



**2025-2026**

**STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK**

# **WE ARE A SCHOOL ON A MISSION**

At Pathway Academy, we cultivate an environment conducive for students to become the best versions of themselves through personal connections, individualized instruction and servant leadership.

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# PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION

The purpose of this Student Handbook is to give Pathway Academy students and their parents an understanding of the general rules and guidelines for attending and receiving an education in our school.

The Handbook is organized in the following sections:

- Required Legal Notices and Information
- General Information about Admission, Attendance, and Conduct
- Curriculum and Program Information
- Of Special Interest to Students
- Of Special Interest to Parents

When the Handbook uses “we” or “our,” it means the school district and/or school administrators. When the Handbook uses “you” or “your,” it means the parent, legal guardian, or person who has accepted responsibility for a student, at least in regard to school matters. From time to time, the Handbook will use more general terms, such as “parents” and “school officials.” Regardless of the particular terminology, our intention is to speak directly to you as the adults who are responsible for working with us, the school officials, to make your child’s experience with Midland Academy a positive educational experience.

The Student Handbook has been developed by school district administrators with assistance of teachers, students, and parents. The content is reviewed by the Board of Trustees and is intended to be consistent with formally adopted school board policies. If there is an apparent contradiction between information in the Handbook and a formally adopted board policy, the school administration will interpret the Handbook in a way that is consistent with policy and may request guidance from the Board of Trustees.

**The Student Handbook is not a contract between the school and parents or students.** It can be amended at any time at the discretion of the school district. If the district makes changes to the Handbook during a school year, the administration of the district and the campus will communicate those changes in ways that are designed to inform parents and students of the new or revised information.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Dear Student and Parent:

Pathway Academy provides this Student Handbook to parents and students to provide you with information about the general rules and guidelines for attending and receiving an education in our school.

We urge you to read this publication thoroughly and to discuss it among your family. If you have any questions about the information here, we encourage you to ask for an explanation from the student's teacher or campus administrator.

## REQUIRED LEGAL NOTICE

**Statement of Nondiscrimination:** Pathway Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex or gender, pregnancy, disability, or age in providing educational services, activities, and programs, including vocational and career technology programs. The District complies with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and any other legally-protected classification or status protected by applicable law. Any questions or concerns about the district's compliance with these federal programs should be brought to the attention of the person shown below as Title IX or Section 504 Coordinator.

The Title IX Coordinator for the school district is Thaddeus McCalister, [tmccalister@pathwayhc.org](mailto:tmccalister@pathwayhc.org) and whose office is located at 706 E. 12th Street and who can be reached by telephone by calling 432-213-6986.

The Section 504 Coordinator for the school district is Alisha Daniel, [adaniel@Pathwayhc.org](mailto:adaniel@Pathwayhc.org), whose office is located at 706 E. 12th Street and who can be reached by telephone by calling 432-213-6986

**Homeless Liaison and Title I Participants:** Homeless children and youth are ensured specific educational rights and protections under the McKinney Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001. "Children and youth who are homeless," as defined by this federal law, means and includes children who:

- Are abandoned in hospitals or are awaiting foster care placement.
- Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus, or train stations.
- Are living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of

alternative accommodations.

- Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
- Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Children who are homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain policies and procedures, including proof of residency requirements; immunization requirements; educational program placement; award of credit; graduation requirements; continuing enrollment in the “school of origin” or enrollment in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing; and other related matters.

For more information on services for homeless students, you may contact Superintendent Thaddeus McCalister, [tmccalister@pathwayhc.org](mailto:tmccalister@pathwayhc.org), whose office is located at 706 E. 12th Street and who can be reached by telephone by calling 432-213-6986.

Your campus school counselor, Alisha Daniel, [adaniel@pathwayhc.org](mailto:adaniel@pathwayhc.org) or a social worker can also provide additional information.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act:** The school district creates and keeps general education records for all students enrolled in the district. Those records are confidential and generally are available only to parents and school personnel or other people who are acting on behalf of the school district. When we say “parents” have a right of access to and copies of all education records pertaining to their children, we mean all biological or legal parents—whether married, divorced, or separated—and any other person with whom the child resides and who is acting as a parent in the absence of the child’s parent or legal guardian.

Parents control the access to their children’s education records until the child becomes an adult at age 18. When the child reaches age 18, she or he controls the access to his or her records and is the one who can consent to the release of the records to other persons. However, parents continue to have a right to see and obtain a copy of their child’s education records so long as the child is a dependent for federal income tax purposes, even if the child does not want them to.

If a parent wants to see or obtain a copy of his or her child’s education records, she or he should contact the dean of the child’s school if the child is currently enrolled. If the child has withdrawn or graduated, parents should contact the school superintendent for access to records. Records can be reviewed in the administrative office during regular office hours, from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., and someone will be available to answer questions about the records.

Originals cannot be removed from the superintendent's office. Copies will be provided to parents within a reasonable time after parents have made a written request for copies. Parents will be charged the district's usual copying fees for copies; however, if the student is eligible for free or reduced price lunches and the parents cannot come to school to review the records, the school will provide one copy of the requested records at no charge.

If you disagree with information in your child's records or believe some information is inaccurate, you can ask for a correction. If the principal does not make the correction, you can ask for a hearing with the superintendent to explain why you believe the record is wrong or misleading. If the superintendent does not direct an amendment to be made, you have 30 days to place a comment in the student's record about the information. **Under no circumstances can students or parents use this process to challenge a grade recorded for a student.**

Because parents generally control access to their children's education records, Pathway Academy ordinarily will not permit access to or copies of education records without at least one parent's written authorization to release the records. **However, under some circumstances, the district can and will provide access to or copies of education records without parent authorization. The most common circumstances are these:**

- Pathway Academy will forward education records on request to a public or private school or institution of higher education in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.
- Pathway Academy may disclose education records to a contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other person who is performing services for the school, who is under the school's control related to the use of the records, and who has complied with Pathway Academy limitations on the re-disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records.
- Pathway Academy will comply with a lawful subpoena for student education records, but will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents before complying, unless the subpoena indicates that parents should not be notified.
- Pathway Academy will release directory information about students to any person who submits a written request for the information, as provided in the Directory Information notice included in this Student Handbook.
- Pathway Academy will release educational records to a juvenile justice agency in accordance with an agreement between the district and the agency. The information will be released before the student is adjudicated and will be provided so that the juvenile agency can appropriately serve the student.



- Pathway Academy will release educational records to “school officials,” meaning any employees, trustees, or agents of the school, including persons employed in shared services arrangements or cooperatives of which the school is a member, school volunteers, parents or students serving on official committees, and the school’s legal counsel, who have a “legitimate educational interest” in the records, meaning they are persons who work directly with your child at school or any school activity, including officials involved in disciplinary or academic decisions affecting your child directly, persons who are compiling statistical data for the district, who are reviewing such records to fulfill their employment responsibilities, or who are investigating or evaluating school programs.

If you believe the district is not following the law regarding student records, you have the right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education, Family Policy Compliance Office

## DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows the procedures for requesting information unless the parent or guardian objects to the release of the directory information about the student. If you do not want Pathway Academy to disclose directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing by September 1, 2025.

Pathway Academy has designated the following information about your child as directory information: name, address, telephone listing, school e-mail, address, photograph, degrees, honors, awards received, date of birth, place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, grade level, most recent school attended, security recordings unless used to impose discipline, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, height & weight of members of athletic teams.

**Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment:** We do not require students to participate in any surveys that are funded with any U.S. Department of Education funds that concern the following topics unless you (or your child if he or she is an adult) give us your prior consent. You will also have the opportunity to inspect the survey in advance. If we administer surveys that concern any of these topics that are funded from other sources, we will give you advance notice of the survey, allow you an opportunity to inspect the survey, and give you an opportunity to opt-out of the survey. The topics that are covered by this notice are:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his or her parent;

2. mental or psychological problems of the student or his or her family;
3. sex behavior or attitudes;
4. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of others with whom the responding students have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his or her parent; or
8. income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

**Invasive Examinations or Screenings:** We do not perform any invasive physical examinations or screenings as a condition of attendance. We do perform vision, hearing and scoliosis screenings, as required by state law. Please contact the school nurse if you have questions regarding those screenings.

**Teacher Qualifications:** As a legal guardian of a Pathway Academy student, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Legal guardians may also request, and Pathway Academy will provide in a timely manner, the following information about the professional qualifications of their student's classroom teachers:

1. Whether your child's teacher(s) have met state qualification and licensing criteria for their grade levels and subject areas.
2. Whether your child's teacher(s) are serving under emergency or other provisional status that is less than full state certification.
3. The bachelor's degree major of your child's teacher(s) and any graduate degrees held, and the field of certification or degree.
4. Whether your child receives services from paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

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

**Education:** If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other support services that are available to all students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide consent for the evaluation. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent.

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

Legal guardians may also request, and Pathway Academy will provide in a timely manner, the following information about the professional qualifications of their student's classroom teachers:

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is:

Contact Person: Tara Mallett, [tmallett@pathwayhc.org](mailto:tmallett@pathwayhc.org) Phone Number: 432-213-6986

**Section 504 Referrals:** A student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law, and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"). Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities. When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be created to determine whether the student needs Section 504 services and support in order to receive an appropriate education as required by federal law.

Each school district or charter school must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's or charter school's Section 504 program. Districts and charter schools must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for a legal guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the legal guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure. The designated person to contact regarding options for a child who is in need of 504 services is:

Contact Person: Alisha Daniel, [adaniel@Pathwayhc.org](mailto:adaniel@Pathwayhc.org) Phone Number: 432-213-6986

## **Notification to Legal Guardian of Intervention Strategies for**

### **Learning Difficulties Provided to General Education Students:**

Pathway Academy will notify legal guardians as indicated by the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) guidelines if their child receives assistance for learning difficulties. This information can include details related to intervention strategies. This notice is not intended for students who have been determined eligible for special education services.

**Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English:** A student whose primary language is not English may be eligible to receive specialized support if the student has difficulty performing regular class work in English. A Language Proficiency Assessment Committee ("LPAC"), which consists of district staff and a legal guardian representative, will determine if specialized support is needed for students eligible for these services and, if so, the accommodations or modifications the student will receive for classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-required assessments. If an Emergent Bilingual student receives Special Education services because of a qualifying disability, the student's Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee will make instructional and assessment decisions in conjunction with the LPAC. The designated person to contact regarding options for students who speak a primary language other than English is:

Contact Person: Alisha Daniel, [adaniel@pathwayhc.org](mailto:adaniel@pathwayhc.org) Phone Number: 432-213-6986

**Videotaping of Students:** For safety purposes, including the maintenance of order and discipline, surveillance cameras may be used to monitor student behavior in classrooms, on school vehicles, and in school common areas. Video recordings may be reviewed by school administrators to document student misconduct or investigate incidents, or as otherwise allowed under applicable law.

## **ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT**

**Student's Legal Name:** While we recognize that there are circumstances when a parent may wish his or her child to be enrolled under a name other than the child's legal name, we are required to maintain all school records for your child under the child's legal surname as shown on the birth certificate or other recognized document to prove the child's identity or as shown in a court order changing the child's name.

**Admission, Release, Withdrawal:** Attendance documentation which includes absences, tardies, Academic Progress and Discipline Referrals will be reviewed by the principal or designee at the end of each six-week grading cycle. Any student who has excessive absences, lack of academic progress or repeated violations of the Student Code of Conduct will be required to attend a conference with either the Attendance Committee, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), or Campus Administrator.

The purpose of the Admission Process is to establish a student's eligibility to attend Pathway Academy. Eligibility is determined primarily on whether the student lives in the geographic area served by Pathway Academy and whether the student is in a grade level offered by Pathway Academy. Pathway Academy can reject a student's application for admission if it is determined:

1. that the applicant provided false information on the admissions application;
2. that the later review of the applicant's education records indicates that the student should be placed in a grade level for which there are not spaces available; or
3. that the later review of disciplinary records indicates that the student is disqualified from admissions eligibility.

After the student is enrolled, the formal admission and enrollment process ends. The student is officially part of Pathway Academy, which now has the privileges and responsibilities associated with that student's education.

We do not admit underage students to school.

The application for admission and enrollment forms are official government records, and it is a crime to provide false information of any kind or false records for identification. School officials can ask parents or another adult enrolling a student to provide some evidence that they are bona fide residents of the area which Pathway Academy serves. As required by law, we will record the name, address, and date of birth of the person enrolling a student.

At the time of enrollment, we will request that you disclose whether your child has a food allergy or a severe food allergy (including the food to which the child is allergic and the nature of the allergic reaction) that, in your judgment, should be disclosed so that district officials may take necessary precautions regarding the child's safety. This information is confidential and will be disclosed only to those employees who need the information to appropriately care for your child.

**Acceptance Procedures:** If fewer applications are received than the number of available seats, all students will be offered admission. If more applications are received than there are seats available, Pathway Academy will conduct an admissions lottery.

During the lottery, all applications are randomized and placed in the lottery pool for that grade level. Once all enrollment spots have been filled by the lottery, the lottery will continue and applicants will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which they were drawn. If a vacancy arises before the commencement of the school year, the individual on the waiting list with the lowest number assignment will be offered admission and then removed from the waiting list. If new applications are received after the lottery date, applicants will be placed on the waiting list on a “first come, first-served” order within their priority group. Students offered enrollment will be sent a registration packet via email or through Ascender with instructions for completing the registration.

**Establishing Identification:** Any of the following documents are acceptable for proof of identification and age: birth certificate; driver’s license; passport; school ID card; school records, or report card; military ID; hospital birth records; adoption records; church baptismal record; or any other legal document that establishes identity. If a person enrolls a child under 11 years of age in school and Pathway Academy does not receive appropriate records to establish identification, the school shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency as required by state law and regulation.

**Undocumented Students:** Pathway Academy will not deny admission based on a student’s immigration status. In accordance

**Address 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 Pathway Academy, each student’s legal guardian must show proof of address at the time of enrollment. Address may be verified through documentation and other means approved by Pathway Academy Board of Directors, including, but not limited to:

- Mortgage statement from the last 60 days
  - Lease from the last 60 days
  - Legal affidavit from landlord affirming tenancy
  - Section 8 agreement
  - A copy of the official resident’s most recent bill for electricity, gas or water
- We do not accept cell phone, cable, and insurance bills. Termination notices are also not accepted.

Falsification of residence on an enrollment form is a criminal offense. All custody or court orders pertaining to the family or student must be turned in when asked, or at the time of enrollment, to the extent that such orders pertain to school matters.

**Certain Transfers—Victims of Bullying and Sexual Assault or**

**Students Who Have Engaged in Bullying:** If you believe that your child is the victim of bullying (see the definition in the Student Code of Conduct), you may request a transfer to another classroom. If we verify that your child is the victim of bullying, the transfer will be made. Our decision on this kind of transfer is final and cannot be appealed to the board or any other authority.

If your child is determined to have engaged in bullying of any other student, he or she may be transferred to another classroom. We will consult with you about the transfer before it is accomplished.

## ATTENDANCE

**Release During the School Day:** Students will be allowed to leave school during the school day only with the permission of the dean or someone in the principal's office who has been given the authority to release students. Parents cannot go directly to their child's classroom and take the child away from school during the day. Teachers do not have the authority to let children leave their classroom with anyone. If you need to take your child from school before the end of the school day, such as for a medical appointment or a family emergency, you should go to the school's front office and sign the child out. The teacher will send the child to the front office, and she or he will be released to you at that time.

At the time children are enrolled, the parent or other adult completing the enrollment forms should list those people who are authorized to pick up children during the school day. **Unless the principal has a current court order signed by a current court order signed by a judge, showing an official file stamp with the court, and indicating that a parent's right of access to and possession of his or her child has been limited in some way, the dean will release children to either parent.**

Students will not ordinarily be released during the school day to participate in private lessons or other instruction. If you believe you have a special situation that would warrant an exception to this rule, please contact the campus dean to schedule a conference about your situation.

**Withdrawing from School:** Children who are under age 18 will not be permitted to withdraw from school unless a parent, legal guardian, or other adult with responsibility for the child comes to the school to complete the necessary forms. Students must return all textbooks issued to them and clear any library fines and other outstanding fees in order for the school to release an official copy of the student's records to the parents or to another school district.



**Attendance Requirements:** State compulsory attendance laws generally require all children between the ages of six and 18 to attend school each day that school is in session.

Regular attendance is critical to your child's success in school. It is also critical to Pathway Academy's success because it is a factor in the district and campus rating under the state accountability system and is a significant factor in the amount of state financial aid Pathway Academy is entitled to receive.

**Attendance records, which include daily attendance, tardies, and early-outs, will be reviewed weekly.** If it is determined that a student exceeds a combination of two undocumented absences, tardies, or early outs, within a 6-week period, the parent will be notified by letter and scheduled to meet with the Attendance Committee to explain the attendance issue. Students who fail to adhere to the attendance policy may be withdrawn from enrollment at Pathway Academy or asked not to return the following school year.

Of course, there are times when children are sick or have other legitimate reasons for being absent from school. Regardless of the age of your child, if he or she will not be at school, the parent/guardian must call the school office to let them know of the absences. Upon returning to school, the student must bring a note signed by the parent or medical professional. The principal or someone acting for the principal will make the final decision whether an absence is classified as excused or unexcused. For questions regarding what constitutes excused, unexcused and documented absences, please ask the attendance clerk or refer to the Student Handbook. If the student does not bring a signed note within two (2) days of returning to school, the absence will be classified as unexcused. Students ordinarily will not be permitted to make up missed classwork assignments for credit if the absence is unexcused.

**Doctor and Dental Appointments:** Absences for appointments with doctors, dentists, orthodontists, physical therapists, and other health care professionals will be classified as excused absences if the student returns to school on the same day as the appointment and presents a note from the health care provider stating the time of the appointment and the time the student left the doctor's office. If the appointment is at the end of the school day and the student has been at school all day up to that time, the absence will be excused if the student brings a note from the health care provider within 2 days. These excused absences include those for a student diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder to attend appointments with health care practitioners to receive a generally recognized service for persons with that diagnosis, such as applied behavioral analysis, speech therapy, and occupational therapy.



**Religious Holidays:** Absences for religious holy days, including up to two days of travel time if necessary, will be classified as excused absences.

**Court Appearances:** Absences for required court appearances will be classified as excused absences upon presentation to the campus attendance official of a copy of the document requiring the student's appearance in court.

**Citizenship/Naturalization Activities:** Absences for appearing at a government office to complete citizenship application paperwork and for taking part in a United States naturalization oath ceremony will be excused upon verification of the student's participation.

### **Attendance and Credit:**

Separate and apart from the compulsory attendance requirements, students must attend school a certain amount of time in order to get credit for their academic work. State law generally requires students to be "in attendance" for at least 90 percent of the days a class is taught during a semester or year. The attendance for credit standard for Pathway Academy is 95 percent of the days a class is taught during a semester or year. All absences from class, excused or unexcused, are counted in determining whether a student has met attendance for credit requirements.

In the 2025-2026 school year, we require students to be in class for 183 days to meet the 95% attendance for credit requirements. Pathway Academy has an attendance committee that will review student attendance records. If the committee decides that extenuating circumstances prevented a student from meeting the minimum attendance for credit standard or fulfilling the principal's plan for meeting instructional requirements, the committee can award credit or tell the student what additional work, additional time, or both time and work must be completed in order for the student to get credit for the grade level or course.

You will be notified when your child is in danger of losing credit because of absences and will have the opportunity to meet with the attendance committee to discuss your child's situation.

**Release During the School Day:** Students will be allowed to leave school during the school day only with the permission of the principal or someone in the principal's office who has been given the authority to release students. Parents cannot go directly to their child's classroom and take the child away from school during the day. Teachers do not have the authority to let children leave their classroom with anyone. If you need to take your child from school before the end of the school day, such as for a medical

appointment or a family emergency, you should go to the school's front office and sign the child out. The teacher will send the child to the front office, and she or he will be released to you at that time.

At the time children are enrolled, the parent or other adult completing the enrollment forms should list those people who are authorized to pick up children during the school day. **Unless the principal has a current court order signed by a judge, showing an official file stamp with the court, and indicating that a parent's right of access to and possession of his or her child has been limited in some way, the dean will release children to either parent.**

Students will not ordinarily be released during the school day to participate in private lessons or other instruction. If you believe you have a special situation that would warrant an exception to this rule, please contact the campus principal to schedule a conference about your situation.

## CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Along with this Student Handbook, your child has also received a copy of the Pathway Academy Student Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct contains the school district's requirements for student conduct and behavior while at school or under the school's jurisdiction. The Code of Conduct also explains the kinds of disciplinary action school officials can take in response to violations of the rules for student conduct and the steps involved in taking disciplinary action. If you have any questions about conduct or discipline rules, please refer to the Code of Conduct or call your child's principal.

### Trust Pass:

Students who demonstrate consistent responsibility, respect and positive behavior may be issued a Trust Pass by staff or administration. A Trust Pass refers to a privilege or hall pass given to students who have earned the school's trust. This pass allows independent movement in designated areas of the school during approved times (such as bathroom breaks or running errands for staff).

Misuse of the Trust Pass - such as accessing unauthorized areas, extending time beyond what is reasonable, or using the pass to avoid class - will result in loss of the privilege.

### Personal Electronic Devices:

Personal electronic devices (i.e. cell phones, tablets, smart watches) are not allowed during the instructional day. Students may bring these items to school; however, the

homeroom teacher will collect devices at the beginning of the day and return them before dismissal.

## **Harassment or Bullying of Students:**

We prohibit students from sexually harassing other students and from sexually harassing employees; we also prohibit harassment based on anyone's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, or disability. Likewise, we prohibit students from bullying each other. Engaging in harassment or in bullying is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

We, of course, prohibit employees from having any kind of sexual contact or romantic relationship with students enrolled in our schools, even if the student is willing and the parents do not object. See the Student Code of Conduct for a complete description of the offense of "harassment" and possible disciplinary consequences.

If you or your child have a complaint about sexual comments, conduct, contact, or any other inappropriate conduct by a school employee or about any other kind of harassment or bullying, do not hesitate to contact the Title IX coordinator whose name appears at the beginning of this Handbook regarding sexual harassment or regarding any other harassment or bullying. We will listen to your concern and conduct a prompt investigation, if warranted based on the allegations. We will also look into reports if other students have been making sexual or other harassing comments to or engaging in bullying or sexual or other inappropriate conduct or contact with your child at school or school activities and take appropriate disciplinary action according to the requirements of the Code of Conduct.

Although we will provide you a general report of the results of our investigation of harassment complaints, the same federal law that protects the confidentiality of information about your child (see Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, page 6) protects the confidentiality of information about the student you reported for investigation. In other words, we will not ordinarily disclose to you the specific discipline imposed on another student, unless that student's parents give us permission to disclose that information. If the complaint is about an employee's conduct, we will inform you of the results of the investigation and of the general action taken in response if there is a finding of wrong-doing on the employee's part.

Copies of the complete policies and procedures addressing prohibited bullying, harassment, or retaliation and the process for making reports or complaints related to alleged harassment or retaliation are included on Pathway Academy's website at [www.pathwayhc.org](http://www.pathwayhc.org).

**Desk and Backpack Searches:** Students should have no expectation of privacy in the contents of their backpacks, desks, or other school property. Desks assigned to students remain at all times under the control and jurisdiction of Pathway Academy. Pathway Academy will make periodic inspections of desks at any time, with or without notice or student consent. School officials will remove any item that violates Pathway Academy policy or that may potentially be dangerous. Students have full responsibility for the security of their backpacks and desks and shall be held responsible for any prohibited items found in them. A student's legal guardian shall be notified if any prohibited articles or materials are found in a student's locker or desk, or on the student's person.

**Searches of Students and Vehicles on School Property:** The principal or other school administrator can search a student's outer clothing, pockets, or property if she or he has a reasonable basis to suspect that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated a school rule. The scope of the search will be related to the suspected violation.

Vehicles parked on school property are also subject to search by the principal or other school administrators if the administrator has a reasonable basis to suspect that there may be contraband of any kind, such as weapons, alcohol, drugs, or any other prohibited substance, in the car.

**Questioning Students at School:** As school officials, we have the right to question your child about his or her own conduct at school and, in the investigation of alleged misconduct by other students or employees, to question him or her about the conduct of others. We expect students to cooperate in this process, and the refusal to cooperate will be treated as insubordination and disciplined accordingly. We will not ordinarily contact you before questioning your child about his or her own conduct or about the conduct of other students or employees, but certainly will contact you as provided in the Student Code of Conduct if our investigation shows that your child has violated school conduct rules. The Code of Conduct provides a complete explanation of the discipline processes and when you will be contacted. Our investigation of possible violations of the Code of Conduct is not a criminal proceeding, and there is no such thing as "taking the Fifth" or a student's right not to incriminate himself or herself in a school discipline investigation.

Sometimes law enforcement officials or investigators from Child Protective Services (CPS) ask to interview students at school. In the case of an investigator from Child Protective Services conducting a child abuse or neglect investigation, we are required by state law to permit the investigator to talk to the child at school. We will also make

every effort to cooperate with law enforcement officials conducting an investigation that requires talking to students.

Ordinarily, we will attempt to contact you before the interview by an outside person takes place. However, if the CPS investigator or the law enforcement official asks or tells us not to contact you, we will comply.

**Pledges, Moment of Silence, Prayer, and Meditation:** Each day students will be led in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and to the Texas flag. If you do not want your child to participate in this activity, please make a written request to the dean for your child to be excused. Following the recitation of the pledges, the school will observe a minute of silence. During this time, students may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that is not likely to interfere with or distract other students.

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school or at any school activity in a manner that does not disrupt or interfere with the delivery of instruction or other activities in the school. No school employee can or will require, encourage, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

## **STANDARD ATTIRE FOR STUDENTS**

### **Students' clothing**

Students' clothing should be casual and comfortable for the purposes of health and warmth. It is always appropriate for students to present themselves well by dressing in an appropriate manner. Clothing that distracts from instructional process and/or is unsafe, is unacceptable

## **CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMS**

**General Curriculum Information:** Pathway Academy operates a 7th - 9th Grade program that meets all state curriculum requirements.

**Structured Physical Activity:** In accordance with state law, we ensure that all students in junior high school engage in the amount and level of physical activity required by the State Board of Education. Students engage in physical education classes and daily recess periods.

**Special Programs:** To meet the requirements of state and federal law, we also offer several programs designed to meet specific needs of some of our students. We identify students as eligible for one or more of these programs based on assessments made after referrals and recommendations from teachers and counselors and will always inform you about the program beforehand. We also can identify students based on an assessment after a request or referral from you. If you have any questions about the referral and identification process for any of the following programs, please contact your child's teacher(s), or the campus principal.

**Special Education:** Pathway Academy provides special education and related services for students with disabilities according to individualized plans developed by teachers, parents, counselors, and other professionals. You may request an evaluation of your child to determine eligibility for special education at any time. Please note that a request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Districts and charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline. We decide whether a student needs special education after we complete a comprehensive assessment. Please contact Tara Mallet, [tmallet@pathwayhc.org](mailto:tmallet@pathwayhc.org), at 432-213-6986 to receive full information about our special education programs. See also the required Notice at the beginning of this Handbook.

**Special Education Referrals:** If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special education services or an administrative employee of the school district or open enrollment charter school, the district or charter school must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district or charter school must give the parent a prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards. If the school district or charter school agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

Please note that a request for a special education evaluation must be made in writing. Districts and charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.

If the district or charter school decides to evaluate the student, it must complete the student's initial evaluation and evaluation report no later than 45 school days from the day it receives a parent's written consent to evaluate the student. However, if the student is absent from school during the evaluation period for three or more school days, the evaluation period will be extended by the number of school days equal to the number of school days that the student is absent.

There is an exception to the 45-school-day timeline. If a district or charter school receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, it must complete the written report and provide a copy of the report to the parent by June 30 of that year. However, if the student is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30th due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply.

Upon completing the evaluation, the district or charter school must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

Additional information regarding special education is available from the district or charter school in a companion document titled Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process.

Additional Information:

The following websites provide information and resources for students with disabilities and their families.

- [Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process](#)
- [Partners Resource Network](#)
- [Special Education Information Center](#)
- [Texas Project First](#)

**Section 504:** Some students who are not eligible for special education and related services may also have disabilities that interfere with their ability to benefit from the regular school program. A committee of educators who have knowledge of the student and his or her needs and limitations will determine what accommodations to the regular method and requirements of instruction are necessary in order for the student to participate. Please contact Alisha Daniel, [adaniel@pathwayhc.org](mailto:adaniel@pathwayhc.org) to receive full information about the school's Section 504 program.

## **Aiding Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need**



**Special Education or Section 504 Services:** For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts and open enrollment charter schools must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). The implementation of MTSS has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts and charter schools to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parents may contact the individual(s) listed below to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine if the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

**English as a Second Language:** English is the basic language of instruction in our schools. Children who have limited English-speaking skills will have access to programs to help them learn to understand, speak, read, and write the English language. At the time you enroll your children for the first time, you will be asked to complete a Home Language Survey so we know whether to take additional steps to be sure your child is properly served.

**Gifted and Talented Students:** Some children demonstrate or show a potential for demonstrating a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to other children of similar age, experience, or environment. These children may perform at a very high level in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area, show an unusually high capacity for leadership, or excel in a particular academic field. We provide a variety of programs, activities, and learning opportunities for these students. Please contact your child's teacher or the dean to gain information about the G/T nomination process.

**Accelerated or Intensive Instruction/Students At-Risk:** Some students do not qualify for special education programs or Section 504 accommodations, but still need some additional assistance to be successful in school. We provide intensive or accelerated instruction in subjects where students are showing special difficulty and may provide specially focused instruction to improve students' language and math skills.

Academic achievement will be closely monitored by teachers and the principal. You will be advised if the need for additional assistance for your child arises.



**Counseling Programs and Services:** The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal, social, and family concerns, including emotional and mental health issues. A student who wishes to meet with the school counselor can either email the counselor or talk to a teacher. As a parent, if you are concerned about your child's mental and emotional health, please speak with the school counselor for a list of references that may be of assistance. If your child comes to see the school counselor a letter will be sent home to inform you of the visit. Please know that when your child comes to see the school counselor the conversation is confidential unless your child states that they are going to hurt themselves, someone else or if someone else is hurting them or someone else. School counselors are temporary until the parent can get their child into a Licensed Professional Counselor. *(Please note that our school counselor is a certified school counselor and not a licensed professional counselor).* The school counselor does have extensive training in mental and emotional health issues and can assist until a licensed counselor can see them. Please know that in the past a permission slip was sent home by the school counselor to see your child more than once, by signing the student handbook you are giving the school counselor permission to see your child in either individual or group sessions. (A letter will be sent home informing you of any individual or group sessions your child is included in.) If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to reach out to the school counselor.

School Counselor: Alisha Daniel [adaniel@pathwayhc.org](mailto:adaniel@pathwayhc.org)

**Testing and Assessment Programs:** Students in grades 7-9 are assessed using the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness ("STAAR").

Results of the state examinations are used to assess individual student progress, as well as being a significant factor in the campus and district ratings under the statewide and federal accountability systems. Please make every effort to have your children at school on state test administration days and to be sure that they have had plenty of rest the night before and a good breakfast that morning.

As required by state law, we will annually assess the physical fitness of students in grades 7-9. Pathway Academy will administer core subject assessments for the purpose of planning and delivering quality instruction.

### **Grading and Report Cards:**

Teachers establish their grading standards, including penalties for late work, but those standards must be consistent with guidelines approved by the campus principal. If you have a question about a grade your child receives on an assignment, you should talk

first with the teacher. An exam or course grade issued by the teachers is final and will not be changed unless we determine that it was arbitrary, erroneous, or not consistent with the grading standards and policy.

Report cards will be sent home at the end of each grading period. If your child is having trouble in a class, the teacher may ask you to schedule a conference. We encourage you to attend those conferences. 7th - 9th Grades will use traditional computer-generated report cards for communicating student achievement with parents.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Six Weeks begins – Aug 18, 2025</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Six Weeks ends – Sept. 26, 2025</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Six Weeks begins – Sept. 30, 2025</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Six Weeks ends – Nov. 7, 2025</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Six Weeks begins – Nov. 12, 2025</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Six Weeks ends – Dec. 19, 2025</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Six Weeks begins – Jan. 6, 2026</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Six Weeks ends – Feb. 12, 2026</b>
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Six Weeks begins – Feb. 17, 2026</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Six Weeks ends – April 10, 2026</b>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Six Weeks begins – April 13, 2026</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Six Weeks ends – May 22, 2026</b>

**Promotion, Retention, Award of Credit:** Students are promoted from grade to grade, or awarded credit for a course, based on their mastery of the knowledge and skills that will let them be successful at the next grade level. In secondary grades, students receive credit for a course when they have met all the state and local requirements for that credit.

If your child does not pass the STAAR after the first administration at a grade level, we will provide intensive instruction in your child's area(s) of academic weakness.

The promotion standard at Pathway Academy for a student in 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, or 9<sup>th</sup> grade is to pass 3 out of 4 core subjects with an overall average of 70. The core subjects are English Language Arts, Social Studies, Math and Science. For students in 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> grades progress on STAAR assessments must be shown.

**Accelerated Instruction Plans:** Pathway Academy will provide tailored accelerated instruction for students not meeting state assessment standards in grades 7-9 or on End-of-ofCourse (EOC) assessments.

- Eligible students will receive supplemental instruction limited to two subject areas per year
- Students will receive no less than 15 or 30 hours of supplemental instruction depending on student performance and is provided during the school year
- If a student fails to achieve approaches or higher on two consecutive assessments in the same subject area, an Accelerated Education Plan will be created by the campus administration and teacher.

For further details, to discuss educational plans, and/or to opt out of requirements if applicable, please contact the Counselor, Alisha Daniel, [adaniel@pathwayhc.org](mailto:adaniel@pathwayhc.org), 432-213-6986.

## **Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System**

**(TELPAS):** The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) is an annual test for kindergarten through grade 12 students identified as emergent bilingual (EB) students. EB students in kindergarten through grade 1 will be holistically rated in their English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing, while EB students in grades 2-12 will take an online test in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Their writing test will be holistically rated. Assessment results will help Midland Academy identify the educational needs of EB students by providing a state-level measure of both their current academic English levels and their annual progress in English. Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) Alternate This test is for identified emergent bilingual (EB) students in grades 2-12 who are also special education students with significant cognitive disabilities. This alternate test holistically assesses the student's English language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

**Educational Technology and Acceptable Use:** We are steadily acquiring computers for school use and access to other instructional and research resources through connections to the Internet and the World Wide Web. These electronic instructional resources are for use at school and for school-related purposes. Before your child is permitted to receive a user identification and password to use school computers, you and your child must sign a User Agreement that explains acceptable and unacceptable use of school educational technology. You will have the choice to prevent your child from having access to the Internet on school computers.

The following kinds of use of the school's equipment or network are classified as unacceptable under our policy and the User Agreement:

1. Unauthorized use of copyrighted material, including violating Pathway Academy software licensing agreements or installing any personal software on district equipment without approval of the Technology Director.
  2. Viewing, posting or distribution of messages that are obscene, vulgar, profane, harassing, sexually oriented, sexually explicit, pornographic, offensive to others, threatening to others, or illegal, because a significant part of Pathway Academy's educational mission is to inculcate or instill the habits and manners of civility and to teach students the boundaries of socially appropriate behavior.
  3. Personal political use to advocate for or against a candidate, office-holder, political party, or political position, measure, or proposition. Research or electronic communications regarding political issues or candidates is not a violation when the activity is to fulfill an assignment for course credit.
  4. Viewing or participating in social network sites or chat rooms other than those sponsored and overseen by Pathway Academy.
  5. Tampering with anyone else's computer, files, or e-mail.
  6. "Hacking," i.e., attempting unauthorized access to any computer whether within Pathway Academy's network or outside it.
  7. Attempting to change, disable, or destroy Pathway Academy equipment, files, or data or any other user's data or files, including introducing computer viruses into Pathway Academy's system by any means.
  8. Any use that would be unlawful under state or federal law.
  9. Unauthorized disclosure, use, or distribution of personal identification information regarding students or employees.
10. Forgery of electronic mail messages or transmission of unsolicited junk e-mail chain messages.
11. Use that violates the student code of conduct.
12. Use related to commercial activities or for commercial gain.
13. Advertisement for purchase or sale of a product.

Students who violate the terms of the User Agreement may lose their computer privileges at school, as well as incur consequences under the school's Student Code of Conduct.

## **OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO STUDENTS**

**Extracurricular Activities:** We offer some school-related extracurricular

activities and encourage students to participate in those that are of interest to them.

Some activities are closely related to subjects taught in the curriculum; others, such as National Junior Honor Society, help students build leadership skills.

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. By state law, students must make a passing grade in all their classes in each grading period in order to be eligible to participate in any extracurricular performance or competition in the next grading period. Students who are ineligible because of one or more grades below 70 will be allowed to practice or rehearse during a suspension, but cannot perform or compete. If the student raises the grade(s) to passing within three weeks, she or he will regain eligibility to perform or compete.

**Student Publications/Distribution of Materials:** All materials prepared and published as part of a school's language arts programs are under the control and supervision of the administration and the Board of Trustees. The superintendent has final approval authority on all materials published or distributed in the name of the school.

Before non-school materials or publications are made available to students in the designated area, they must be submitted to the dean for review and approval. The principal will make a decision within two school days after the materials are submitted, and his or her failure to act within that time is interpreted as disapproval. If the materials are disapproved, students can appeal to the superintendent using the student complaint policy.

**Personal Graduation Plan:** All students in grades 7-9, will be asked to participate in developing a personal graduation plan. The plan will identify your child's education goals and will take into consideration your educational expectations for your child. Students at all grade levels will engage in goal-setting activities which lead to the goal of graduating from high school.

## OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO PARENTS

### Parent Rights

**Academic Programs:** You can ask the dean to change your child's teacher or class assignment; however, the principal is not required to make the reassignment and will

not do so ordinarily if that change would affect the assignment or reassignment of another student.

You can ask the school board to add a specific academic course to the schedule and offerings. If the administration and the board determine that the course is among those included in the State Board of Education-approved curriculum and that there is sufficient interest in the class to make it economically practical to offer the class, the request will not be unreasonably denied.

You can ask that your child be permitted to attend a class for credit above his or her grade level. If the principal and child's current and prospective teacher expect that the child can perform satisfactorily in the class, the request will not be unreasonably denied.

**Teaching Materials:** You may review all teaching materials, textbooks and other teaching aids used in your child's classroom and may review all tests administered to your child, after the test is given. To review these materials, please contact the homeroom teacher, who will make arrangements to provide you access to those materials at school during regular school hours.

**Records and Other Information:** As we stated in the "Required Notices" section of this Handbook, you have a right of access to all written educational records that we maintain concerning your child. You also can receive full information about any and all school activities in which your child is involved. However, as we explained in the section on "Questioning Students at School," we must comply with a request or directive from a Child Protective Services investigator regarding contact with or information to parents about an investigation.

**Video and Audio Recording:** We will seek and obtain your written consent before any school employee makes an audio or video recording of your child, except that your prior consent is not required before a recording that will be used only for:

- safety purposes, including maintaining order and discipline in common areas of the school or on school buses;
- a purpose related to a co-curricular or extracurricular activity;
- a purpose related to regular classroom instruction; or
- media coverage of the school.

**Psychological Examinations:** We will seek and obtain your written consent before conducting any psychological examination, test, or treatment of your child, unless the examination is part of an investigation by Child Protective Services in response to a report of known or suspected child abuse or neglect. If the examination or test is part of the comprehensive assessment to see if your

child needs special education or related services, before we obtain consent, on your request, we will provide you with information about the name and type of examination and how the examination will be used to develop an appropriate individualized program for your child.

**Exemption from Instruction:** You may temporarily remove your child from a class or other school activity that conflicts with your religious or moral beliefs if you provide a written statement authorizing the removal to your child's teacher. However, you are not entitled to remove your child from class or an activity to avoid taking a test or to prevent your child from taking a subject for an entire semester. Your child will be required to satisfy grade level or graduation requirements, regardless of any periods of temporary removal based on your religious or moral beliefs.

**Campus Performance and Accountability:** We will keep you informed annually of your children's campus ratings and whether the campus has been identified under state and federal law as one that needs improvement. If the campus is so identified, we will inform you of your rights regarding public school choice at that time. You will receive information with your child's report card for the first reporting period of each year related to the campus performance rating under the state accountability system if the information is available at that time.

**Classroom Celebrations:** Parents or guardians (with the exception of middle school) may provide any food product of their choice with the homeroom teacher's consent, to their child and his or her classmates on the occasion of the child's birthday or for any other school-designated function, such as class parties, bake sales, etc. This food product may not be taken to a classroom unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher and/or principal.

**Visiting School:** You are welcome to visit your child's school however, you must comply with our policy requiring all visitors to go first to the front office and sign in. We have this policy for the safety of your children and our staff. Parents and any other person on campus without the administration's knowledge will be considered as trespassers and may be subject to arrest.

We also expect parents to be polite and civil in their dealings with all school staff. We do not permit or tolerate abusive, disrespectful, threatening, lewd, profane, or offensive language from your children at school, and we will not tolerate it from parents. Parents who create a disruption at school or behave unacceptably may be prohibited from coming onto school property without specific authority and will be treated as criminal trespassers if they disregard the dean's or superintendent's directive.



Unless we have possession of a court document that limits a possessory conservator (that is, the parent who does not ordinarily have custody of the student) access to his/her child while at school, we will permit either parent to eat lunch with their child at school.

Each visitor to Pathway Academy must check in at the front office and receive a Hall Pass Visitor badge.

**Complaint Process:** We realize that situations may arise when parents disagree with a decision that affects their child or believe that a policy has been improperly applied to their child. A number of these types of disputes or controversies have specific processes for pursuing those concerns.

In general, all parent complaints should be brought initially to the teacher involved or the campus administration within 15 business days of the events or situation that you are concerned about. Often the problem can be resolved through an informal conference with the teacher or administration. On those occasions when a conference does not take care of a problem, you should request a copy of the complaint policy and complaint form from the principal's office. In order for your concern to be resolved at the earliest possible level, you must put your complaint in writing on the form provided before meeting formally with administration.

Administration will schedule a conference with you and give you a written response within ten business days after the conference. If administration is not able to take care of the problem, you can make a written request for the board of trustees to consider the matter at a future meeting. You must, however, follow our established policies and use our forms.

Individual trustees cannot respond to parent complaints beyond referring the matter to the administration. Furthermore, the board of trustees will not permit complaints to be heard in the public comment or open forum portion of board meetings. In order for the board to take any action on a complaint, you must follow the complaint process established in policy.

**Lost, Damaged, or Stolen Personal Items:** We ask that you discourage your child from wearing or bringing to school expensive or irreplaceable jewelry, watches, sunglasses, or personal clothing that may be removed during the days, such as winter coats. Students are responsible for all their personal possessions while at school or any school-sponsored or school-related event. It is important that you understand the school district is not responsible for any personal items that are lost, damaged, or stolen at school or a school-related activity.



Pathway Academy maintains a “Lost and Found” in the administrative offices; clothing and other items that are turned in as “lost” and not claimed by the end of the school year will be donated to a local charity.

**Telephone Use:** School telephones are for school business use. Students will be permitted to use school telephones only for emergencies and only with permission. If you call for your child during the school day, we will take a message and deliver it to the student at the end of the class period or other time that will least interfere with instruction.

**Parent Organizations/Volunteer Opportunities:** Pathway Academy has an active Parent-Teacher Organization, and we encourage you to actively participate in this group.

We encourage parents to volunteer in our school. All volunteers must complete an application form, and the district will obtain a Criminal History Report on all applicants for volunteer programs.

**Transportation Program:** Students will receive transportation, upon completion of paperwork, if they live further than one (1) mile of the campus.

**Food Service/Free and Reduced-Price Food Program:**

**Meal Prices:**

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

**Student Health Concerns:** We adopt and enforce policies to ensure that our campuses comply with Texas Department of Agriculture guidelines for restricting student access to vending machines containing foods of minimal nutritional value. Generally, this means that soft drinks and other foods of minimal nutritional value will not be available to elementary students during the school day or to secondary students during any designated meal periods.

As required by state law, we have and enforce prohibitions against student possession and use of tobacco, tobacco products, or electronic cigarettes on campuses or a school-sponsored or school-related activities. These prohibitions are addressed in the Student Code of Conduct and the employee handbook.

The district's student health advisory council meets at least four times during each school year.

In collaboration with you and, if possible, your child's physician, we will develop an individualized health plan for children with diabetes who need care for diabetes while in school or participating in a school activity. If your child has diabetes and will need care at school or while participating in a school activity, you must submit the diabetes management and treatment plan prepared by you and your child's physician before or at the beginning of the school year, on enrollment after the beginning of the school year, or as soon as practicable following a diagnosis of diabetes.

Students with a diagnosed food allergy that places them at risk for anaphylaxis (sudden onset, whole body reaction to an allergen that can involve closing of airways, hives, swelling, irregular heartbeat, wheezing, and other symptoms) shall be cared for in accordance with guidelines developed by the commissioner of state health services.

**Alcohol-Free School Notice:** All alcoholic beverages are always prohibited on Pathway Academy property and at all school-sanctioned activities occurring on or off school property.

**Tobacco and E-Cigarettes Prohibited:** Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, electronic cigarette (e-cigarettes), or any form of smokeless tobacco or electronic vapor product while in school buildings, vehicles, on or near school property, at a school-related or school-sanctioned events off school property.

**Drug-Free School Notice:** Pathway Academy prohibits the use, sale, possession, or distribution of illicit drugs by students on school premises, on or near school property, or at any school-related or school-sanctioned activity or event, regardless of its location. IDEA also prohibits the use, sale, possession, or distribution of look-alike substances and/or synthetic substances designed to imitate the look and/or effects of illicit drugs.

**Steroids at School:** State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering anabolic steroids. Anabolic steroids are for medical use only, and only a physician can prescribe use. Pathway Academy does not permit steroid use. A notice shall be posted in a conspicuous location in the school gym or in any place in a building where physical education classes are conducted.

**Pest Control:** Pesticide applications on Pathway Academy's property are made only by trained and licensed applicators. Should you have questions about Pathway Academy's pest management program or wish to be notified in advance of pesticide applications, you may contact Thaddeus McCalister, [tmccalister@pathwayhc.org](mailto:tmccalister@pathwayhc.org), 432-213-6986.

**Asbestos Management:** In accordance with federal and state regulations, Pathway Academy has implemented an Asbestos Management Plan to monitor and control any potential asbestos hazards on Pathway Academy's facilities. Pathway Academy's Asbestos Management Plan is available for review during regular hours of school operations at the Administration Office. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Thaddeus McCalister, [tmccalister@pathwayhc.org](mailto:tmccalister@pathwayhc.org), 432-213-6986.

**Student Illness or Injury at School:** We will promptly attempt to notify you or a person you have authorized us to notify if we have knowledge that your child has been injured at school or has become ill at school. We have a school nurse available and a secluded area where your child can stay if she or he is injured or becomes ill.

Although we want your child to attend school every day, we do not want your child at school if she or he has a communicable disease or is running a fever of 100° or more. Under State and local Health Department regulations, if your child has certain medical conditions, she or he must be excluded from school for a period of time. The school nurse can provide you a complete list of those conditions and periods of exclusion.

## STUDENT HEALTH

**Mental Health Promotion and Intervention:** Pathway Academy has developed protocols for providing a legal guardian with a recommended intervention for a student with early warning signs and a possible need for early mental health or substance abuse intervention, or who has been identified as at risk of attempting suicide. The campus School Counselor will notify a legal guardian within a reasonable amount of time after learning that a student has early warning signs and possible need for intervention and will also provide additional information on available counseling options. Teachers and administrators will be trained to recognize and assess for mental health crisis or suicide risk annually. The campus School Counselor will be trained in providing intervention and resources for students and families. The assessment process will determine the level of intervention and next steps for the student, legal guardian, and campus. Pathway Academy has developed protocols for staff members to notify the School Counselor to identify a student who may need intervention. The School Counselor can provide additional information about the school's intervention program, as well as materials on identifying risk factors, accessing resources for treatment, and accommodations available at school.

**Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels):** Pathway Academy has implemented programs to address the following mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse concerns:

- Mental health promotion and early intervention
- Building skills to manage emotions, establish and maintain positive relationships, and engage in responsible decision making
- Substance abuse prevention and intervention
- Suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention (interventions after a suicide in a community)
- Grief, trauma, and trauma-informed care • Positive behavior interventions and supports
- Positive youth development, and
- Safe, supportive, and positive school climates.

Pathway Academy has adopted various curriculums that support mental health and wellness of staff, students, and families.

**Food Allergy Information:** For purposes of this section, the term “severe food allergy” means a dangerous or life-threatening reaction of the human body to a food-borne allergen introduced by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact that requires immediate medical attention. Allergy information is to be updated annually as part of the registration process. Legal guardians are required to:

1. Update the student’s Health History Information indicating the type of allergy, specifying the food(s) which the student is allergic to, nature of the reaction, and whether the allergy is life-threatening.
2. Complete a Medication Consent Form, Action/Care Plan, and Special Diet Request Form signed by both the legal guardian and physician.
  - a. Submit the Medication Consent Form, Action/Care Plan, and any prescription medication in its original container from the pharmacy (U.S.A. Only) with a proper label directly to the school Nurse.
    - i. A proper label contains the patient’s name, medicine’s name, and dosage.
    - ii. Students are not to be sent to campus with medications, they must be delivered by a legal guardian.
3. Ensure a medication refill, in its original container with a proper label, is delivered to the school Nurse before the medication is completed.
4. At the end of the year, pick up any remaining medication before the last day of school or it will be appropriately disposed of.

**Administering Medicine at School:** Often, students have to take prescription medication for a certain period of time as treatment for a medical condition. If at all possible, we ask that you schedule the timing of the doses so that the child takes the medicine at home. If children have to take medicine at school, you must make a written request to the nurse. The school nurse or other authorized school employee will administer medications only from a container that appears to be the properly labeled original prescription container or from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by the nurse from a properly labeled original prescription container. Only the nurse or other authorized school employees are permitted to administer prescription medicines at school. Other than prescription asthma medicine or anaphylaxis treatment for students with severe allergies that may result in anaphylaxis, we do not permit students to carry their own medications and self-administer.

Children with asthma or children with severe allergies that may result in anaphylaxis will be allowed to carry and self-administer their prescription asthma or anaphylaxis medicine under certain conditions. The student must have demonstrated to his or her doctor and to the school nurse that the child has the skills necessary to self-administer the asthma or anaphylaxis medicine. Additionally you must provide us a written authorization for self-administration and a written statement from the child's doctor that the student has asthma and is capable of self-administration and that includes the name and purpose of the medicine, the prescribed dosage, the times and circumstances for administration, and the period for which the medicine is prescribed.

The nurse or authorized personnel may administer commonly used over-the-counter treatments, such as antacids, aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, antibiotic ointments, when provided by the parents. The nurse or authorized personnel will administer these medications according to the labeled instructions if you make a written request to the nurse, providing the same basic information as is required for administering prescription drugs.

If your child has unique medical conditions or any other condition that requires virtually immediate administration of medications under specified conditions, please contact the principal, who will schedule a meeting of appropriate personnel to ensure that your child's needs are met.

If your child has a food allergy or a severe food allergy that, in your judgment, would require immediate medical attention if the student were exposed to the allergen, we will ask you to disclose that information, including the food to which the child is allergic and the nature of the allergic reaction, at enrollment so that we may take necessary precautions for the child's safety. The information provided is confidential and will be

disclosed only to those employees who need the information in order to appropriately care for your child.

**Bacterial Meningitis Information:** Bacterial Meningitis is a disease that affects the brain and spinal cord. While it is a serious condition and can lead to long-term complications, there are prevention measures that families and students can take to stay healthy. To prevent Bacterial Meningitis, families should:

- Vaccinate children as recommended by the Advisory Council on Immunization Practices (ACIP):

- o MCV4 within the first year of life

- o MCV4 for children at age 11-12 years o MCV4 booster dose at age 16-18 years

- Practice Healthy Habits that prevent the spread of bacteria and viruses:

- o Hand Washing before meals, when encountering frequently touched surface,

and if visibly dirty.

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

- o Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.

Note: The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) requires at least one meningococcal vaccination on or after a student's 11th birthday, unless the student received the vaccine at age 10. Also note that entering college students must show, with limited exception, evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five-year period prior to enrolling in and taking courses at an institution of higher education. If you think you or a friend may have Bacterial Meningitis, you should promptly seek medical attention.

**Immunizations:** The law requires that students be fully vaccinated against specified diseases in accordance with an immunization schedule set by the State of Texas. Failure to provide up to date immunization records or an approved exemption will result in the scholar being excluded from school attendance until those items are submitted to the campus Nurse. To comply with State Law, legal guardians:

1. May read the "Kindergarten Through 12th Grade Requirements" available on the Texas Department of State Health Services website at <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunizations/school/requirements> to determine the specific number of doses required for their student.

2. Must submit proof of immunization, either from personal health records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation to the Nurse before the first day of school.

**Exemption from Immunization Requirements:** Exclusions from immunization requirements are allowable on an individual basis for the reasons discussed below. A legal guardian may, for each student:

1. Claim exemption for medical reasons by submitting a statement signed by the student's physician (M.D. or D.O.) to the Nurse before the first day of school.

a. The physician must be duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States and must have examined the student.

b. The signed statement must state 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 student or any member of the student's household.

c. 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.

2. Claim exemption for reasons of conscience (including a religious belief) by submitting a Department of State Health Services affidavit to the campus Nurse within 90 days of it being notarized.

a. The affidavit must state that the student's legal guardian declines vaccinations for reasons of conscience, including because of the person's religious beliefs.

b. The affidavit will be valid for a period of two years.

c. The form affidavit may be obtained by writing the Texas Department of State Health Services Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 787149347, or online at Affidavit Request for Exemption from Immunization.

d. Students who have 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.

3. Claim exclusion for armed forces, by submitting proof that the student is serving on active duty with the armed forces of the United States.

**Health and Physical Education Assessment:** Pathway Academy Health and Physical Education staff shall plan for the annual assessment of students' Healthy



# STUDENT SAFETY

**Student Code of Conduct:** Pathway Academy has adopted a Student Code of Conduct in accordance with law. The principal shall ensure that the Student Code of Conduct is distributed to each student at the beginning of the year. Transfer students shall receive a Student Code of Conduct upon enrollment.

**Child Abuse Reporting and Programs:** Pathway Academy provides child abuse anti-victimization programs and cooperates with official child abuse investigators as required by law. Pathway Academy also provides training to its teachers and students in preventing and addressing incidents of abuse and other maltreatment of students, including knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a student may be a victim of abuse or maltreatment. Assistance, interventions, and counseling options are also available. School administrators will 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 at school who is alleged to be a victim of abuse or neglect. 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 legal guardians.

**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. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child.

**What is Trafficking?** Child trafficking in any form is prohibited by the Texas Penal Code. Sex trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, into sexual abuse, assault, indecency, prostitution, or pornography. Labor trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, to engage in forced labor or services.

Traffickers may be trusted members of a child's community, such as friends, romantic partners, family members, mentors, and coaches, although traffickers frequently make contact with victims online.



## What is Other Maltreatment of a Child?

Other maltreatment of a child under the Texas Family Code includes “abuse” or “neglect” of a child.

## Reporting and Responding to Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other

### Maltreatment of Children:

Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused, trafficked, or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting to law enforcement or to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).

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

Legal guardians, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse, trafficking, or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The DFPS also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County.

Reports of abuse, trafficking, or neglect may be made to:

- Texas Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400
- In non-emergency situations, the Texas Abuse Hotline Website • Your local police department
- Call 911 for emergency situations.

**Freedom from Hazing:** Pathway Academy prohibits hazing, which means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off campus directed against a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization if the act:

- Is any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity
- Involves sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, calisthenics, or other similar activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student

- Involves consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance, other than described in item 5 below, that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student
- Any activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that involves a violation of the Texas Penal Code; or
- Involves coercing, as defined by Penal Code section 1.07, the student to consume a drug or an alcoholic beverage or liquor in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student is intoxicated.

Pathway Academy will not tolerate hazing and will impose disciplinary consequences for hazing conduct as allowed by the Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, it is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report to the Dean or Superintendent.

**Freedom from Bullying:** Pathway Academy prohibits bullying as defined below, as well as retaliation against anyone who reports or is involved in an investigation of bullying. Bullying is defined in state law as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct 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
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating,
- threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or IDEA or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Bullying also includes cyberbullying, which is defined by state law as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

Pathway Academy's anti-bullying policy applies to:

- Bullying that occurs on or is delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property
- Bullying that occurs on a publicly or privately-owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of students to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity and
- Cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity if the cyberbullying:
  - o Interferes with a student's educational opportunities; or
  - o Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school related activity.

# APPENDIX

These items are available at [www.pathwayhc.org](http://www.pathwayhc.org)

Parent Engagement Policy and Title I Home-School Compact Cafeteria Online Account Access  
2025-2026 School Calendar

School Safety Transfers from a Persistently Dangerous School Student Welfare/ Freedom from Bullying  
Policy

Student Welfare/Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Technology Resources Policy  
Student and Parent Complaints/Grievances Policy

Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Internet Safety and Acceptable Use  
Policy

Wellness and Health Services Care Plans