Irving Independent School District
Attendance Taking Procedures

The Texas Education Agency *Student Attendance Accounting Handbook* (*Handbook*) contains the official attendance accounting rules and regulations for all public school districts in Texas. Relevant excerpts from the *Student Attendance Accounting Handbook* are provided in Appendix A. The *Handbook* is the official standard of required information for all attendance accounting systems. One of the requirements in the *Student Attendance Accounting Handbook* is for districts to create written attendance taking procedures. In creating these written procedures, it is not the intent of the Irving Independent School District to change or alter any rules, regulations, or reporting requirements specified in the *Handbook*.

Irving ISD recognizes the importance of consistent and accurate reporting of attendance. The *Handbook* states that the primary purpose for the TEA's collection of student attendance data is to ensure that Foundation School Program (FSP) funds can be allocated to Texas's public schools. The Superintendent of Schools, principals, and teachers are responsible to the Board of Trustees and to the state for maintaining current, complete and correct attendance records in compliance with the Handbook. The procedures described in this document specifically address taking attendance for FSP funding purposes in Irving ISD.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

While simple in concept, the taking of complete and accurate attendance for FSP funding purposes is a complex process. In order for the district to receive the maximum amount of funding for all students and to adhere to all attendance laws and regulations, the following personnel must be aware of their individual responsibilities and must work together in order to accurately record student attendance and to retain required documentation supporting claims for FSP attendance funding.

**Teacher**

The Teacher will:

- Comply with District attendance accounting procedures
- Take attendance at the appointed snapshot time each day
- Sign and date the Teacher Six Week Attendance Summary Reports verifying the accuracy of the student attendance data
- Maintain accurate documentation to support student/class attendance records, including documentation to support changes to posted absences

**Attendance Clerk**

The Elementary Attendance Clerk will:

- Comply with District attendance accounting procedures
- Post all attendance data in the Student Management System on a daily basis according to the District procedures
- Print Office Report for verification and check report against sign in/out book
- Check administrator list of students placed in discipline setting (ISS/OSS) on daily basis
- Contact parent/guardian to verify /document absence reasons
- Manage compulsory attendance at the campus level
- Manage Teacher Summary Report each six weeks for teacher/principal verification signatures
• Maintain all documentation in attendance audit box for five years

The Secondary Attendance Clerk will:

• Comply with District attendance accounting procedures
• Post all attendance data in the Student Management System on a daily basis according to the District procedures
• Code field trips and out of building trips from sponsor attendance list signed and dated by sponsor
• Check administrator list of students placed in discipline setting (ISS/OSS) on daily basis
• Call or email parents to verify absence
• Support compulsory attendance at the campus level
• Run error scan (start date is first day of school) and verify attendance every day
• Run class to daily conversion process daily to post all absence code updates (secondary class attendance campuses only) at the end of each day
• Print daily Verify Class Attendance Log report for review at end of each day
• Run Daily Master Attendance Report listing each student and each period the student has been counted absent
• Manage Teacher Summary Report each six weeks for teacher/principal verification signatures
• Maintain all attendance change documentation, including any substitute paper roll, in attendance audit box for five years

Assistant Principal

The assistant principal will:

• Notify the appropriate Help Desk Advisor when a LEP student is removed from the instructional setting to a disciplinary assignment that results in discontinuation of services for more than 5 consecutive days
• Communicate with the appropriate attendance clerk when a discipline assignment results in days of Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), In-School Suspension (ISS), and/or DAEP (SRC) assignment

Campus Principal

The campus principal will:

• Implement District attendance accounting procedures
• Designate Elementary Records Clerk to support the attendance process during any temporary absence of the attendance clerk
• Verify and sign Teacher Attendance Summary Reports each six weeks

Record Retention

All public schools in Texas must maintain records to reflect the average daily attendance (ADA) for the allocation of funds by the TEA. Information for all FSP attendance reports must be available for audit purposes for five years from the completion of the school year. All Irving ISD attendance clerks have an “audit box.” All printed reports and documentation supporting changes to or corrections to student absences should be grouped by six week reporting periods within each year in the audit box. The audit box should be clearly marked and securely stored.
Time of Day for Attendance Taking

Each campus must determine attendance for all grades by the absences recorded at the one particular point in time during the second or fifth instructional hour of the day or its equivalent. For the school year 2016-2017 the official time attendance will be recorded for all elementary/early childhood schools is 9:30 a.m. or 1:45 for PM early childhood schools. Secondary principals identified the official time of day attendance will be recorded at their campus on the district Time of Day for Attendance Taking document. Once a time of day for attendance has been established it cannot be changed without school board approval.

Students present at the time the attendance snapshot is taken are counted present for FSP funding purposes. Having students sign in is not an acceptable method of taking attendance. With the exception of any reason listed in the Student Attendance Accounting Handbook, students who are absent at the time the attendance snapshot is taken are counted absent for FSP funding purposes. Students who are on campus at the time attendance is taken but who are not in their assigned classroom are considered in attendance for FSP purposes provided they were with a campus official (e.g., nurse, counselor, principal, etc.). Class admit slips or other documentation supporting that a student was with a campus official must be retained by the attendance clerk for audit purposes.

"Tardies"

For official attendance accounting and FSP purposes, "tardies" do not exist. However, locally designed codes may be implemented to indicate that —

- a student arrived late to class before official roll call and was counted present for ADA and FSP purposes, or
- a student arrived late to class after official roll call and was counted absent for ADA and FSP purposes.

Adequate documentation that defines all locally designed codes must be retained with all other auditable records.

Irving ISD Elementary Attendance Taking Procedures

1. The designated attendance accounting time for all elementary/early childhood schools is 9:30 a.m. or 1:30 for PM early childhood schools. Schools. It is critical to understand that except for the reasons listed in section 3.6.3 of the Handbook (Appendix A), a student must be on campus by the designated attendance taking time to be coded as anything other than “absent” for FSP funding purposes.

2. A student must be present at school at 9:30 a.m. or 1:45 p.m. (early childhood schools) to be counted present for Foundation School Program (FSP)/Average Daily Attendance purposes.

3. Absences are reported from Student Plus to the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) for FSP attendance purposes. Except as indicated below, students who arrive at school after 9:30 a.m. must be marked as “Absent” in order for FSP attendance to be correctly reported in PEIMS.

4. The Student Attendance Accounting Handbook lists two exceptions in which a student not on campus during the attendance taking time may be considered present for FSP purposes.

   a. The student is on a school sponsored activity such as a field trip.
b. The student comes to school after attendance taking time with a note from the doctor. A note from the parent is not sufficient documentation for FSP accounting, although the parent’s note may be used to support the locally defined school attendance code of an excused absence.

5. The following scenarios address situations in which the student is at school, but not in the teacher of record’s classroom at 9:30 a.m. or 1:45 (PM early childhood schools).

a. The entire class is scheduled for “specials” or some other activity with another professional staff member who has responsibility for instruction of the entire class. The homeroom teacher escorts the class to the scheduled activity and gives supervision over to another teacher or professional staff member. The homeroom teacher records the students’ attendance upon return to the classroom.

b. The homeroom teacher releases a student to go to the library, the counselor, the nurse, or to some other staff member. The teacher may not have escorted the student to the destination but does know that the student should be with another professional in the building. The teacher records the student as present.

c. The entire class is going on an approved field trip under the teacher’s supervision prior to the designated attendance taking time. Neither the students nor the teacher will be in the classroom at 9:30 a.m. The teacher should mark absences on a paper class roll and give it to the campus attendance clerk, noting the nature of the field trip and signing the document before giving it to the clerk. The attendance clerk will enter absences on the computer and place the signed roll in the campus attendance audit box.

d. The student has been assigned to ISS. Assignment to ISS creates a PEIMS discipline record. In order to maintain documentation that the student is present in ISS, the professional who has charge of the student in ISS at 9:30 a.m. should notify the attendance clerk that the student is present using a written roll or email. The clerk marks the student PRE and places the documentation in the audit box. If the homeroom teacher has not marked the student as absent, the written documentation from the ISS professional should still be placed in the audit box to support both the ISS placement and the student’s FSP attendance.

6. Teachers record student absences in eSchool Plus. The campus attendance clerk moves the data from eSchool Plus into Student Plus for storage and processing to PEIMS. Once the attendance clerk starts moving absences information, the teacher can no longer make changes to the attendance recorded in eSchool Plus. Follow the procedures listed below to keep attendance taking timely and to avoid accidentally locking teachers out of taking attendance.

a. At 9:30 a.m./1:45 p.m. teachers are given a signal to remind them to take attendance.

b. At 9:45 a.m./2:00 p.m. the attendance clerk runs the Attendance Missing Submission Report and sends an email to any teacher who has not entered absences in eSchool Plus.

c. At 10:00 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. the attendance clerk begins entering office attendance and running processes.

Irving ISD Secondary Attendance Taking Procedures

1. For FSP funding purposes, attendance will be taken and submitted by teachers at the time designated by each secondary campus in Appendix B. It is critical to understand that except for the reasons listed in section 3.6.3 of the Handbook (Appendix A), a student must be on campus.
by the designated attendance taking time to be coded as anything other than “absent” for FSP funding purposes.

2. Any student not in the assigned class at the designated official time of attendance will be counted absent by the classroom teacher.

3. During the period in which FSP attendance is being taken, the “tardy” designation will only be used by the teacher if a late-arriving student is actually in class at the designated time for taking attendance at the campus; otherwise the student will be marked as absent. The “tardy” designation will not be used by the attendance office to override the teacher’s mark during the period in which FSP attendance is taken.

4. Written documentation is required for the attendance office to override the absence recorded by the teacher for any student out of class under the supervision of another school official at the official time of attendance or absent from school for one of the reasons listed in section 3.5.3 of the Handbook. This documentation will be provided to the attendance office by the official in charge of the student at that time, or by the parent, if appropriate. The attendance clerk will enter the appropriate code to override the absence recorded by the classroom teacher upon receipt of the proper documentation.
APPENDIX A

Extract

Student Attendance Accounting Handbook 2016-2017

The Student Attendance Accounting Handbook (handbook) contains the official attendance accounting rules and regulations for all public school districts in Texas. This handbook is the official standard of required information for all attendance accounting systems, whether manual or automated. No school district official (or any other person in your school district) has the authority, either implied or actual, to change or alter any rules, regulations, or reporting requirements specified in this handbook.

1.1 Student Attendance and FSP Funding

The primary purpose for the TEA’s collection of student attendance data is to ensure that FSP funds can be allocated to Texas’s public schools. All public schools in Texas must maintain records to reflect the average daily attendance (ADA) for the allocation of these and other funds by the TEA. For districts to receive the maximum amount of funding for all their students, the following personnel must be aware of their individual responsibilities and must work together to assemble the required documentation at the earliest possible time: administrators, special program staff, teachers, and attendance personnel.

Information for all FSP attendance reports must be available for audit purposes for five years from the completion of the school year. Superintendents, principals, and teachers are responsible to their school board and to the state for maintaining accurate and current attendance records, regardless of the attendance accounting system in use.

1.5 Auditing of Attendance Information

Regardless of where attendance records are filed or stored, they must be readily available for audit by the Financial Audits Division of the TEA. Auditors have the authority to examine attendance records for any year for which your district is required to retain records (see Section 2). If auditors detect errors during an audit, the TEA will either assess an adjustment to subsequent allocations of state funds or require your district to refund the total amount of the adjustment when the audit is finalized.

2.2.5 Attendance System Procedures Manual

Your district or charter school must maintain a procedures manual that provides specific, detailed information on the district’s school attendance accounting system. This procedure manual must include the following information:

- how and when teachers are to take official attendance, how attendance is entered into the attendance accounting system, which position(s) is/are responsible for the coding of special programs (such as career and technical, special education, Pregnancy Related Services, etc.)
• how changes to special programs are to be documented, how student membership is to be reconciled between the teacher rosters and the attendance accounting database
• how your district will maintain attendance accounting records (including computerized records, period absence slips, and official calendar) after the completion of the school year
• what backup systems are in place to protect the attendance accounting records
• which position is responsible for the maintenance and security of the attendance accounting records

For paperless accounting systems in which absences are posted directly to the electronic system, sufficient paper documentation to support any changes to posted absences (see 2.2.3 "Paperless" Electronic Attendance Accounting Systems)

The principal of each campus is responsible for reviewing his or her respective Campus Summary Reports for completeness and accuracy. A principal should compare reports from the TEA, which reflect Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data, to locally produced reports for reasonableness and accuracy. By signing the Campus Summary Report—or, in the case of a paperless attendance accounting system, by indicating his or her approval of data electronically—a principal affirms that he or she has checked, or caused to be checked, the accuracy and authenticity of the attendance data.

The teacher who initially records an absence is responsible for the accuracy of the report and attests to the validity of the data with his or her signature—or, in the case of a paperless attendance accounting system, with his or her entry of those data using the teacher’s logon with a distinct secret password.

The attendance personnel generating absence summaries and/or transcribing the absences or coding information into the accounting system are responsible for adhering to all laws and regulations pertaining to student attendance accounting. Each person entering data into the attendance accounting system must sign an affidavit attesting that the data he or she has entered are true and correct to the best of his or her knowledge—or, in the case of a paperless attendance accounting system, indicate electronically that the person attests that the data he or she has entered are true and correct to the best of his or her knowledge.

3.6.2 Time of Day for Attendance Taking

Each campus must determine attendance for all grades by the absences recorded at the one particular point in time the campus has chosen for roll to be taken (a snapshot, e.g., 9:45 a.m.) during the second or fifth instructional hour of the day or its equivalent.

Your campus may select an official attendance-taking time that is not during the second or fifth instructional hour of the day if your local school board has adopted a district policy allowing for recording absences in an alternate period or hour. The policy may —

   o allow for each campus to choose an alternate attendance-taking time for the campus as a whole,
allow for each campus to choose an alternate attendance-taking time for certain groups of students as described in 3.6.2.2, or
allow for both of these circumstances.

3.6.3 Requirements for a Student's Being Considered Present or Absent for FSP (Funding) Purposes

For official attendance accounting purposes, "excused" and "unexcused" absences do not exist. Students present at the time the attendance snapshot is taken are counted present for funding purposes. Note that having students sign in is not an acceptable method of taking attendance. With the exception of any reason listed in the following paragraphs, students who are absent at the time the attendance snapshot is taken are counted absent for funding purposes. Students who are on campus at the time attendance is taken but who are not in their assigned classroom are considered in attendance for FSP purposes provided they were with a campus official (e.g., nurse, counselor, principal, etc.). Class admit slips or other documentation supporting that a student was with a campus official must be retained for audit purposes.

A student not actually on campus at the time attendance is taken may be considered in attendance for FSP purposes if the student —

- is enrolled in and attending an off-campus dual credit program course (see 3.6.2.2 Alternate Attendance-Taking Time for Certain Student Populations for instructions on how to record attendance for these students).
- is participating in an activity that is approved by your local school board and is under the direction of a professional staff member of your school district or an adjunct staff member. The adjunct staff member must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree and be eligible for participation in the Teacher Retirement System of Texas.

Students participating in any activity that is not approved by your local school board or without certified district personnel supervision must be counted absent. For attendance to qualify for funding purposes, the certified district staff member or adjunct staff member must be accompanying the students as an official of your school district for the specific purpose of supervising the students and must be approved by your school board to supervise the activity. For example, students would be reported present if they are participating in 4H activities that are supervised solely by a county extension service agent who has been approved by the local school board as an adjunct staff member.

- is participating in a mentorship approved by district personnel to serve as one or more of the advanced measures needed to complete the Distinguished Achievement Program outlined in 19 TAC §74.13(a)(3).
- is a Medicaid-eligible child participating in the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) programs implemented by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. Such students may be excused for up to 1 day at a time without loss of ADA.
- misses school for the purpose of observing religious holy days, including traveling for that purpose. Travel days for which the student is considered in attendance are limited to not more than 1 day for travel to and 1 day for travel from the site where the student will
observe the holy days. Your school district may elect to excuse additional travel days; however, the student would be considered absent for the additional travel days for attendance accounting purposes. Your school district is responsible for determining what constitutes a religious holy day for purposes of excusing absences. The agency does not maintain a list of days that qualify as religious holy days for purposes of being considered in attendance for FSP purposes. However, we do provide the following guidance: To be considered a religious holy day, the day should be one generally recognized by the student’s religious denomination as a holy day that is required to be observed by all members of that denomination. Church retreats, camps, and mission trips and individual religious rites (baptisms, christenings, bar mitzvahs, etc.) are not considered holy days.

- is in grades 6 through 12 and misses school for the purpose of sounding “Taps” at a military honors funeral held in Texas for a deceased veteran.

- misses school for the purpose of attending a required court appearance, including traveling for that purpose. Travel days for which the student is considered in attendance are limited to not more than 1 day for travel to and 1 day for travel from the site where the student is required to appear in court. Your school district may elect to excuse additional travel days; however, the student would be considered absent for the additional travel days for attendance accounting purposes.

A court appearance is considered to be required if the law (federal or state) or the court mandates an appearance by the student in a criminal, civil, or traffic matter. Examples of required court appearances would be appearances in response to a jury summons in the name of the student, a subpoena in the name of the student, or a traffic ticket marked “You Must Appear” or “Court Appearance Required.” Additional examples would be a student’s appearance in court as a plaintiff or defendant or as the subject of a court proceeding, such as an adoption or custody proceeding. Acceptable forms of documentation may be a copy of a pleading or other document filed with the court, a notice from the court clerk regarding a hearing or trial date, a jury summons, a subpoena, etc.

**Important:** Absences to meet with probation officers and other absences related to court-ordered activities outside the courtroom do not qualify as required court appearances.

- misses school for the purpose of serving as an election clerk, including traveling for that purpose. Travel days for which the student is considered in attendance are limited to not more than 1 day for travel to and 1 day for travel from the site where the student is serving as an election clerk. Your school district may elect to excuse additional travel days; however, the student would be considered absent for the additional travel days for attendance accounting purposes.

  To serve as an election clerk, a student must —
  
  - be eligible to serve as an election clerk under the Texas Election Code, §32.051(c), or
  
  - be at least 16 years of age, have the consent of the principal of the school the student attends, be a United States citizen, and have completed any training course required by the entity holding the election.

- misses school for the purpose of appearing at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the student’s application for United States citizenship, including traveling for that purpose. Travel days for which the student is
considered in attendance are limited to not more than 1 day for travel to and 1 day for travel from the site of the governmental office. Your school district may elect to excuse additional travel days; however, the student would be considered absent for the additional travel days for attendance accounting purposes.

- misses school for the purpose of taking part in a United States naturalization oath ceremony, including traveling for that purpose. Travel days for which the student is considered in attendance are limited to not more than 1 day for travel to and 1 day for travel from the site of the ceremony. Your school district may elect to excuse additional travel days; however, the student would be considered absent for the additional travel days for attendance accounting purposes.

- is temporarily absent because of a documented appointment with a health care professional. A documented appointment with a health care professional includes an appointment of a student diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder with a health care practitioner to receive a generally recognized service for persons with that disorder. To be considered temporarily absent, the student must begin classes or return to school on the same day of the appointment. The appointment should be supported by a document, such as a note from the health care professional. The appointment must be a face-to-face consultation with a health care professional. A consultation over the phone or via video (telemedicine) is not considered an appointment with a health care professional.

- is in his or her junior or senior year of high school and misses school for the purpose of visiting an institution of higher education accredited by a generally recognized accrediting organization to determine the student's interest in attending the institution.

Your district 1) may not excuse for this purpose more than two days during a student's junior year and two days during a student’s senior year and 2) must adopt a) a policy stating when an absence will be excused for this purpose and b) a procedure for verifying students' visits to institutions of higher education.

- is participating, with local school board approval, in a short-term (for example, 5-day) class that is provided by the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI) or the Texas School for the Deaf (TSD) at a location other than the student’s campus. The student must not be considered in attendance for FSP purposes on any day the student is traveling between the student’s district and the location of the class but is not attending class. (However, travel days may be excused for compulsory attendance purposes. Your school district is responsible for obtaining documentation of the student’s class attendance from the TSBVI or TSD.

Your school district must allow a student whose absence is excused for any of the previously listed reasons a reasonable amount of time to make up school work missed on these days. If the student satisfactorily completes the school work, the day of absence is counted as a day of compulsory attendance.

If your school district excuses a student’s absence for any of the previously listed purposes (counts the student as present for FSP purposes), the district must keep documentation related to the
absence on file for audit purposes. Your school district should establish a local policy describing what constitutes acceptable documentation for each of the listed absences.

3.6.6 Attendance Accounting During Testing Days

If standardized achievement tests or final exams are administered during the period designated for attendance taking, staff should record absences just before, during, or immediately after the exam.

A student who is exempt from taking exams and who attends school on an exam day only to "sign in" during the attendance-taking time has not met the minimum 2-through-4-hour requirement for that day (see 3.2.2 Funding Eligibility).

3.6.8 "Tardies"

For official attendance accounting and FSP purposes, "tardies" do not exist. However, locally designed codes may be implemented to indicate that —

- a student arrived late to class before official roll call and was counted present for ADA and FSP purposes, or

- a student arrived late to class after official roll call and was counted absent for ADA and FSP purposes.

Adequate documentation that defines all locally designed codes must be retained with all other auditable records.
## APPENDIX B

Irving Independent School District

Secondary School Time of Day for Attendance Taking

### 2016-2017 School Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Attendance Period</th>
<th>Official Attendance Taking Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Barbara Cardwell Career Preparatory Center | 4th  
11:30-12:48                      | 12:05 p.m.                        |
| Irving HS                             | 2nd                                | 10:15 a.m.                      |
| Jack E. Singley Academy               | 2nd/6th (A/B block)                | 11:00 a.m.                      |
| MacArthur HS                          | 2nd                                | 9:40 a.m.                       |
| Nimitz HS                             | 2nd                                | 10:20 a.m.                      |
| Secondary Reassignment                | 2nd                                | 10:00 a.m.                      |
| Austin MS                             | 2nd                                | 9:25 a.m.                       |
| Bowie MS                              | 2nd                                | 9:35 a.m.                       |
| Crockett MS                           | 2nd                                | 9:45 a.m.                       |
| De Zavala                             | 2nd                                | 9:40 a.m.                       |
| Houston MS                            | 2nd                                | 9:15 a.m.                       |
| Johnson MS                            | 2nd                                | 9:45 a.m.                       |
| Lamar                                 | 2nd                                | 10:00 a.m.                      |
| Travis                                | 2nd                                | 9:45 a.m.                       |

Note: The official attendance taking time for all elementary schools, including the early childhood schools, is 9:30 a.m. and 1:45 p.m. for afternoon early childhood schools.