



**YELLOWSTONE**  
ACADEMY

2016-17

# Student Handbook



**I. OUR MISSION AND VALUES**

- a. Mission & Vision
- b. Affirmation of Faith
- c. Goals of Student Handbook
- d. Admissions Policies

**II. GENERAL INFORMATION**

- a. Hours of Operation
- b. School Holidays
- c. Early Release
- d. Parent Engagement Events
- e. School Closing
- f. Food Service
- g. Snacks
- h. Transportation Policy
- i. Health Information
- j. Absence Due to Illness
- k. Illness During School Hours
- l. Drills & Procedures
- m. Procedures for Parent/Guardian Concerns
- n. Using Student’s Likeness/Image in Media/Promotional Material for School Use

**III. CODE OF CONDUCT**

- a. Student Dress Code Policy
- b. Uniform Violation Consequences
- c. Telephone Use
- d. Vandalism
- e. Theft
- f. Indecent Exposure & Sexual Misconduct
- g. Harassment Policy
- h. Abuse
- i. Bullying/Cyber Bullying
- j. Drug and Alcohol
- k. Sex Education/Activity (PREACH) Abstinence
- l. Misdemeanor and Felony Offenses
- m. Gang-Free School Zone
- n. Discipline Policy

**IV. ACADEMIC POLICIES**

- a. Attendance Policy
  - i. Attendance Procedures
  - ii. Truancy
- b. Tardies
- c. Homework Policy
- d. Make-up Work Policy
- e. Cheating
- f. Plagiarism
- g. Grading/Report Cards
- h. Progress Reports
- i. Final Grades
- j. Promotion Policy
- k. Field Trips
- l. Participation in Co-Curricular Activities
- m. Athletics Standards of Conduct
- n. Computer/Internet Use
- o. Textbooks and School Owned Instructional Materials
- p. Tuition Payment & Expectations

**V. SIGNATURE PAGE**

# I. UPHOLDING YELLOWSTONE ACADEMY'S MISSION AND VALUES

## MISSION & VISION

Yellowstone Academy is the premier school in Houston's inner-city. Yellowstone serves the students and families in Houston's Third Ward and surrounding areas by providing an exceptional educational and co-curricular program that is coupled with a comprehensive support structure to help every student be successful. We are developing graduates that possess a strong faith, are committed to their education, and have the skills and experiences they need to be successful in high school, college, and beyond.

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Yellowstone Academy is a non-denominational Christian School. The mission, purposes, and methods of the Academy are under girded by Christian orthodoxy. All teachers, staff, and board members of the Academy are committed to the perspective that Yellowstone Academy exists for the advancement of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in its full dimensions, in the lives of its students and their families, attending to their spiritual, educational, physical, emotional, social, and practical needs. The doctrinal foundation of the Academy is best expressed by the Apostle's Creed:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. AMEN.

## GOALS OF THE YELLOWSTONE ACADEMY STUDENT HANDBOOK

- To create a culture of academic excellence for all students.
- To ensure that all students are treated with dignity.
- To encourage students to take responsibility of their personal actions.
- To create an orderly professional environment.
- To establish clear and consistent expectations for student life.
- To promote high quality instructional time.
- To nurture and engage student maturity.

## ADMISSION POLICIES

Students can be admitted in grades Pre-K 3 through seventh grade for the upcoming school year. As a general rule, eighth grade students will not be added, and there is limited space available for middle school students. Students are admitted before the beginning of the new school year and also during the school year. Records of previous school attendance will be reviewed before admission will be granted. Previous information such as prior test scores, testing, and other academic and behavioral records may also be reviewed. Yellowstone Academy does not provide any special education modifications or programs. Applications of students that require special services may be denied, because Yellowstone is unable to provide these special services.

## II. GENERAL INFORMATION

### HOURS OF OPERATION

#### TRADITIONAL SCHOOL YEAR

Monday-Friday

7:15a.m. (Doors Open)      7:45a.m. (Late Bell rings and School Starts)      3:45p.m (Student Dismissal begins)

### EARLY RELEASE DAYS

See school calendar for specific days identified as early release days. Early Release will be at 1:00

\*\*\*The school is not responsible for students who are dropped off before the identified time at which school doors are opened. Parents/guardians are expected to wait with their children until the school doors are opened, or until the bus has arrived, as the children will be unsupervised until this time.

### SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

August 2-9: Teacher Inservice  
August 10: First Day of School  
September 5: Labor Day Holiday  
October 14: Parent Conferences  
October 17: Fall Holiday  
October 18: Teacher Inservice  
Nov. 21-25: Thanksgiving Break  
Dec. 19 - Dec. 30: Christmas Break  
January 2: Teacher Inservice

January 16: MLK Holiday  
Feb 20: President's Day Holiday  
March 13-17: Spring Break  
April 14: Good Friday Holiday  
April 17: Teacher Inservice  
May 29: Memorial Day Holiday  
June 2: Last Day of School  
June 5-7: Teacher Inservice  
June 8-July 31: Summer Break

### EARLY RELEASE

AUGUST 31	JANUARY 25
SEPTEMBER 28	FEBRUARY 22
OCTOBER 26	APRIL 26
DECEMBER 16	

### PARENT ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

PARENT OPEN HOUSE: SEPTEMBER 15  
PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE DAY: OCTOBER 14  
COMMUNITY BBQ: NOVEMBER 5  
CHRISTMAS PROGRAM: DECEMBER 15  
BLACK HISTORY PROGRAM: FEBRUARY 28  
FAMILY GAME NIGHT: APRIL 27

## **SCHOOL CLOSING**

Whenever possible, our school closures will be announced on local television and radio stations. For inclement weather closures, Yellowstone Academy follows HISD's decision. Every effort will be made by the Leadership Team to notify parents of school closure the day before.

In the event that weather conditions make travel to school hazardous and unsafe it is recommended that parents use their discretion in bringing their children to school or allowing them to ride the bus.

In the event that weather conditions become dangerous once school has started, students may be released from school early.

In the event that Houston ISD or the State of Texas cancels public schools for reasons beyond inclement weather, Yellowstone Academy may or may not close. The school will determine the appropriate action and will inform parents appropriately.

## **FOOD SERVICE**

All Yellowstone students are required to eat the breakfast and lunch provided by the cafeteria staff through Yellowstone Academy. Students with allergies must have physician documentation of their allergies to be approved by administration so they may bring their own breakfast and lunch.

## **SNACKS**

Students are not allowed to bring outside snacks or food to school. In appropriate grade levels, school snacks are provided in the afternoon by Yellowstone Academy.

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

Parents must provide contact information and identification information for any person authorized to pick up their student. Parents must inform the office in writing if a child has permission to walk home. Parents and students will be informed about bus routes and bus stops prior to the start of each school year. Bus routes and stops are subject to change each year. All students are expected to be at their specified stop 10 minutes prior to their pick-up time. Students must be waiting outside of the bus stop in order for the bus to stop.

Buses will not wait for tardy students. If a student misses the bus, the student and/or parent/guardian should call the school immediately. Parents/guardians are expected to find an alternate way to transport the student to school. Bus transportation is considered a privilege, and not a right, at Yellowstone Academy. In order to preserve this privilege and maintain safety on the bus, appropriate behavior is expected by each student at all times on the bus.

At anytime if a student is seen as a threat to the safety of herself/himself or her/his classmates she/he will be suspended and even expelled depending on the nature of the incident. If a student is suspended or expelled from the bus for disciplinary reasons, parents are expected to find another source of transportation.

Parents/guardians who provide transportation for their children are expected to pick up their children in a timely manner at the end of each school day (3:45pm). Teachers and staff members at Yellowstone commit to work long hours to ensure a helpful, successful school. We appreciate that students not riding a bus are picked up within 15 minutes after school, field trips, extracurricular activities, and other events. Families are expected to inform the School office in advance if this timeline cannot be met.

Transportation arrangement changes must be made by 2:00 of the same day. No changes will be allowed after this time.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION**

State law requires that all children in elementary and middle school must have an updated Texas Certificate of Immunization.

Immunizations are required for measles, rubella, tetanus, diphtheria, polio, mumps, whooping cough and hepatitis B. For entrance into the sixth grade, each student must have at least one additional dose of MMR vaccine.

## **ABSENCE DUE TO ILLNESS**

If a child is sick in the morning, the school expects him/her to stay home for the day. The student must be fever-free for 24 hours to attend school the next day. Please call the school in the morning to inform the school of the child's absence and to arrange a way to pick up or receive the child's makeup work. After more than three consecutive absences for illness, students will need to bring a doctor's re-admittance form to school on their first day back to school to receive an excused absence for missed days.

The student will be responsible for all assignments. Please see procedures for make-up work under academic policies.

## **ILLNESS DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

If a child becomes ill or injured during the school day and is not well enough to stay in class, the parent/guardian will be called to pick the child up. The school does not have the capacity to watch over and care for ill children. It is necessary to have updated emergency contact numbers on file in the school office in case no one can be contacted at home.

Parents/guardians are required to pick up the student *within one hour* of the call from Yellowstone.

Any students with communicable or contagious diseases or disorders must be sent home. Students who are diagnosed with any contagious disease will be required to be treated by a physician and return to school with a doctor's note.

Yellowstone Academy will only administer medicine to a student who has an official note from his or her doctor on file, describing the prescribed medicine, the required dosage, and the required frequency. Such notes must be brought to the school by the parent along with the medicine in the original bottle. Medicine will be kept in the main office and administered by the school's Administrative Assistant or the nurse on duty. Students are responsible for ensuring that they receive their medicine at the regularly scheduled time.

Students with over the counter medicine for the treatment of temporary illnesses (such as a cold) or minor health concerns (such as allergies) must also bring their medicine to the office along with a note from their parent describing the required dosage and frequency. All medication must be checked into the front office. No student may possess over the counter medication.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the school has current contact and health information. If a child has needs we do not know about, we cannot provide for those needs, and if a child has an emergency, we *must* be able to reach the parent.

## **DRILLS & PROCEDURES (FIRE, TORNADO, HURRICANE)**

### **FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES**

Posted in every room is a map detailing the evacuation procedure. Students are to follow their teacher outside in the event of a fire drill, fire, or natural disaster and to stay with their class. Students must proceed directly to the designated area and wait for instructions.

Students should walk, not run, when proceeding to the exits. Students are not allowed to talk during fire drills so that they may hear instructions that might be given in the event of a real emergency.

If a fire alarm sounds while a child is not in the regular classroom, he or she should exit the building by the quickest route and proceed to the designated meeting place. Students are not allowed to secure or recover clothing or other personal property after the fire alarm has sounded.

Any student violating this procedure is jeopardizing the safety of our school and will face consequences including possible suspension. Any student found guilty of pulling the school's fire alarm will be subject to strict consequences, including suspension and/or expulsion.

## **TORNADO DRILL PROCEDURES**

In the event of a tornado warning, students will be required to take the necessary precautions to protect themselves. When a tornado warning has been announced by the National Weather Service, the Leadership Team or designee will be responsible for communicating directly with students and teachers about the impending danger via an ‘all-call’ or another appropriate means of communication.

When the signal has been given by the Leadership Team’s designee, students should move quickly and quietly to the designated area of the school that has been assigned to their classroom. Teachers will be asked to follow the same procedures as above for the fire drills, except to bring students to the designated area inside the building. Once they have reached their assigned area (in the hallway), students will crouch on the floor against the wall and cover their heads with their hands, Talking will not be allowed during tornado drills or tornados.

## **HURRICANE PROCEDURES**

Yellowstone Academy will follow HISD’s extreme weather policy.

## **PROCEDURES FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN CONCERNS**

If a parent has a concern or disagreement, they should schedule an appointment through the front office to discuss the matter with the teacher and attempt to resolve the disagreement through informal discussion. Parents will not be allowed to address concerns with teachers during instructional time. If there is no resolution to the problem, the parent/ guardian should then ask the front office to schedule a meeting with the Director of Academics if it is a concern related to a teacher or academic need, or the Dean of Students if the concern is related to child behavior.

## **USING STUDENT’S LIKENESS/ IMAGE IN MEDIA/PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL FOR SCHOOL USE**

From time to time, Yellowstone will host media representatives, reporters, photographers, journalists, and other media professionals on campus to capture the staff, students, parents, and mission of Yellowstone Academy. These professionals may use various media formats, including video, photography, audio recordings, and the written word to share Yellowstone Academy with the general public. By signing this handbook, the parent/guardian gives Yellowstone permission to use their child’s image for one or more of the related media activities referenced here. Yellowstone will make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent/guardian whenever a student will be involved in a promotional or media-related activity. A parent/guardian may remove permission to use their student’s likeness/image at any time by calling Lenora Cross at 713-741-8000 or emailing her at [lcross@yellowstoneacademy.org](mailto:lcross@yellowstoneacademy.org).

# III. CODE OF CONDUCT

## STUDENT DRESS CODE POLICY

The student dress code policy at Yellowstone Academy requires ALL students to wear the required uniform every day, unless otherwise indicated.

The uniform will consist of the following:

- A Yellowstone Academy t-shirt or polo is required for all students.
- Chapel shirts must be worn on Monday and any off campus field trip.
- Shirts MUST be tucked in at all times.
- Navy or Beige, Khaki pants, shorts, skirt, skorts or jumpers should be free of any designs, writings, rips, embellishments, or contrasting accent colors.
- No baggy pants, pants cannot sag.
- Shorts, skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be at an appropriate length.
- Belts are required for all items that have belt loops. Chains, pocket watches, or any other accessory should not be attached to the belt
- Students may only wear plain shirts underneath their uniform. Writings or designs should not be visible through the shirt. Students will be told to remove any shirts not in compliance with the uniform policy.
- No 'flip-flops' or sandals.
- Any shoes with a heel taller than an inch are not allowed.
- All shoes, sneakers, or boots should be enclosed.
- Socks, tights, or panty hose should always be worn with shoes (no footless leggings).
- No suspenders should be worn over any uniform shirt.
- Students and parents should make every effort to ensure that the uniform shirts and pants are cleaned regularly. Students should wear clean uniforms to school daily. Torn or worn clothing should be replaced.
- Any jewelry worn around the neck should be worn inside of the uniform shirt.
- Earrings are not permitted for male students at Yellowstone.
- Hair should be free of bright colors and glitter.
- Headbands can be worn only if they are sold as a headband.
- Students may only wear Yellowstone Jackets.

Students may not wear the following:

- Tight clothing
- Any headwear such as bandanas, hats, hoods, scarves, caps, head wraps, etc.
- Any gang related attire
- Makeup with excessive coloring
- Large chains or other excessive jewelry
- Body tattoos (real or artificial), body art, or body piercings
- Attire with any reference to death (i.e. skulls, poison logos, etc.)
- More than one bangle or bracelet on each arm
- Any clothing or item that distracts from the educational environment
- Hair cuts must be free of excessive shavings and designs

*The school reserves the right to add to this list as concerns or problems arise.*

## UNIFORM VIOLATION CONSEQUENCES

- Students who come to school not abiding by any of the above policies will receive a warning on their first violation.
- Blatant uniform violations (no uniform shirt or no navy or khaki bottoms) or consistent violations (no belt for several days) will result in the parent being contacted immediately to bring the appropriate item to school. In addition, dress code violation forms will be sent home for parents to sign and return to school. **Chronic violation of uniform requirements are subject to further discipline, including removal from school.**

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Students are not allowed to bring the following items to school:

Weapons and toy weapons	Candy and Gum
Soda or strong 'power' drinks	Any illegal substance
Fruit drinks, iced teas, carbonated beverages	Toys, beads
Gameboys or any other electronic toys	Portable radio, iPod, iTouch, etc.*
Sweet /salty snacks	Sunflower seeds
Cellular Phones*	Card games, dice

\*\*\* The school reserves the right to add to this list at any time, anything that interferes with instruction or disrupt the class environment are not permitted. \*\*\*

\* Cell phones may be carried; however, they can only be used after school hours. They should be turned off during school hours. The school also reserves the right to confiscate the phone for an extended period of time if it is used during instructional time. **Administrators/and or staff members will not investigate to find any electronic communication device if it is brought to school and lost or stolen.**

## TELEPHONE USE

Students may not use any school phone without permission from a teacher. Students will only be allowed to use the phone in case of an emergency. Students must have a written pass from a teacher to use a school phone. Students who use a phone without permission from a teacher will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Students are also not allowed to receive phone calls unless it is an emergency. Parents/guardians are asked to communicate message and make transportation arrangements with the child before sending the child to school in the morning. If necessary, the Front Office will deliver messages to students in class, but only in urgent situations will the student be pulled out of class to receive a phone call.

## VANDALISM

Vandalism may include property damage, graffiti, arson caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property, possession of graffiti implements. This also includes possession of lighters, matches, accelerants, and threats of arson (verbal, written, gesture, electronic).

## THEFT

Theft is defined as possession of stolen goods, cause or attempt to steal school property or private property, or knowingly received stolen school property or private property. Suspension or expulsion may result depending on the value of stolen property.

## INDECENT EXPOSURE & SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Any students that remove clothing in front of other students, engage in any sexual activity during any school activities, or expose themselves on school property or a school event, will be subject to severe disciplinary action, including expulsion. Ultimate disciplinary action is at the discretion of the Executive Director.

## **HARASSMENT POLICY**

Yellowstone Academy is committed to equitable and swift resolution of harassment issues. Any student experiencing harassment should follow any or all of these measures.

1. Tell an adult at school
2. Make a list of facts that occurred; Write down what happened and share it with a staff member.
3. Students should notify the Director of Academics or Dean of Students, social worker, teacher, or other adult they feel comfortable with.

## **ABUSE**

All school personnel are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and/or neglect. Mandated reporters are required to report suspected child maltreatment immediately when they have ‘reasonable cause to believe that a child who is 17 years of age or younger and known to them in a profession or official capacity has been harmed or is in danger being harmed- physically, sexually, or through neglect- and that a caregiver either committed the harm or should have taken steps to prevent the child from harm. After a report has been filed, school staff members are prohibited from discussing the details of the report with parents or any other party.

No one in the workplace, even a supervisor, is permitted to suppress, change, or edit a report of abuse. A mandated reporter who willfully fails to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect is subject to license suspension or revocation, and commits a misdemeanor. Falsely reporting information is also a misdemeanor.

## **BULLYING/CYBER BULLING**

No one should be subjected to harassment or bullying on campus for any reason. Therefore, it is the policy of Yellowstone that all employees, volunteers, parents and students will deal with all persons in ways that convey respect and consideration for individuals regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, family situation, religion or political affiliation. Acts of harassment, bullying, cyber bullying, hostility, defamation, will not be tolerated and constitute grounds for disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion from school. Legal agencies may be contacted.

Bullying is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate disciplinary action. Bullying, meaning engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the school and that: (1) has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student’s property, or placing a student in reasonable fear or harm to the student’s person or of damage to the student’s property; (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student; (3) exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and (4) interferes with a student’s education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school. A student may be suspended, placed in-school suspension, or if serious or persistent behavior occurs, may be removed from the school.

## **CYBERBULLING**

Cyber bullying, at or away from campus, defined as the use of the Internet, cell phones, or other devices to send, post, or text-message images and material intended to hurt or embarrass another student. This may include, but is not limited to, continuing to send email to someone who has said he or she wants no further contact with the sender; sending or posting threats, sexual remarks, sexual pictures, or pejorative labels (i.e., hate speech); ganging up on victims by making them the subject of ridicule in public forums and posting false statements as fact intended to humiliate another student; disclosure of personal data such as another student’s real name, address, or school on web sites or forums to embarrass or harass; posing as another student for the purpose of publishing material in his or her name that defames or ridicules him or her; sending threatening and harassing text, instant messages, or emails to another, and posting or sending rumors or gossip to incite others to dislike and/or gang up on the target which is determined to have a material and substantial interference with school activities or with the rights of the student. A student may be suspended, placed in in-school suspension, or if serious or persistent behavior occurs, may be removed from the school. In addition, the information can lead to a referral to the proper authorities for prosecution.

## **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

Yellowstone has a zero tolerance for drug and alcohol offenses. Possessed, used, sold, furnished, or being under the influence of any controlled substance (marijuana, cocaine, heroin, K2, methamphetamine, handlebars, prescription drugs, other), alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. This includes: Offered or arranged or negotiated to sell any controlled substance, and then sold, delivered, or furnished to any person another liquid, substance, or material and represented it as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant, or prescription drug.

## **SEX EDUCATION/ACTIVITY (PREACH) ABSTINENCE**

Yellowstone Academy is a faith-based institution which advocates abstinence. Any student deemed involved in sexual activity will be handled on a case by case basis by the Dean of Students and an assigned committee of staff members.

## **MISDEMEANOR AND FELONY OFFENSES**

**MISDEMEANOR:** Regardless if it occurs at a school-related activity or off campus, a student may be subject to out of school suspension or even expulsion, depending on the nature of the offense. Each circumstance will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

**FELONY:** Regardless of when or whether the offense takes place at a school-related activity, on school property, or more than 300 feet from school property line, a student may qualify for expulsion if he or she:

- Has received deferred prosecution under the Family Code for conduct defined as a felony offense.
- Has been found by a court or jury to have engaged in delinquent conduct under the Family Code for conduct defined as a felony offense
- Is charged with engaging in conduct defined as a felony offense
- Has been referred to a juvenile court for delinquent conduct
- Has received probation or deferred adjudication for a felony offense
- Has been convicted of a felony offense
- Has been arrested for or charged with a felony offense

## **GANG-FREE SCHOOL ZONE**

Yellowstone Students should be aware that Yellowstone Academy is a ‘gang-free school zone.’ Participation in activities by groups such as gangs or cults is grounds for suspension and/or expulsion. Visual displays of gang-related signs or symbols on the body, clothing, accessories, or personal property of the student are prohibited. ‘Jumping,’ and/or ‘hazing’ on school property or at a school-related event will result in immediate suspension. Gang-related associations may also be referred to the police department for appropriate documentation.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Yellowstone Students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and honorable manner. Any misbehavior that causes a disruption to the school environment will be subject to disciplinary action. There are four levels of disciplinary action and shall be administered by school administration in the following manner:

### **LEVEL 1 VIOLATIONS OF CLASSROOM RULES**

Offenses that occur in the classroom that are usually corrected by the teacher.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE INTERVENTION**

## **LEVEL 2 REMOVAL FROM CLASSROOM FOR A PERIOD OF TIME**

Offenses that seriously disrupt the educational process in the classroom, in the school, and/or school-related activities. Students may be removed from their classroom for a period of time depending on the nature of the offense.

- PERSISTENT CLASSROOM MISBEHAVIOR
- VERBAL AND PHYSICAL AGGRESSION
- TRUANCY
- CHEATING ON CLASS ASSIGNMENT(S)
- USE OF CELLULAR PHONE DURING CLASS TIME
- THEFT OF ANOTHER STUDENT OR STAFF MEMBER'S POSSESSIONS
- POSSESSION OF PROHIBITED ITEMS
- CONSISTENT VIOLATIONS OF THE DRESS CODE

## **LEVEL 3 SUSPENSION**

The administrator may suspend a student for up to three consecutive days. A decision to suspend a student is final and may not be appealed. A student may be suspended for engaging in the following conduct at school or at a school-related event.

- Fighting, Gambling, misdemeanor stealing/theft of property, including computers and related equipment, in an amount under \$500
- Possession of a knife, persistent disruptive behavior on a school bus, smoking, or using tobacco on campus, interfering with school authorities
- Aggressive, disruptive action or group demonstration that disrupts or materially interferes with school activities (boycotts, sit-ins, trespassing, and walkouts)
- Failure to comply with reasonable requests of school personnel and/or defiance of the authority of school personnel
- Changing school records or documents or signing a parents name on school documents
- Indecent/unsolicited sexual proposal/sexual harassment
- Harassment/dating violence, including threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, engaging in sexually intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another student, subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraining, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another students physical or emotional health.
- Selling or soliciting for sale any merchandise on school campus without the authorization of the building principal
- Display of disrespect toward school personnel or campus visitors
- Participation in activities by groups such as gangs or cults
- Visual display of gang-related signs or symbols on the body, clothing, accessories, or personal property of the student. Gang-related associations may be referred to the police department for appropriate documentation
- Failure or refusal to cover up while on campus or at a school-related activity any tattoo that is inappropriate, obscene, offensive, vulgar, or gang-related.
- Profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures
- Possession or use of fireworks, poppers, smoke or stink bombs, or any other pyrotechnic device that may be used to disrupt the educational process
- Possession of live ammunition or bullets, possession of pepper spray or mace
- Engaging in threats or other acts of intimidation that interferes with another students desire or willingness to participate in the educational process
- Any verbal abuse of others, including slurs, name-calling, or derogatory statements because of that person's race, color, religion, national origin, disability, physical/personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression.
  
- Bullying/ Cyber Bullying

- Engaging in assault not involving bodily injury
- Misdemeanor criminal mischief (i.e. vandalism)
- Use of computers fax, or other electronic devices to send or receive or view obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, or racist media. Use of named devices to purchase materials or services of any kind.
- Sending or forwarding inappropriate emails containing offensive language. “Sexting” or using a cell phone or other personal communication device to send text or email messages or possessing text or email messages containing images reasonably interpreted as indecent or sexually suggestive while at school or school-related function.
- Any other acts of serious misconduct that disrupt the school environment in the classroom and/ or school.

## **EXPULSION & MANDATORY EXPULSION POLICIES**

Optional expulsion offenses include:

- Selling, giving, delivering to another person, possessing using, or being under the influence of marijuana, controlled drug, or other controlled substances, inhalants, dangerous drugs, or alcohol.
- Possessing a knife, which includes razor blades, utility knives, X-ACTO knives, or other objects that are designed to cut and that are reasonably determined under the circumstances to have been possessed by student for use as a threatening weapon.
- Engaging in assault, which is defined as intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury to a staff member or volunteer.
- Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of deadly conduct.
- Possession of a firearm off school property and not at a school activity but within 300 feet of school property.
- The student engages in conduct that contains the elements of criminal mischief (vandalism) regardless of whether the offense takes place at a school-related activity, on school property, or more than 300 feet from school property
- The student engages in conduct against another student that contains the elements of aggravated assault, regardless of whether the offense takes place at a school-related activity, on school property, or more than 300 feet from school property.
- The student engages in conduct involved a school that contains the elements of false alarm or report (such as terroristic threat) regardless of whether the offense takes place at a school-related activity, on school property, or more than 300 feet from school property line.
- The student engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of breach of computer security, regardless of whether the offense takes place at a school-related activity, on school property, or more than 300 feet from school property.
- Engaging in any conduct listed under required expulsion off of school property and not at a school activity but within 300 feet of the school. (on or off school property)

Required expulsion: Students shall be expelled from school if the student, on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property:

- Uses, exhibits, or possesses a firearm, which is defined as any device designed, made, or adapted to expel a projectile through a barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance or any device readily convertible to that use.
- Uses, exhibits, or possesses an illegal knife, which is defined as a knife with a blade over five and a half inches and also includes hand instruments designed to cut or stab by being thrown (martial arts stars), a dagger, a bowie knife, a sword, or a spear.
- Uses, exhibits, or possesses a club, which is an instrument that is specially designed to inflict serious bodily injury or death when a person is struck with the instrument and includes a black jack, nightstick, mace, or tomahawk.
- Uses, exhibits, or possesses a weapon listed as a prohibited weapon such as an explosive weapon, machine gun, short-barrel firearm, a firearm silencer, a switchblade knife, brass knuckles, armor piercing ammunition, a chemical dispensing device, or zip gun.

- Engaged in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of:
  - Aggravated assault, which includes causing serious bodily injury to another during the commission of an assault or using or exhibiting a deadly weapon during the commission of an assault and which may include damage to a person's eye caused by pointing a laser pen or laser device at another.
  - Sexual assault
  - Aggravated sexual assault, which includes causing or threatening to cause serious bodily injury to another during the commission of a sexual assault or using or exhibiting a deadly weapon during the commission of a sexual assault.
  - Arson
  - Murder
  - Capital murder or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder
  - Indecency with a child
  - Aggravated kidnapping
  - Aggravated robbery
  - Manslaughter
  - Criminally negligent homicide
  - Continued sexual abuse of a child or children
- A student shall be expelled for engaging in any conduct containing the elements of an offense for which expulsion is required while retaliating against an employee, on or off school property.

Disciplinary Options/Responses under Optional Expulsion:

- Required administrator/parent/student conferences
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities, including field trips, and commencement exercises/award ceremonies
- Restitution or restoration as applicable
- Referral to appropriate agencies
- Referral to juvenile court for legal action
- Suspension for up to three consecutive days per occurrence

## **IV. ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

The following guidelines have been established to minimize absenteeism. The Texas Board of Education allows for documented absences due to: Personal illness, death or serious illness in the family, recognized religious holidays, absences caused by order of government, inclement weather or dangerous conditions.

If a student misses the bus or oversleeps, it is the parent's responsibility to find a way for the child to get to school. Transportation problems are not considered excused absences.

In the event that a student is absent for the first part of the day, he or she is still encouraged to report to school. Students who report to school after 10:00 a.m. (Monday-Friday) however, will be considered absent for the entire day. In addition, students who report to school but leave before 10:00 a.m. will be considered absent for the entire school day.

When a student is absent, a parent or guardian must communicate in person or in writing with the school. This communication should clearly state the reason(s) for the absence. For extended absences, supporting documentation (ex: doctor's note) is required.

Any absence that is not supported with written documentation and/or does not fall within the guidelines of excused absences as defined by the Texas Board of Education will be considered unexcused.

Excessive absences will be considered in any retention decision. If a student is absent a total of more than 10 days, formal inquiries will be made and reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Students absent more than 10 days will have to meet with appropriate administration to discuss a plan of action for the remainder of the school year. In addition, students absent more than fifteen days will be considered for retention or expulsion.

Students who withdraw from Yellowstone are still eligible for application the following year, but will not be re-admitted in the same year withdrawn.

### **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

In light of the school's mission and the importance of education, it is imperative that students understand the importance of attending school EVERY day. Students and parents are encouraged to make every effort possible to attend school.

If a student is going to be absent, the parent is asked to call the school office before 7:45 a.m. the morning of the absence. The school will work with the parent and student to determine the appropriate procedures and completing missed assignments.

### **TRUANCY**

Any student caught skipping class is considered truant, and subject to immediate consequences ranging from short-term suspension to mandatory expulsion.

- **Skippping Class:** Students are considered "skippping" a class if they are unaccounted for 15 minutes or more without a pass. Consequences for skippping will be handled by the classroom teacher and/or the Head of School.

Truancy is a major violation of Yellowstone Academy regulations. Any student who misses school or a class without prior permission or who misses for reasons other than those outlined in the excused absence section may be considered truant. Truancy will be handled by the Head of School and/or the Executive Director or their designee.

### **TARDIES**

Students are also expected to arrive on time to school each day. School begins each day at 7:45 a.m. Students who arrive after 7:45 a.m. are considered tardy and will be marked as such on their attendance records. Repeated tardies may result in further disciplinary action or expulsion.

## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

Students kindergarten through eighth grade: The purpose of homework is to reinforce the skills taught in class. Generally, new skills will not be introduced as homework. Homework will be checked each morning. Students are responsible for returning all assignments promptly and completely. Homework that has been done with little effort (i.e. the student rushed through just to get done) is considered incomplete. At Yellowstone, there are no excuses for incomplete or missing homework. Students who have questions about their assignments are expected to ask their teachers.

Students who come to school with incomplete or missing assignments (regardless of the reason) will face any or all of the following consequences:

- Students will be required to spend their lunch/recess in order to finish their assignments that day.
- Students who still have not finished the previous night's homework by the end of the day will be required to stay in during extracurricular activities until all of their homework is complete.
- Teachers may also institute additional consequences at their own discretion, which may include additional assignments, homework contracts, homework plans, or other reasonable consequences deemed appropriate by the teacher.
- There will be a 10 point deduction for each day work turned in and a 50 will be given after the third day.

## **MAKE UP WORK POLICY**

When a student is absent, all missed work must be completed. It is the student's responsibility to consult with each of his or her teachers to make sure he or she is aware of all assignments. The time generally allowed to complete the work without penalty will be the number of days the student was absent. For example, if a student was absent for one day, then he or she will have one day to make up any missed work. Teachers will have regular make-up policies already in place, and students should be aware of those requirements.

This policy is intended to assist students who are willing to work hard to maintain their grades; however, the Director of Academics reserves the right to deny the privilege of making up missing assignments or re-doing assignments for any student who abuses this privilege.

## **CHEATING**

Cheating will absolutely not be tolerated at Yellowstone Academy. Students found to be cheating will receive a consequence ranging from in class discipline to out of school suspension, or even expulsion. Cheating includes copying someone else's work, having someone else complete an assignment, copying the answers from the answer key, going against the directions in seeking outside assistance, etc. The grade may reflect a reduction to reflect the act of cheating or plagiarism.

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism involves the stealing of someone else's ideas or words as one's own or the imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author (or person) and representation of them as one's original work. Students who copy an idea or actual text from another source and claim that it is their own will be guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarizing is considered against the law and will be punished at Yellowstone Academy. Penalties may range from detention to suspension. The grade may reflect a reduction to reflect the act of cheating or plagiarism.

## GRADING/REPORT CARDS

The school year is broken into four (4) grading periods. The marking periods are nine weeks to allow students several opportunities to demonstrate mastery of specific skills. In addition, multiple means are used to determine students' grades and assess their skill levels. At the end of each marking period, students will receive grades in all core academic classes.

The grading scale is as follows:

100-90=A
Excellent achievement at the assigned performance level
89-80=B
Above Average achievement at the assigned performance level
79-75=C
Achievement at the assigned performance level
74-70=D
Below Average achievement at the assigned performance level
F=50-69
Failure to achieve at the assigned performance level

Parents are REQUIRED to meet with their child's teacher(s) in order to receive their child's report cards for the first quarter. Parents of students with deficiencies in any academic area may also be required to pick up their child's progress reports and report card. Fourth quarter report cards will be sent home on the last day of school. Parents will have to wait until August to receive report cards if they are not picked up the last day of school.

## PROGRESS REPORTS

The school will distribute progress reports in student's weekly folders that provide information on how students are performing on specific academic standards and assessments. The progress report is not part of the student's formal academic record. Rather, it is an opportunity to communicate with parents/guardians about how students are doing. If a student is in danger of failing a class, parent conferences are available upon request. Teachers can also request conferences with parent/guardians, and parents/guardians may call or request a conference with any teacher at any point in the year.

## FINAL GRADES

The final year-end grade for a course is the numerical average of the four (4) marking periods. Grades are rounded to the nearest whole number. If a student receives a yearly grade lower than 70, he or she fails that course for the year. A Steps to Success plan must be in place for students to be considered for retention.

## PROMOTION POLICY

To be considered for promotion to the next grade, students must meet at least two of the following three criteria for ALL of the core skill classes:

- Have a final yearly grade of 70 or above in three out of four academic subjects, (1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade) and an overall academic average of 70 or above.
- 'Meet Standards' or 'Exceed Standards' on required academic tests.

If a student does not meet the above criteria for promotion to the next grade, he or she may only be promoted at the discretion of the Director of Academics and the grade placement committee. Students who are grade placed may be denied the privileges associated with being promoted (e.g. participating in the promotion exercises, etc.)

Student retention occurs when a Yellowstone Academy student must repeat a grade level due to poor academic performance and /or poor attendance. The Yellowstone Academy instructional staff and administration reserve the right to retain any students who fail to demonstrate academic mastery in core subject areas. Retained students will be required to repeat an entire grade level depending upon the individual student's performance. Grade level retention meetings and notices happen during the second semester of the school year, and input from the instructional staff members at that particular grade level is considered when making retention decisions.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trip lessons are provided at least once per semester to students who are eligible. Field trips are designed to complement instruction that is occurring in the classroom, but only those students who earn the trip through academics and appropriate behavior will be invited to attend. Field trips may include in-school or off-campus field trips. By signing the Commitment to Excellence contract parents agree to allow their child to participate in those trips for which he or she is eligible. On some trips, a limited number of parents and volunteers may be invited to help chaperone. Only those parents who have been actively involved at the school will be considered to participate in such events.

## **PARTICIPATION IN CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Co-curricular activities are those that directly relate to a body of courses offered by the school. These include student groups that directly relate to the school's curriculum, address the subject matter that is actually taught, or soon will be taught, in a regularly offered course, for which the subject matter of the activity concerns the body of the course as a whole, participation may be required for a course, or for which participation in the activity results in academic credit. Such co-curricular activities could include: musical groups, dance, photo club, boys and girls scouts, computer club, art club, athletics. Students who participate in extracurricular activities are subject to no-pass/no-play and are suspended until the grade is brought up.

## **Athletic Standards of Conduct**

Yellowstone Academy student athletes are expected to be supportive of their school, team, classmates, teammates, teachers, coaches, and administrators. They are expected to be conscientious students, peer leaders and role models, and to participate in service and mission projects. Most importantly, YA student athletes are expected to do all things to the glory of God.

In addition to meeting the above expectations, athletes must abide by the following requirements. Athletes that do not abide by the following requirements are subject to discipline by the athletic department and/or school administration.

Yellowstone Academy athletes are expected to...

- Show good sportsmanship at all times
- Obey all team rules as set forth by the team coach.
- Submit and respect to the authority of their coaches, teachers, and administrators.
- Submit and respect to the authority of all games officials.
- Participate only in activities that reflect positively on their school, team, or themselves
- Use appropriate language free of profanity or improper suggestion or innuendo.

Student athletes in possession of or use tobacco products or students under the influence of, possession of or attempting to sell alcoholic beverages will be disciplined by the school administration. In addition, upon first offense the athlete will receive a two week suspension from participation in games, traveling with the team, and suiting up with the team. Second time offenses could result in suspension of up to one year.

Student athletes under the influence of, in possession of or attempting to sell illegal drugs or those involved in any immoral sexual activity or those in possession of any pornography, illicit pictures of literature will be disciplined by the school administration. In addition, the athlete will be suspended from all athletic activity for one year.

Student athletes will obey all school rules as set forth in the Yellowstone Academy student handbook.

## **COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY**

Computers are used to support learning and enhance instruction. Students will use computers frequently in their academic environment. However, all of the computer privileges depend on a student's using the technology in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. A student may not:

- Use the internet for any illegal purpose
- Use any social networking site (Facebook, My space, Bebo, Twitter, MOCO, IMBU, etc.)
- Use profane, obscene, impolite or abusive language
- Change computer files that do not belong to the user;
- Violate someone else's privacy
- Share his/her password with anyone except adults at the school

Unacceptable use of the internet will result in immediate revocation of access privileges and/or other consequences.

## **TEXTBOOKS & SCHOOL OWNED INSTRUCTION MATERIALS**

The school will provide each student with a variety of textbooks and instructional materials (including workbooks, magazines, journals, library books, agendas, jump drives, etc) It is the responsibility of each student to keep up with their textbooks and instructional materials borrowed from the school. The school has a very limited budget for funding such instructional materials; therefore parents of students who lose or damage any of these materials will be charged the appropriate replacement costs and will be expected to pay these charges promptly. The Dean of Students will determine the charge for such lost or damaged items.

## **TUITION PAYMENT & EXPECTATIONS**

Tuition is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month and late after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month. Failure to do so, means that students CANNOT participate in ANY EXTRA CURRICULUR ACTIVITIES and possibly be removed from school. If at any time there is a financial change in your household please contact Lenora Cross at (713)741-8000, ext 305.

# V. SIGNATURE PAGE

## **Bus Behavior Contract** *(must be signed/returned for any family using the Yellowstone bus services)*

I understand that riding the bus at Yellowstone Academy is a privilege that is not guaranteed to any child.

I understand that any student who gets out of his/her seat without permission or acts unruly in any way (including throwing things, yelling loudly, using profanity, hitting other students, or any other action that might distract the bus driver) will be suspended immediately from the bus for AT LEAST a week. Repeat offenders may be expelled from the bus for the remainder of the year.

I understand that students that break any of the school's policies regarding prohibited behaviors will be immediately expelled from the bus.

I understand that students and parents who do not have their own transportation are still expected to get to and from school an even if the student is suspended from the bus.

I understand that the school administrators will enforce this policy based upon the word for the bus driver/and or bus monitor and that they will not second-guess the word of the adult on the bus. I understand that the school administrators will enforce this policy to protect the safety of all students.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

-----

## **Student Handbook Confirmation**

As the parent/guardian of:

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_,

I confirm that I have read and understand all rules, policies, and procedures outlined in the 2015-16 Yellowstone Academy Student Handbook. I understand that Yellowstone Academy reserves the right to add, remove, or change any policy in this handbook at any time. In the event that there is a change, I further understand that Yellowstone will send me a written notice and an amendment to this handbook.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*This Signature Page will be kept on file for the 2016-17 school year.*