessing drug paraphernalia
21. Possessing or using fireworks, smoke or stink bombs, pyrotechnics, or other explosive devices
22. Possessing, viewing, or distributing pictures, text messages, e-mails, or other materials of a sexual nature in any media format
23. Retaliation in any form against students or staff members
24. Truancy
25. Unruly, disruptive, or abusive behavior that interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students
26. Using the Internet or other electronic communications to threaten students or employees or cause disruption to the school program
27. Willful destruction of property belonging to the school, another student, or a school employee/ volunteer

LEVEL III OFFENSES (Any Level III Offense Can and May Lead to an Expulsion Hearing)

1. Four or more Level I offenses committed in any one school year
2. Two or more Level II offenses committed in any one school year
3. Any offense listed in Sections 37.006(a) or 37.007 (a), (b), and (d) of the Texas Education Code, no matter when or where the offense takes place.
4. Arson, or setting or attempting to set a fire on school property (not arson)
  
5. Assault, sexual assault, aggravated assault, aggravated sexual assault, kidnapping, aggravated kidnapping, robbery, or aggravated robbery
6. Being a member of, pledging to become a member of, joining, or soliciting another person to join, or pledge to become a member of a public-school fraternity, sorority, or gang
7. Bullying and/or cyber-bullying, including intimidation by name calling, using ethnic or racial slurs, or making derogatory statements that could disrupt the school program or incite violence (See "Freedom from Bullying and Cyber-bullying," page 27.)
8. Burglary of a motor vehicle on campus
9. Capital murder, murder, manslaughter, criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder, or criminally negligent homicide
10. Commission of a felony offense listed under Title 5, Texas Penal Code, or any conduct punishable as a felony

11. Any conduct endangering the health and safety of others
12. Defacing or damaging school property, including textbooks, lockers, furniture, and other equipment, with graffiti or by other means, and causing major damage.
13. Deliberate destruction or tampering with school computer data or networks
14. False alarm, false fire alarm, or false report
15. Felony criminal mischief against school property, another student, or school staff
16. Indecency with a child, indecent exposure, inappropriate sexual conduct, or public lewdness, required registration as a sex offender, or sexual abuse of a young child or children
17. Possessing, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of any drug or look-alike substances, drug paraphernalia, non-approved prescription, or over-the-counter medication
18. Possessing, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of alcohol
19. Possessing, selling, or distributing any tobacco or tobacco products
20. Targeting another individual for bodily harm
21. Theft (stealing property belonging to the school or another person)
22. Using a razor, box cutter, chain, or any other object in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury to another person
23. Use, exhibition, or possession of a firearm, illegal knife, club, or prohibited weapon
24. Verbal or physical threats or actions against school employees

## CONSEQUENCES

### IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS)

The following rules and regulations apply to all students assigned ISS:

1. ISS follows the same hours as the regular school day.
2. Although alternate and additional assignments may be given, students are still responsible for completing all regular classwork, homework, or make-up work per the teacher's policies when they miss class for detention.
3. A student who fails to arrive, arrives late, or leaves early from a scheduled ISS without a confirmed excuse will be assigned another day of ISS. If a student misses more than one scheduled ISS without a confirmed excuse, he or she may be subject to further disciplinary action.

Failure to follow these guidelines will be reported to the Principal/ Assistant Principal of Instruction for further consequences.

### OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (OSS)

The Parent/Student Liaison will give the student notice of suspension and the reasons for the suspension.

All students are entitled to conferences, hearings, and/or appeals of disciplinary matters as provided by state and federal law and school policy.

### PROCESS FOR SUSPENSIONS LASTING UP TO THREE DAYS

In addition to the above list of Code of Conduct violations, the Principal has authority to suspend a student for any of the following additional reasons:

1. The need to further investigate an incident,
2. A recommendation to expel the student, or

3. An emergency constitutes endangerment to health or safety.

### PREREQUISITES TO SUSPENSION

Prior to suspending a student, the Principal/ Assistant Principal of Instruction or designee must attempt to hold an informal conference with the student to:

1. Notify the student of the accusations against him/her,
2. Allow the student to relate his or her version of the incident, and
3. Determine whether the student's conduct warrants suspension.

### NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

If the Parent/Student Liaison or designee determines the student's conduct warrants suspension during the school day, the Principal/ Assistant Principal of Instruction or designee will make reasonable effort to notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) that the student has been suspended before the student is sent home. The Principal/ Assistant Principal of Instruction Liaison or designee will notify a suspended student's parent(s) or guardian(s) of the period of suspension, the reasons for the suspension, and the time and place for an opportunity to confer with the Parent/Student Liaison.

### CREDIT DURING SUSPENSION

A student shall receive credit for work missed during the period of suspension if the student makes up work missed during the period of suspension according to the teacher's policies for make-up work.

## **PROCESS FOR EXPULSIONS**

### NOTICE

When the Principal or designee determines that a student's conduct warrants expulsion, but prior to taking any expulsion action, the Principal or designee will provide the student's parent(s) with written notice of:

1. The reasons for the proposed disciplinary action; and
2. The date and location for a hearing before the Principal, within five school days from the date of the disciplinary action.

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

1. May be present.
2. Shall have an opportunity to present evidence.
3. Shall be apprised and informed of the school's evidence.
4. May be accompanied by his or her parent(s); and
5. May be represented by an attorney.

### HEARING BEFORE PRINCIPAL

The school shall make a good faith effort to inform the student and the student's parent(s) of the time and place for the hearing, and the school shall hold the hearing regardless of whether the student, the student's parent(s) or another adult representing the student attends. The Principal may audio record the hearing.

Immediately following the hearing, the Principal will notify the student and the student's parent(s) in writing of his or her decision. The decision shall specify:

1. The length of the expulsion, if any.
2. When the expulsion is not permanent, the procedures for re-admittance at the end of the expulsion period; and
3. The right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Chief Executive Officer, Board of Directors or the Board's designee.

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

### APPEAL TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The student or his or her parent(s) may appeal the expulsion decision to the Board of Directors by notifying the Chief Executive Officer in writing within seven calendar days of the date of receipt of the Principal's decision. The Board will review the audio or transcribed record from the hearing before the Principal at a specially called meeting. The Board will notify the student and his or her parent(s) of its decision, in writing, within five calendar days of the hearing. The decision of the Board is final and may not be appealed. Discipline consequences will not be deferred pending the outcome of an appeal of an expulsion to the

Board.

### NO CREDIT EARNED

Except when required by law, students will not earn academic credit during a period of expulsion.

### EMERGENCY PLACEMENT AND EXPULSION

If the Principal or designee reasonably believes a student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with a teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students in a class, with the ability of a student's classmates to learn, or with the operation of the school or a school-sponsored activity, the Principal or designee may order immediate removal of the student. Immediate suspension may be imposed by the Principal or designee if he or she reasonably believes such action is necessary to protect persons or property from eminent harm. At the time of such an emergency removal, the student will be given verbal notice of the reason for the action and appropriate hearings will be scheduled within a reasonable time after the emergency removal.

### **PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

All disciplinary actions regarding students with disabilities shall be conducted in accordance with the most current federal and state laws.

## **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION REQUIREMENT**

A student with a disability shall not be excluded from his or her current placement pending appeal to the Board of Directors for more than ten days without ARD Committee action to determine appropriate services in the interim. Pending appeal to a special education hearing officer, a student with a disability shall remain in the present education setting, unless the school and parents agree otherwise.

## **GUN-FREE SCHOOLS ACT**

In accordance with the Gun-Free Schools Act, the school shall expel, from the student's regular program for a period of one year, any student who is determined to have brought a firearm, as defined by federal law, to school. The Principal may modify the term of expulsion for a student or assess another comparable penalty that results in the student's expulsion from the regular school program on a case-by-case basis.

For the purposes of this law, "firearm" means:

1. Any weapon – including a starter gun – which will, or is designed to, or which may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive from the frame or receiver of any such weapon.
2. Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer.
3. Any destructive device. "Destructive device" means any explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than 1/4 ounce, mine, or device similar to any of the preceding described devices. It also means any type of weapon – other than a shotgun shell or a shotgun that is generally recognized as particularly suitable for sporting purposes – by whatever name known which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than 1/2 inch in diameter; and any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into a destructive device as described, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

## **SECTION 6: IMPORTANT NOTICES**

### **ANNUAL NOTICE OF PARENT AND STUDENT RIGHTS (ANNUAL FERPA CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (eligible students) certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. These rights include the following:

#### **THE RIGHT TO INSPECT AND REVIEW**

Parents and/or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Office Coordinator a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

If circumstances effectively prevent the parent or eligible student from exercising the right to inspect and review the student's educational records, the school shall provide the parent or eligible student with a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or eligible student to inspect and review the requested records.

The school shall not destroy any educational records if there is an outstanding request to inspect and review the records under this section. The school may charge a reasonable fee for a copy of an education record that is made for the parent or eligible student, unless the imposition of a fee effectively prevents a parent or eligible student from exercising the right to inspect and review the student's education records. The school will not charge a fee to search for or to retrieve the educational records of a student.

If the educational records of a student contain information on more than one student, the parent or eligible student may inspect and review or be informed of only the specific information about that student.

## **THE RIGHT TO SEEK AMENDMENT OF THE STUDENT'S EDUCATIONAL RECORDS**

Parents and/or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student. Such a request must be made to the Registrar/PEIMS Clerk in writing, clearly identify the part of the record the parent or eligible student wants changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. The school will decide whether to amend the record as requested within a reasonable time after the school receives the request. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, it will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.

If, as a result of the hearing, the school decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student, it shall amend the record accordingly and inform the parent or eligible student of the amendment in writing.

If, as a result of the hearing, the school decides that the information in the educational record is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student, it shall inform the parent or eligible student of the right to place a statement in the record commenting on the contested information in the record or stating why he or she disagrees with the decision of the school, or both. If the school places an amended statement in the educational records of a student, it is obligated to maintain the amended statement with the contested part of the record for as long as the record is maintained and disclose the statement whenever it discloses the portion of the record to which the statement relates.

## **THE RIGHT TO CONSENT PRIOR TO DISCLOSURE**

Parents and/or eligible students have the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception permitting disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A "school official" is a person employed by 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; a person or company with whom the school has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.