



Upper School Student & Family Handbook

2024 - 2025

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Welcome Letter

Yellowstone Schools Families,

On behalf of our Board of Trustees and our faculty and staff, we want to welcome you to the 2024 - 2025 school year! This year marks our 21st year of school operation. Whether this is your first year with us or you are a returning family, we are thrilled that you have chosen to enroll your child at Yellowstone Schools.

At Yellowstone, we believe all students are born with purpose and destined for success. In many ways, this handbook is a reminder of that promise and our commitment to help make that promise a reality. As you will see, we take this work seriously and encourage you to familiarize yourself with this handbook. You play a critical role in helping us realize our collective mission: to inspire, empower, and invest in our students to achieve their highest potential and fulfill their intended purpose.

The Board of Trustees and School Leadership will work alongside you to make this the best year yet for the entire Yellowstone family. Yellowstone has assembled an exceptional faculty and staff with deep knowledge, experience, and passion for our mission. As a community school, we invite you to be part of our mission in various ways, along with numerous community volunteers and leaders who will all support the teaching and learning in our classrooms.

We are blessed to have you as part of the Yellowstone family, and we look forward to all that we will accomplish together this year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marian Williams".

Marian Williams (Principal)
Jazzminn Richey (Director of Student Support)
Carranda Comeaux (Lead Counselor)
James Mosley (Superintendent)

School Calendar

Yellowstone Schools 2024-2025

School Calendar

| July 24 | | | | | | |
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| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
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| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

| August 24 | | | | | | |
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| September 24 | | | | | | |
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| October 24 | | | | | | |
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| November 24 | | | | | | |
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| December 24 | | | | | | |
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| January 25 | | | | | | |
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| February 25 | | | | | | |
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| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | |

| March 25 | | | | | | |
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| April 25 | | | | | | |
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| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
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| May 25 | | | | | | |
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| June 25 | | | | | | |
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| 29 | 30 | | | | | |









Start and End of Quarters
Q1 Aug. 14 - Oct. 11; **Q2** Oct. 16 - Dec. 20;
Q3 Jan. 8 - Mar. 7; **Q4** Mar. 17 - May 23

STAFF START AND END DATES

New Instructional Staff: July 25, 2024 - May 30, 2025
 Returning Instructional Staff: July 29, 2024 - May 30, 2025

- Jul. 1-5: Closed Campus
- Jul. 15: 11 Month Staff Starts>Returns
- Jul. 17-19: Leadership Summit
- Jul. 25-26: New Instructional Staff Starts
- Jul. 29: All Staff Returns
- Jul. 29-Aug. 13: Teacher In-Service
- Aug. 7&8: Family Orientation
- Aug. 14: First Day of School
- Sep. 2: Labor Day -- School Holiday
- Sept. 16: Teacher In-Service
- Oct. 4: Teacher In-Service
- Oct. 14: Indigenous Peoples' Day -- School Holiday
- Oct. 15: Teacher In-Service
- Oct. 19: Staff Required Work Day
- Nov. 4: Teacher In-Service
- Nov. 25-29: Thanksgiving Break
- Dec. 17: Upper School -- Fall Semester Showcase
- Dec. 19: Lower School -- Christmas Program

- Dec. 20: Last Day of Semester 1 -- Early Dismissal
- Dec. 23-Jan. 3: Winter Break
- Jan. 6-7: Teacher In-Service
- Jan. 8: Students Return; Begin Semester 2
- Jan. 20: MLK Day -- School Holiday
- Jan. 25: Staff Required Work Day
- Feb. 14: Teacher In-Service
- Feb. 17: President's Day -- School Holiday
- Feb. 25: Upper School -- Black History Program
- Feb. 27: Lower School -- Black History Program
- Feb. 28: Teacher In-Service
- Mar. 10-14: Spring Break
- Apr. 18: Good Friday -- School Holiday
- Apr. 21: Teacher In-Service
- May 23: End Grading Period 4
- May 26: Memorial Day -- School Holiday
- May 29: Last Day of School -- Early Dismissal

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
|  | Regular School Day |  | First or Last Day of Grading Period |
|  | Teacher Inservice - No Students |  | First or Last Day of School |
|  | Special Events |  | Early Release |
|  | School Holiday - Campus Closed |  | Required Work Day |
| | |  | Campus Closed |

Yellowstone Schools Guiding Statements

Belief

We believe all students are born with purpose and destined for success.

Mission Statement

We seek to inspire, empower, and invest in our students to achieve their highest potential and fulfill their intended purpose.

Vision

By 2026, We will provide a Life-Changing Experience to 750 students in PK3-12th grade on one campus.

Theme

Purpose + Responsibility

Student Pledge

As a Yellowstone Lion, I pledge to
make positive and responsible choices
while respecting myself and others.
I am determined to do my personal best
and live life with purpose and integrity.
Today, I will learn more, so that I can be more.
Today, I will strive for excellence.
Lions, PRIDE!

Core Values

Positivity: At Yellowstone, we smile first. We are a positive presence on campus and extend good-natured grace and enthusiasm in all personal interactions.

Responsibility: We follow through on our promises and commitments. We own our actions and will never settle for less than our best effort.

Integrity: We demonstrate integrity at every opportunity, doing the right thing, no matter what.

Determination: We anticipate and overcome challenges. We are resilient in the face of obstacles and are committed to the success of every member of the Yellowstone community.

Excellence: We hold everyone (families, students, colleagues) to the highest standard of excellence and constantly look for ways to enhance the Yellowstone experience.

Yellowstone Upper School Commitment to PRIDE Values

Teachers will...

- Create a positive learning environment, assume positive intent from students and colleagues, and notice positive, wanted behavior from students. Teachers will focus on student strengths and offer support when needed to ensure student success.
- Be responsible for planning engaging, relevant, and rigorous lessons and activities, embracing their role in student growth and success. Teachers will be responsible for creating a safe and nurturing learning environment, addressing the whole child's needs.
- Live lives of integrity, leading by example, staying true to their personal values
- With diligence and determination work to meet each student where they are and work to grow each student to their highest potential. Teachers will continuously work to improve themselves as educators, not allowing any barrier to their success and growth.
- Model excellence on campus by working to the highest standards and exceeding expectations.

Caregivers will...

- Foster a positive relationship between school and home by being responsive to school communication and assuming positive intent in interactions with staff and students.
- Model responsibility to their scholars by prioritizing attendance and punctuality as well as adhering to school uniform guidelines. Caregivers will ensure students have the necessary supplies, and they will communicate any needs with the school for support.
- Live lives of integrity, leading by example, staying true to their personal values
- Relentlessly advocate for their child, insisting they thrive with the appropriate support. Caregivers will encourage their children to learn from mistakes, accept feedback, and use all of this to grow.
- Hold themselves, their children, and our staff to the highest standards and accept nothing less than the absolute best from and for their children.

Students will...

- Learn how to self-regulate their emotions and strive for positive relationships with teachers and peers. With guidance, students will practice gratitude and assume positive intent.
- Do the things they are expected to do and accept the results of their actions. Students will help to keep Yellowstone Schools a safe place by making safe choices and using safe words.
- Do the right thing, no matter what. Students are committed to academic honesty and following school procedures and expectations.
- Strive to complete good work and won't give up. Students will give their full effort, and work to overcome obstacles to become their best selves.
- Constantly go above and beyond expectations and exceed high standards of behavioral and academic success.

The **PRIDE** Five

UPPER SCHOOL COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

Positivity

My interactions will be positive & polite.

Responsibility

I will be on time, in uniform, & prepared for class with all electronics off & out of sight.

Integrity

I will make smart choices publicly & privately.

Determination

I will strive to overcome challenges & obstacles, instead of making excuses in order to reach my goals.

Excellence

I will give my best effort at all times.



Uniform Policy & Dress Code

Students are expected to be in uniform every day. Teachers will perform uniform checks as students arrive to class. If students are out of uniform, staff will contact caregivers to bring the appropriate item for the student to wear. Non-uniform accessories and jackets will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the day. Students with more than three uniform infractions in a quarter will be contacted by an administrator for further clarification. Caregivers and students must work together to ensure proper dress code policy is followed.

Each student will receive two logo embroidered polo-style tops from Yellowstone Schools as well as a spirit sweater. Additional shirts in any of the school colors may also be purchased at retailers near you. Additionally, the appropriate plain color, polo-style shirts can be taken to The Needle for embroidery only for a small fee. Contact The Needle for more information.

The Needle
5909 Scott Street, Suite B.
Houston, Texas 77021
needlestores@yahoo.com
(713) 256-7642

Tops

- **Polo-shirts & collared shirts may be light blue, royal blue, navy blue, gold, or yellow.**
- **High School students may also wear grey.**
- **All outerwear must be solid colored (any of the school colors) with logos no larger than the size of a quarter.**
 - **Outerwear with a hood attached is NOT permitted.**
- **Spirit T-shirts or any college themed t-shirt may be worn on Fridays only.**
- **Undershirts must also be solid school colors only (+white).**

Bottoms

- **Bottoms must be uniform style khaki, Navy Blue, or black**
- **Skirts must be no shorter than 2-inches above the knee.**
- **Solid white or school-colored leggings, tights, or knee high socks are permitted.**
- **On dress down days, jeans must either be free of tears or holes, OR must have solid colored tights/leggings underneath.**

Shoes

- **Must be closed toe and closed heel.**
- **Crocks, heelys, high heels higher than one inch, slides, slippers, or house shoes are NOT permitted.**

Accessories

- **Bonnets, bandanas, wave caps, and other non-religious head coverings are NOT permitted.**

School Supplies

Each grade level will compile a list of school supplies to be purchased by families for their individual students' use. Yellowstone schools will assist with supplies when needed. Caregivers should complete a SAFs form to notify our counselor if they are in need of supplies.

There are also other items which help create a safe and dynamic learning environment for students and teachers such as facial tissue, disinfecting wipes, hand sanitizer, etc. Your child's teacher may reach out to you for assistance with these as well.

At Home Supplies





Caregivers should keep the following supplies at home to ensure students can complete all necessary homework tasks:

- Writing utensils (pencils and/or pens)
- Notebook paper

Communication

Communication Systems

Remind 101: Yellowstone Schools utilizes Remind texting service to communicate with our families upcoming events, school closures, assignment reminders or transportation delays. It is required that all caregivers subscribe to this service. Text the code behind the @ symbol (see chart below) to 81010.

| Class | Join Code | Join Link | QR Code |
|-------|-----------|---|---|
| 06 | @ysgrade6 | remind.com/join/ysgrade6 |  |
| 07 | @ysgrade7 | remind.com/join/ysgrade7 |  |
| 08 | @ysgrade8 | remind.com/join/ysgrade8 |  |
| 09 | @ysgrade9 | remind.com/join/ysgrade9 |  |

Email: At Yellowstone, every family will need an email address. This email address will be used to connect families to our student information system Skyward. Families will be expected to maintain this email address during their student’s time of enrollment. Teachers and staff can be reached via email and are expected to respond to email communication within 48 hours.

Yellowstone Schools Website: Important updates will be posted to the school website at www.yellowstoneschools.org. Under the caregiver portal of the website, families can access the Student and Family Handbook, the most current school calendar, announcements, re-enrollment, tuition payments, and Skyward login.

Skyward: Skyward is the student information system that Yellowstone will utilize to keep track of family information, student academics and behavior. Caregivers will have access to view academic information as well as be contacted with any behavior information. Access Skyward at <https://yellowstoneschools.org/skyward>

Phone: At Yellowstone, we utilize phone calls to develop personal relationships with our families. When major academic/behavior concerns or emergencies arise, our primary form of contacting families will be through phone calls. It is imperative that families update their contact information as needed with the front office.

Social Media: Please follow our Twitter, Instagram and Facebook page to stay connected to Yellowstone.

Communicating Concerns

The front office staff will ensure that all concerns are addressed in a timely manner. The following process will be followed to provide correct information and support.

1. Review school handouts or communications for correct information.
2. Reach out to your child's teacher. Email or a phone call are the best methods. (You should expect a response within 2 business days.)
 - College & Career Readiness Counselor = bholliday@yellowstoneschools.org
3. Reach out to the Director of Student Support or the Lead School Counselor. Email or completing the Student Assistance Form are the best methods. (You should expect a response within 1 business day.)
 - Director of Student Support = jrichey@yellowstoneschools.org
 - Lead School Counselor = www.yellowstonesaf.com or ccomeaux@yellowstoneschools.org
4. If you have not received a response or your concern has not been resolved, reach out to our principal via email. (You should expect a response within 1 business day.)
 - Principal = mwilliams@yellowstoneschools.org

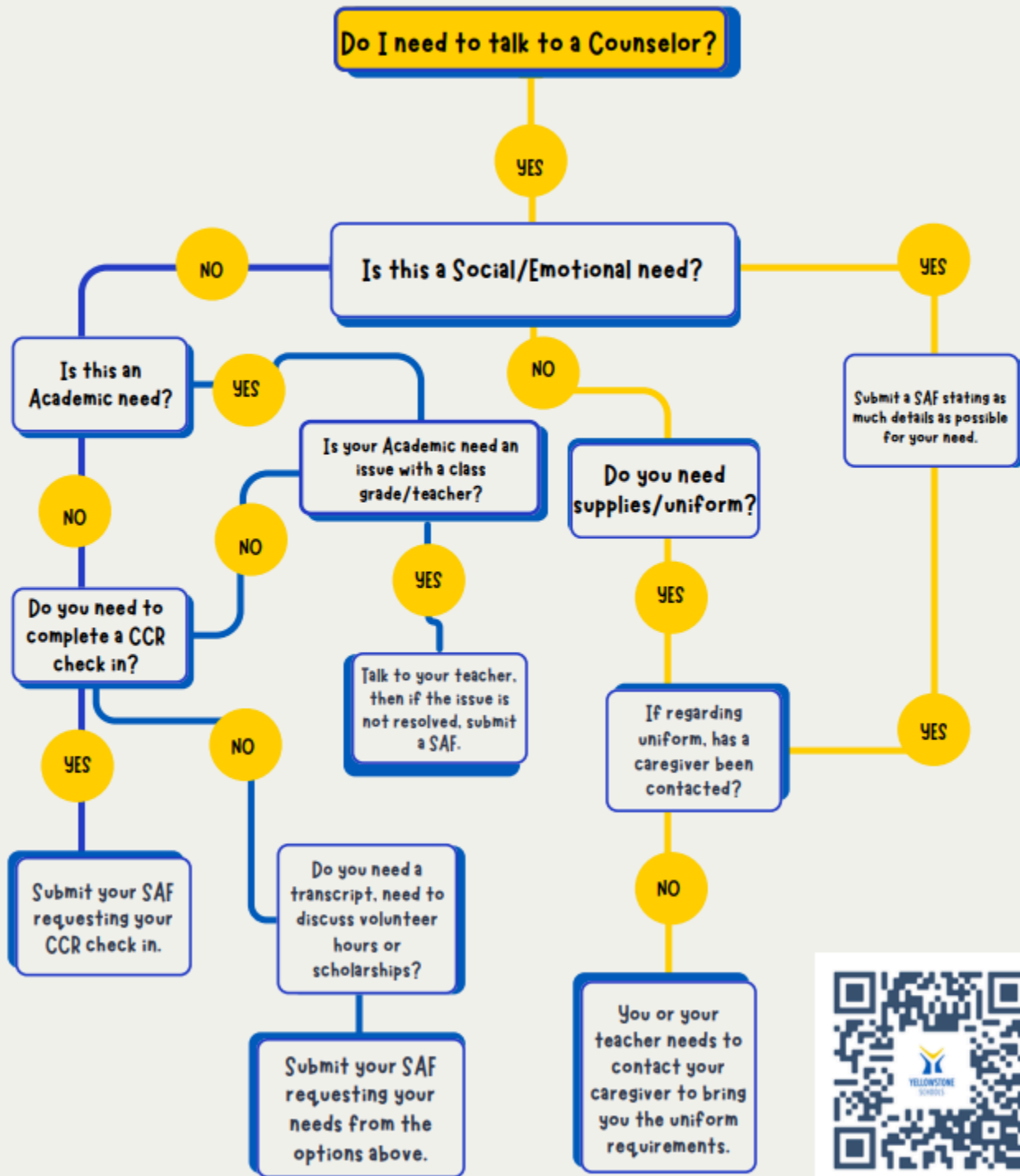
Teacher Responsiveness

Open communication between school and home is vital and encouraged throughout the school year. Between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. our teachers' primary responsibilities are the safety and supervision of our scholars. Secondary to this, they are to provide excellent instruction in a safe learning environment. During instructional time, teachers will be extremely limited on phone calls or meetings. All teachers have a daily planning period and a weekly/bi-weekly conference schedule. Feel free to reach out to our teachers via email, leave a voicemail, etc. You should expect a response to any concerns communicated within 48 hours (2 school days). If at any time this presents a concern, please contact the front office for assistance.

Administrator Responsiveness


Administrators will make themselves available to caregivers as needed. Understand, our ultimate priority is student safety and supervision. Secondary to this, we are ensuring all students are receiving an excellent education in a stellar learning environment. In order to provide the needed support during arrival, the school day start, the school day end, and dismissal, administrators are not available between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. If you have a concern that needs immediate attention, you may leave a message via voicemail, in person, or through email. The expectation of administrators is that all caregiver concerns are addressed within 24 hours. If at any time this presents a concern, please contact the front office. Use the following chart to determine who to contact in reference to a particular topic.

Who Do I Run To?



| Topic/Concern | Contact |
|--|---|
| Enrollment documents, withdrawals, request for records, attendance, tuition | Vernardo Washington, Registrar & Data Manager vwashington@yellowstoneschools.org Lenora Cross, Office Assistant & Registrar lcross@yellowstoneschools.org |
| Food services, transportation | Damon Gunn, Director of Campus Services dgunn@yellowstoneschools.org |
| Academic concerns, partnerships, volunteer hours, scholarships, job/college applications | Beverly Holliday, College & Career Readiness Counselor bholliday@yellowstoneschools.org |
| Behavior concerns, student discipline | Jazzminn Richey, Director of Student Support jrichey@yellowstoneschools.org |
| Social/emotional concerns, family resources, counseling services | Carranda Comeaux, Lead School Counselor ccomeaux@yellowstoneschools.org |
| Issues with anyone on staff, difficulty getting issues resolved after prior contact with anyone on staff | Marian Williams, Principal mwilliams@yellowstoneschools.org |

A Day in the Life of a YSU Student

|  YELLOWSTONE SCHOOLS | |
|--|---|
| YSU High School (HS) | YSU Middle School (MS) |
| Breakfast / Power Up (6:30 - 7:15) TA/Admin Arrival = 6:30 Teaching Staff Arrival = 7:00 | Breakfast / Power Up (6:30 - 7:15) TA/Admin Arrival = 6:30 Teaching Staff Arrival = 7:00 |
| Period 1 7:15 am - 8:10 am (55 minutes) | Period 1 7:15 am - 8:10 am (55 minutes) |
| Period 2 8:13 am - 9:03 am (55 minutes) | Period 2 8:13 am - 9:03 am (55 minutes) |
| Period 3 9:06 am - 10:01 am (55 minutes) | Period 3 9:06 am - 10:01 am (55 minutes) |
| Period 4 10:04 am - 10:59am (55 minutes) | Period 4 10:04 am - 10:59am (55 minutes) |
| 9th - 10th grade lunch 11:02 - 11:32 | Period 5 11:02 am - 11:57 am (55 minutes) |
| Period 5 11:35 am - 12:30 pm (55 minutes) | Period 6 12:00 pm - 12:55 pm (55 minutes) |
| Period 6 12:33 pm - 1:28 pm (55 minutes) | 6th -8th grade lunch 12:58 - 1:28 |
| Period 7 1:31 pm - 2:30 pm (55 minutes) | Period 7 1:31 pm - 2:30 pm (55 minutes) |
| Dismissal 2:30 - 2:45 TA Clock-out = 2:30 Teaching Staff Clock-out = 2:45 | |
| Tutoring Program = 2:45 - 3:45 | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Arrival Procedures | The doors of the building will open for students starting at 6:30am. Students will report to Christ Commons for breakfast until 7:10am. At 7:10 am, students will be dismissed to 1st period and students entering after this time will report straight to class. |
| Grades 6-10 Breakfast | Students will report to Christ Commons upon arrival to eat breakfast before heading to 1st period. Students who arrive late may participate in “grab & go” breakfast to finish eating in class. |
| Academic Instruction | Academic instruction takes place between 7:15 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. The day includes instruction in Advisory/Seminar, reading, language arts, math, science, social studies, intervention, and Electives class (PE, Dance, Band, Choir, Art, or Spanish). All students also have a 30 minute lunch period. |
| End of Day Routine Dismissal Procedures | <p>Teachers will provide closure to the students’ day, share celebrations, and discuss areas of improvement and goals for the next day. Students will gather materials & return chromebooks for dismissal.</p> <p>Walkers are dismissed, bus riders. Tutoring students and students participating in athletics will report to tutoring rooms. Car riders will be escorted to Christ Commons for carpool lane procedures.</p> <p>Car riders are expected to exit the back gate and report directly to their car. If their car has not yet arrived, they will remain in the carpool waiting area (Christ Commons) waiting for their ride to arrive. When their ride pulls up, the carpool monitor will call for the student via radio.</p> |
| Town Hall/ Campus PRIDE Celebrations & Freedom Friday | Students with perfect attendance, A/B honor roll, A honor roll, and PRIDE awards will be recognized each week during Town Hall & Campus PRIDE Celebration time. Students who have enough PRIDE points will be permitted to attend Freedom Friday events and festivities weekly. |

Academic Honor Code

Yellowstone Schools deeply values learning and seeks to empower each student to reach his or her full potential. We recognize that struggles and mistakes are necessary elements of the learning process; however, cheating and plagiarism deprives students from the process of learning. In order to realize their full potential, Yellowstone Upper School students pledge to value learning above grades and to hold themselves to the highest standard of academic integrity.

Cheating

Cheating is misleading a staff member in some way as to receive, or attempt to receive, credit for work not originated by the student or work performed with unauthorized assistance. Examples of cheating include but are not limited to:

- Copying another student's work or allowing another student to copy work.
- Use of AI technology to replicate the work of others is considered plagiarism.
- Completing another student's work for them.
- Communication of any kind during a test or quiz.
- Sharing or receiving questions/answers to items included on anything entered as a test or quiz grade.
- Accessing unauthorized information during a test or quiz using any electronic device or written source.
- Theft of a test or test key, including theft by digital means.
- Sabotaging a fellow student's work.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of passages, materials, words, or ideas that come from someone or something else, without properly naming the source. Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to:

- Plagiarizing by taking credit for work done by another.
- Copying text (ideas, words, or syntax) or other materials from the internet, book, article, computer code, or other source without citing the source.
- Purchasing or receiving, in any manner, an assignment that is the work of another person and submitting that assignment as your own.

Possible Consequences for Violation of the Academic Honor Code

As with any violation of school policy and discipline concern, each situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Yellowstone Schools holds Integrity as one of its core values, and violating the Academic Honor Code directly contradicts this. However, responsibility is also a core value, and often these instances are invaluable teachable moments for students to acknowledge a mistake, take responsibility, and grow. Repeat offenders of the Academic Honor Code, regardless of course in which the incident occurred, will face escalated, more severe consequences. Examples of possible consequences include but are not limited to:

- Teacher/admin conference with caregiver and student.
- Reduced or no credit for assignment.
- Alternative assignment.

Grading Policies and Procedures

Students, caregivers, and teachers all share roles and responsibilities in the grading and reporting process. Student grades are one measure which indicates the level of student performance. Other measures are also taken into consideration and families will be updated on each. The following are student, caregiver, and teacher expectations through the grading process.

Student Expectations

- Complete work on time and with their best effort
- Ask questions when he/she does not understand an assignment or when clarification is needed
- Maintain academic integrity and honesty
- Show assignments to caregivers/guardians regularly for review

Caregiver/Family Expectations

- Provide a quiet, comfortable place for students to complete assignments at home
- Help their child to organize their time so that assignments can be completed successfully
- Monitor assignments completed at home, but allow the child to complete work on their own
- Maintain clear and positive lines of communication with the teacher
- Provide the necessary supplies and materials to help their child successfully complete an assignment
- Check student work for completion, review graded work with students, and discuss progress as necessary

Teacher Expectations

- Provide meaningful assignments that reinforce classroom learning and provide meaningful practice towards mastery of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and concepts taught.
- Create authentic assessments that accurately measure the student's mastery of skills and concepts taught.
- Assign homework that provides extended practice of previously taught skills and that can be completed in a reasonable period of time based on the student's age and grade level.
- Provide students and caregivers with required weekly homework on the first instructional day of the week.
- Send graded work home for caregiver acknowledgement and student discussion.
- Consider age and grade level appropriate time requirements and access to resources when assigning extended projects and long-term assignments.
- Follow grading and reporting timelines/procedures and seek assistance for clarification from administration when needed.
- Provide students with a rubric for long term projects or alternative assignments when the assignment is given.
- Inform students of content covered on all major assessments.
- Be available to students during designated tutorial times or by an agreed appointment arranged by the student or caregiver.
- Check student work for completion, review graded work with students, and discuss progress as necessary.

Grading & Assessments

Assessments evaluate students' progress toward mastery of learning goals and objectives. Assessments may vary in length and scope and include not only written assessments but also performance-based measures and compositions.

Written Tests

Types of examinations include Curriculum-Based Assessments (CBAs), designed to measure progress towards curriculum mastery, and benchmark assessments, designed to provide practice in the state examination format. Yellowstone students will take no less than two cumulative curriculum assessments per subject per year.

Performance Assessments

Performance assessments are measures of a student's progress toward mastery of TEKS and curriculum objectives that differ from traditional paper and pencil assessments. These may include:

- classroom participation and discussion
- research projects
- checklists of skills
- student portfolios
- written responses
- enrichment activities
- lab experiments
- group work/projects
- teacher observation
- written compositions

Alternative Assessments/Labs

Alternative assessments will reflect real-world tasks and relate to instructional objectives. This type of assessment often requires analyzing a task, developing a plan of action, gathering information, selecting relevant information, and presenting the information. The instructor will design the presentation based on the subject and content objectives. Alternative assessments may be substituted for major tests. Instructors will provide a rubric for alternative assessments.

Project-Based Learning Assignments/Research Papers/Long Term Projects Research papers or projects are lengthy class or homework assignments that may take several weeks to complete. These projects and research papers must be included in the course syllabus, and the due date must be stated in the syllabus. Projects may be assigned individually or to a group of students. The instructor will provide the student with a rubric explaining how the project or paper will be assessed. A timeline of due dates will be included. Special projects, research papers, or other long-term assignments are due on or before the due date stated in the syllabus. Students who are absent on the due date, including school business absences, must meet the stated deadline. Any exceptions for the late projects must be approved by the Principal or the designee.

Daily Grades

Teachers take grades on assignments, activities, and projects completed in class that are designed to measure progress toward mastery of the TEKS and Schools curriculum. Daily grades consist of any instructional activity defined or planned by the teacher to be completed during class or continued as homework to facilitate the learning process. An assignment completed more than 50% outside of the classroom is designated as

homework. Quizzes or short assessments to evaluate a student’s level of understanding and progress toward instructional objectives may also be considered daily grades. Quizzes do not have to be scheduled in advance, but must cover material previously taught where instructional feedback has been provided.

Homework

Yellowstone Schools endorses homework as a valued extension of learning beyond the classroom and an integral part of the instructional program. Homework is a necessary part of the instructional process that may or may not begin in the classroom and extend into time outside of regular class time. All students in all classes will receive homework assignments in weekly increments. Teachers will provide weekly homework assignments on the first instructional day of each week. On RARE occasions, students will be required to complete assignments that are a continuation of classwork.

To be effective, homework should:

- Be meaningful, purposeful, and directed toward specific learning objectives.
- Build upon concepts and skills previously introduced in the classroom.
- Encompass a variety of activities.
- Encourage independent learning, responsibility, and self-discipline.
- Require students to apply various thinking skills.
- Be assigned at the student’s ability level.

Practical Considerations

Teachers should systematically assign homework, offer direction, and evaluate student work. Caregivers should support homework by frequently reviewing assignments, providing a convenient time and place free from distractions, and encouraging excellence in student work. Students should make every effort to complete their own work. If an assignment is found to present difficulty, assistance should be sought from the teacher. In any case, students should not copy answers or have someone else do the work.

Length and Difficulty of Homework

The length and difficulty of an assignment shall be directed by the teacher and should depend on grade level, student needs, content, purpose, and type of assignment. Assignments should be made with consideration given to a student’s total schedule and should be coordinated across subject areas at each school to avoid overloading students at any particular time.

| Grading Policy |
|---|
| Required Number of Grades |
| Teachers shall record a minimum of 2 grades for each subject each week. Teachers are encouraged to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of the TEKS. Teachers are required to take a minimum of two grades per week beginning the first full week of each grading period. No single grade may count for more than 10% of a total class grade per quarter. Science teachers must take a minimum of (3) Lab grades per quarterly grading period. Graded assignments will be returned to students within a week of the due date. |
| Percentage of Grades |
| The following scale shall be used in all academic classes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Classwork - 40% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Labs, Essays, DBQs, Text-Dependent Questions, Independent Practice ● Summative Assessment - 30% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Benchmark (Taught Standards), Unit Tests, Projects ● Formative Assessment - 20% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quizzes, Exit Tickets ● Homework - 10% |
| Grading Policy |
| Maximum Weight of Grade |

Curriculum Mastery

Mastery of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

Yellowstone Upper School has provided a well-balanced scope and sequence and curriculum resources based on state-prescribed Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). All teachers are required to align their instruction to the TEKS. Students who participate in this curriculum will have the opportunity to master the knowledge, skills, and competencies established by our curriculum and the state standards.

Yellowstone utilizes ongoing mastery assessment to determine which students are in need of remediation and instructional intervention (re-teaching and acceleration). The use of benchmark tests, teacher-made tests, performance assessments, and teacher observations helps to determine which students are not mastering instructional objectives.

Intervention

Acceleration (intervention) is an integral part of the instructional program and is an ongoing process. Frequent evaluation, both formal and informal, will determine the need for acceleration.

Reasons for Acceleration:

- Provides frequent reinforcement and review so that a student does not get behind in the curriculum
- Occurs at the time the need is identified
- Allows the student to progress systematically through content without experiencing extended, frustrating periods of non-achievement
- Offers a variation in instructional approach – uses a new technique, strategies, materials, opportunity for review, and practice
- Includes, but is not limited to, targeted small-group instruction, tutorials, and summer school

Caregiver Notification of Progress

Grading reports will be sent home mid-quarter and end of quarter. If a scholar's grade is above 70 at progress report time but falls below 70 prior to the end of the quarter, the teacher is required to send an additional notification of progress to caregivers.

Final Grade of 65 or below

At the end of each grading period, documentation must be submitted to the principal for any student receiving a grade of 65 or below for the quarterly grading period. (See Grading Report).

Transfer Grades

Students new to our campus or who enroll in a school after the start of a grading period shall be treated fairly in awarding grades. Grades shall be computed using a combination of grades from the former school and grades earned for the time the student has been enrolled in our school in a proportionally significant manner.

Promotion Standards

- Students earning a failing grade in 2 or more classes will be required to attend summer school for promotion.
- Students must earn a score of “approaching” or higher on STAAR assessments to be promoted to the next grade level. Students scoring below “approaching” will be required to attend summer school for promotion.
- ALL STUDENTS MUST HAVE SUFFICIENT ATTENDANCE TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PROMOTION.
 - All students who are retained will be placed on an Instructional Improvement Plan for the following school year.

Sufficient attendance requires a student to be in attendance at least 90% of the days school is in session. There is no differentiator between excused and unexcused absences for this criterion. Students not meeting promotion standards are retained in their CURRENT grade for the FOLLOWING school year.

Attendance Policy

At Yellowstone Schools, we believe that students have to be present to learn. Our school-wide 2024-25 attendance goal is 95% for the year.

| Logistics | Time | Notes |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Doors Open | 6:45 a.m. | This is the earliest students may arrive to campus. |
| Breakfast Served | 6:45 a.m. - 7:15 a.m. | Students eat breakfast in the classroom. |
| Tardy Bell | 7:15 a.m. | Students are considered tardy to school after this time. |
| Early Pick-Up Cut-Off | 1:00 p.m. | To protect our dismissal procedure and policy, students will not be released from campus after these times. |
| Transportation Changes | 1:00 p.m. | To ensure student safety and time management, all transportation changes must be in writing. See <u>Transportation policy for details.</u> |
| Dismissal | 2:30 p.m. | This will be our regular dismissal time beginning with early childhood, except for early dismissal days. |
| Early Release | 1:00 p.m. | Students should immediately clear the campus. The campus includes the playground, city park, and any location that is within 300 yards or 1000 feet of the school. Students should report to their bus, vehicle, or <u>afterschool activities.</u> This will be the dismissal time for days notated as “Early Release” on the school calendar. |

ADA Time

Official ADA time for Yellowstone Schools is at 9:30 a.m. Students who arrive after 9:30 a.m. will be considered absent for the day. Students who are not in attendance at least 90% of their classes could be subject to retention, loss of credit, or affect future enrollment.

Absences

Students returning from an absence must bring a written note from a caregiver/guardian or physician validating the reason for the absence, WITHIN THREE (3) DAYS, to the Attendance Office to record the absence as EXCUSED. No more than (3) three handwritten caregiver notes will be accepted for EXCUSED absences during the school year. **There is not a differentiator between excused and unexcused absences.**

Acceptable reasons for excused absences include:

- Personal Illness
- Death of a Family Member
- Student Health Services; Family/Student Counseling Therapy Appointments
- Religious Holidays and Major Activities (*The student is counted present in school according to state statute and is not considered absent.*)
- Authorized School-Sponsored Activities
- Required Court Appearance

Yellowstone Schools will communicate any school cancellations through Skyward or Remind 101 as we will follow HISD school cancellation policies.

Tardy/Attendance Policy

Students are considered tardy after 8:20 a.m. unless the tardy is due to late bus arrival. Students will accumulate 1 unexcused absence for every 5 tardies.

Code of Conduct

Throughout the school year as necessary, the Student Code of Conduct shall be:

- Made available for review in the main office; and
- Made available on the Yellowstone Schools website and/or as hard copy to students, caregivers, teachers, administrators, and to others on request.

Alcohol

To provide a safe alcohol-free environment for students and employees, Yellowstone Schools prohibits alcoholic beverages on Yellowstone Schools property at any time, and at all school sanctioned student activities occurring on or off Yellowstone Schools property. If you are found to be intoxicated, you will be asked to leave the premises.

Drug-Free Zone

To provide a safe drug-free environment for students and employees, Yellowstone Schools prohibits drugs and/or control substances on Yellowstone Schools property at any time, and at all school-sanctioned activities occurring on or off Yellowstone Schools property. A person commits a criminal offense, if the person knowingly or intentionally possesses a controlled substance: in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any real property that is owned, rented, or leased to Yellowstone Schools or a playground; or on a school bus.

Cell Phone Use

In order to foster a school culture that is conducive to learning and to provide the best educational experience possible, distractions and disruptions must be kept to a minimum. To accomplish this, Yellowstone Upper School's policy includes the following key points:

Cell Phone Policy

- Use of student cell phones, earbuds, air pods, Bluetooth devices, or any other electronic devices will NOT be permitted inside of the building during the school day, for ANY reason.
- All students who need to bring a cell phone with them for the purposes of traveling home MUST ensure the cell phone is turned off and MUST KEEP THE CELL PHONE OFF put away inside of a backpack or small purse until after dismissal or on special designated days when given instructions that they may use them (such as lunchtime on Freedom Fridays when students earn that privilege).
 - Students are not permitted to take their cell phones into the restrooms with them during the day. Students will be asked to show evidence that they do not have a cell phone in their purse or in their pockets prior to being excused to go to the restrooms for safety purposes.
- All students who are not in compliance with the school cell phone policy will have their phones confiscated by a staff member and turned into the main office. The progressive consequence scale for cell phones is outlined below;
 - 1st offense - Returned to student at the end of the day.
 - 2nd offense - Returned to a caregiver or approved guardian at the end of the day.
 - 3rd offense - A caregiver or guardian must sign out the cell phone and the student will be placed on a check-in/check-out plan where they will be required to turn in their cell phone and pick it up daily from the main office.
- Yellowstone staff are not responsible for any cell phones that are lost, stolen, or damaged while at school.
- If a student refuses to surrender the device and/or is argumentative during this process will start at the 3rd offense and the student may be subject to escalated disciplinary action.

Bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying is strictly prohibited, and Yellowstone Upper School may implement a variety of different techniques – both educational and disciplinary in nature – in order to eliminate bullying between students. Students may face disciplinary consequences for bullying conduct 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;
- 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; or
- Is considered cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity, if the cyberbullying interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school-related activity. This includes the use of AI technology using the images or voices of others.

Students are encouraged to report an alleged incident of bullying immediately to any adult on campus. Any adult receiving a report of bullying will notify the Director of Student Support or Lead Counselor by the end of the school day. Reports may be made orally or in writing, and reports may be made anonymously. Students or caregivers may contact the Director of Student Support or Lead Counselor to submit the report. No student or other person shall retaliate against any other student or person who reports bullying.

The school will promptly launch an investigation into the reported incident. The school will notify the caregiver(s) of the alleged victim and the caregiver(s) of the alleged bully on or before the third business day after the incident is reported. Pursuant to our Family/Student Handbook, our response to bullying may include the following:

- Students who are victims of bullying, witness bullying, or engage in bullying will have the option of meeting with our Lead School Counselor for a Restorative Conference, Mediation, or Community circle.
- Responses in alignment with our Student Code of Conduct (reflection assignment, lunch detention, ISS, OSS, or Saturday Virtual School.)
- The principal or a designated staff member may report acts of bullying that constitute assault or harassment to the local law enforcement office.
- Repeated reports of bullying made against any individual student will result in the student being placed on a "Bullying Contract" where their behavior will be monitored and tracked more closely. Being placed on a bullying contract may impede the student's ability to participate in school-wide incentive events or extra curricular activities for a designated period of time.

Extra- Curricular Activities Behavior Standards

Sponsors and coaches of extracurricular activities may develop and submit for approval standards of behavior that are higher than the Yellowstone Schools-developed Student Code of Conduct and may condition membership or participation in the activity on adherence to those standards.

Students shall be informed of any extracurricular behavior standards at the beginning of each school year or when the students first begin participation in the activity. Students and

their caregivers shall sign and return to the sponsor or coach a statement that they have read the extracurricular behavior standards and consent to them as a condition of participation in the activity.

Extracurricular standards of behavior may take into consideration conduct that occurs at any time, on or off Yellowstone property and during and outside of school hours. Extracurricular behavioral standards shall not have the effect of discriminating on the basis of gender, race, color, disability, religion, ethnicity, age, or national origin.

Standards of behavior for an extracurricular activity are independent of *YSU Student Code of Conduct*. Violations of these standards of behavior that are also violations of the Student Code of Conduct may result in extra-curricular activity discipline and schoolwide discipline.

School-Wide Behavior System

At Yellowstone, we believe that behavior is taught and that “misbehavior” is a lack of a specific skill. Our goal is to deliver a system that empowers students to learn and practice self-regulation and problem-solving skills by providing a physically and emotionally safe environment with a focus connection and relationship-building.

As educators, we know that all children learn differently from each other. This philosophy is the same when considering learning social-emotional skills, as it is in learning language arts or math. It is understood that each behavior situation and issue is unique, and each will be approached and treated differently. Teachers and administrators work to ensure that outcomes for any intervention or situation are equitable, handled in accordance to what the children involved need in order to be safe, learn from the situation, and improve.

When students earn a disciplinary referral, they will be sent to the reset room where the referral will be processed, caregivers will be notified, reflection assignments will be completed, and restorative conferencing will occur prior to consequences being assigned for each student. Students will return to class prepared to be received with a fresh start and will be encouraged to practice replacement behaviors to prevent the disruption of the learning environment.

Teachers and administrators will:

- Communicate expectations clearly and will redirect students in a positive/restorative manner.
- Monitor students, focusing on WANTED behaviors, and intentionally teach students skills which appear to be lacking by observed unwanted behaviors.
- Give students a fresh start with a growth mindset after each visit to the reset room.
- Provide intensive intervention (such as mentors, behavior trackers, goal setting & tracking, and individualized rewards for reaching goals) when necessary.
- Involve caregivers and families at every step to ensure alignment.
 - Caregivers & guardians will be required to engage in restorative conferencing when mandatory conferences are scheduled.
 - Administrators will often engage in restorative conferencing prior to making determinations for external placement (ISS, OSS, &/or expulsion) in attempts to keep students in school, in class, & learning successfully.
 - **Failure to attend a mandatory caregiver conference will result in ISS or OSS.**

| Offense | Options |
|--|--|
| <p>*The Director of Student Support/CBS will use their judgment/training to assign a consequence given what the teacher's referral communicates.</p> <p>*Students are only permitted one "counsel & return" per day. All referrals after that should have lunch detention assigned at least.</p> | |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Level 1</u></p> <p>Classroom disruption (after in-class Behavior Management Cycle, 2 Individual redirections, & Behavior Notification)</p> <p>Talking on Level Zero (after in-class Behavior Management Cycle, 2 Individual redirections, & Behavior Notification)</p> <p>Uniform Violation (after in-class Behavior Management Cycle, 2 Individual redirections, & Behavior Notification)</p> <p>Refusal to work (off task) (after in-class Behavior Management Cycle, 2 Individual redirections, & Behavior Notification)</p> <p>Inappropriate Language (after in-class Behavior Management Cycle, 2 Individual redirections, & Behavior Notification)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removal from class ● Conference with Campus Behavior Support ● Restorative/ Reflection Assignment ● 1-2 Days Lunch Detention ● Loss of Freedom Friday ● (Repeated Offense Short Term) 1 Day of ISS ● (Repeated Offense Long Term) Behavior Support Plan & Mandatory Restorative Conference w/parent present. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Level 2</u></p> <p>Cell Phone Usage (after in-class Behavior Management Cycle, 2 Individual redirections, & Behavior Notification)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confiscation logging Required for all instances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parent must come retrieve the phone from the main office ● Restorative/ Reflection Assignment ● Lunch Detention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Repeated Offense Short Term |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Level 2</u></p> <p>Extreme Tardy/ skipping (after in-class Behavior Management Cycle, 2 Individual redirections, & Behavior Notification)</p> <p>Repeated Level 1 offenses</p> <p>Aggressive Horseplay (students getting physical with one another in a playful/ non-threatening manner)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hallway Conference with Campus Behavior Coordinator ● Restorative/ Reflection Assignment ● 1-3 Days Lunch Detention ● 1 Day of ISS ● (Repeated Offense) Behavior Support Plan & Mandatory Restorative Conference w/parent present. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Level 3</u></p> <p>Automatic Referrals</p> <p>SEVERE DISRESPECT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Includes sexual harassment ● Includes profanity directed at a teacher <p>INSUBORDINATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Includes confiscation refusals ● Includes repeated refusal to complete work <p>THEFT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Includes possession of stolen property <p>UNAUTHORIZED area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Includes leaving without permission & severe skipping <p>BULLYING/ HARASSMENT</p> <p>FIGHTING/ ASSAULT</p> <p>DRUG USE</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Written Character Development Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Required for all instances (copies housed in ISS rooms) ● 1-2 Days Lunch Detention ● ½ - 1 Day of ISS ● Mandatory Restorative Conference w/parent present. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Required for Repeated Offense ● 1-3 Days OSS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Requires Admin Approval ● Behavior Support Plan & Mandatory Restorative Conference w/parent present. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Required for long-term repeated offenses ○ Requires Admin Approval ● External placement for extreme cases &/or continued repeated offenses. |

Discipline Interventions

Yellowstone personnel shall adhere to the following general guidelines when imposing discipline. A student shall be disciplined in the reset room when necessary to improve the student's behavior, to maintain essential order, or to protect other students, school employees, or property. Students shall be treated fairly and equitably. Discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case. Disciplinary consequences shall not have the effect of discriminating on the basis of gender, race, color, disability, religion, ethnicity, age, or national origin. The following are possible consequences imposed by an administrator which occur beyond the classroom.

Lunch Detention

A consequence used as an intervention for Level 1 misbehavior. Students who are assigned lunch detentions must report to the designated area during their lunch period. While in Lunch detention, students will receive their lunch and silently complete a behavior reflection. The Grade Level Chair will be responsible for contacting caregivers, to inform them of the lunch detention, teachers are responsible for contacting caregivers via phone as in regards to specific behavior concerns.

In-School Suspension

A skill-building in-school suspension is the removal of a student from his/her regular educational schedule for more than 60 minutes of the school day to an alternative supervised setting inside the school building to engage in structured activities that develop academic, social, emotional, and/or behavioral skills.

When a student is assigned In-School Suspension, students will be expected to fully complete the structured activities provided in addition to their daily school work. When a student is assigned to In-School Suspension, a caregiver conference must be held and scheduled within 5 school days. This meeting will be scheduled at your convenience to the best of our ability.

Out-of-School Suspension

An out-of-school suspension is the removal of the student from school attendance. When a student is removed from school in response to an inappropriate behavior, the removal counts as the first day of an out-of-school suspension.

A student serving out-of-school suspension is not allowed to come onto school property, participate in extracurricular activities, or attend school-sponsored events. A student is considered trespassing if he or she comes onto school grounds while suspended out of school. Out-of-school suspensions are excused absences. When a student is suspended, families are expected to complete a series of reflective activities during the time spent at home.

When a student returns from OSS, a caregiver/guardian must escort the student back to campus for a restorative conference with admin & teacher leaders. Upon returning to campus, the student will be placed on a behavior support plan to ensure the behavior that led to suspension does not continue. . Families should anticipate this process taking place between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.

Reverse Suspension

Students who demonstrate repeated Level II or III Offenses may receive Out of School Suspension (OSS) as a consequence. In lieu of OSS, the administration may offer the

opportunity for a reverse suspension.

Reverse suspension requires a caregiver/legal guardian to attend school with their student for a portion or the length of the entire school day. Caregivers/Legal Guardians are required to sign in and out for the day and attend every class for which their student is enrolled.

The caregiver/guardian must always sit next to their child and refrain from using electronics or technology in the classroom. When attending PE, caregivers/guardians are permitted to stand to the side as not to interfere with the physical activity of the class. Just like OSS, if a student is involved in school clubs or sports, they are not permitted to attend their extracurricular activity for the day of the assigned Reverse Suspension.

Mandatory Family Restorative Conferencing

The caregiver will be required to attend a meeting with the student and administrators or CBS. Conduct plans or agreements will typically be created during the conference to prevent continued undesirable behaviors. Escalated consequences (such as ISS or OSS) will be assigned if/when caregivers do not comply with the mandatory conferencing process.

What is the Zero Tolerance Policy?

The Zero Tolerance Policy establishes firm and non-negotiable consequences for specific behaviors that are disruptive, violent, or harmful to the well-being of our school community. These behaviors are listed in the Student Expulsion section below.

These consequences are designed to ensure that our school remains a safe and welcoming place for everyone. Our primary focus is equipping your child with the academics, character, and life-changing experiences needed to succeed beyond high school. To do so, we must ensure a safe and welcoming school environment, which is why **the Zero Tolerance Policy will be enforced without exception.**

Student Expulsion

A student can be expelled if a student exhibits continuous or egregious Level II or Level III offenses (in accordance with our Zero Tolerance Policies). A disciplinary review board meeting will be scheduled for any student who engages in behavior that would warrant an expulsion prior to the expulsion being approved.

The following behaviors are considered serious infractions and may be subject to immediate suspension and/or expulsion, except if noted otherwise in this handbook, if the behavior takes place on school property, including campuses, within 600 feet of school property, at a school-sponsored event, or on a school bus. Additionally, any disciplinary action taken may be reported to other schools, including colleges. Yellowstone reserves the right to suspend or expel students for serious infractions not explicitly outlined below or those referenced in other parts of this handbook.

- Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of a felony offense or is punishable as a felony
 - Murder
 - Indecency with a child
 - Aggravated kidnapping

- Aggravated robbery
- Manslaughter
- Criminally negligent homicide
- Continuous sexual abuse of a young child
- Arson
- Possession of any weapon
 - Possession, distribution, or use of any size knife, club, firearm, pellet gun, ammunition, explosive, bladed instrument, prohibited weapon under the Texas penal code, air gun, chemical-dispensing device, replica firearm or bomb, electric stunning device, and other dangerous item
- Possessing, distributing, selling, or using medications that are available with a prescription in a manner that is not consistent with the medicine's intended use as indicated on the manufacturer's label, or with school rules concerning the handling of such medications
- Distributing or selling medications that are available without a prescription in a manner that constitutes an attempt to assist in or encourage an overdose
- Possessing or selling items attempted to be passed off as illegal drugs or contraband
- Selling, delivering, or distributing an alcoholic beverage
- Being involved in any gang activity, including participating as a pledge or member, or soliciting another person to become a pledge or member of a gang
 - Violation of anti-gang affiliation contracts (when suspicion of gang activity has been documented)
- Cases of serious extortion, serious intimidation, or serious disrespect of another student, staff member, or campus visitor
- Engaging in conduct that would require a student to register as a sex offender;
- Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of an offense of public lewdness or indecent exposure
- Engaging in conduct that contains the element of a sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault
- Any assault that results in any physical harm
- Making a terroristic threat, false alarm, or report including but not limited to bomb threats
- Retaliating against a school employee or other person
- Deadly conduct
- Making a hit list

Expulsion as a Consequence for Serious and/or Persistent Misbehaviors:

Escalation to Expulsion Policy

- A student may be suspended and/or expelled for serious infractions. Misbehavior in violation of the Student Code of Conduct not otherwise constituting an expellable offense may become a serious infraction subject to expulsion and/or suspension when the misbehavior is so persistent that, in cumulative effect, it is significantly disruptive of the educational process. Students who receive between six and eight days of suspension in any academic year may be recommended for expulsion by the campus school director.
- Students who receive nine or more days of suspension in any academic year must be recommended for expulsion by the campus school director.
- Yellowstone does not distinguish between in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension in the application of this policy. If a student is expelled from Yellowstone Schools and wishes to return at the end of the expulsion

period, s/he will be required to re-apply to Yellowstone and participate in the lottery system as appropriate. Additionally, any expelled student will not have the benefit of a sibling preference in the lottery system.

Transportation Policy

Yellowstone Schools will provide transportation services for our students. Transportation is a privilege and will be conditional based on the behavior of our students. The buses are an extension of our campus, and all rules and consequences listed in this document apply. Caregivers are expected to be at their designated stop ten minutes before the scheduled time of pick up and after the scheduled time of drop off. Safety is our number one concern as it pertains to transportation. To provide the safest environment for all stakeholders, students and caregivers will adhere to the following expectations.

Student Expectations:

- Cell Phones and other electronic devices are not permitted on the bus.
- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the vehicle in an orderly manner at the designated stop. Students must wait to get off the bus until they are dismissed.
- When students exit the bus, they should always walk in front of the bus and never behind.
- Keep feet, books, instruments cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Students will not be allowed to get on a bus they are not riding.
- Do not deface the vehicle or its equipment.
- Do not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the vehicle.
- Possession or use of any form of tobacco, alcohol, and other illegal substances on any district vehicle is not permitted.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the vehicle and before crossing in front of the vehicle.
- Follow any other rules established by the operator of the vehicle.

Caregiver Expectations:

- Caregivers/guardians shall be responsible and accountable for the conduct and safety of their children prior to the arrival and after the departure of the school bus at the assigned school bus stop.
- At no time are caregivers/guardians allowed to get on a school bus. This could be considered a criminal offense/trespassing.
- Please park and pick up students on the same side of the street as the bus stop. Caregivers/guardians should instruct their children to go directly home in the afternoons.
- Have your child at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to scheduled pick-up time. If the bus has to wait at a stop longer than 5 minutes, your student will be brought back to the school and you will have to pick them up from there.
- Teach your child their full name, home address, and telephone number where an adult family member may be contacted in an emergency.
- Review the *Bus Rider Expectations* with your child.
- Remind students to watch for siblings at bus loading or unloading times and encourage them to notify the bus driver of any concerns of a sibling not loading the bus or getting off at the appropriate stop.
- Follow campus procedures regarding transportation change requests.
- Misconduct will be addressed in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct; the privilege to ride in a school vehicle, including a school bus, may be suspended/revoked.

Transportation Changes

Any changes that need to be made to a student’s transportation must be in writing. We will not accept phone calls to change a student’s transportation method. We will also not allow students to make changes to their (including siblings) transportation method. Only caregivers/guardians will be able to submit transportation changes. The following written forms will be accepted:

- Submit a *Yellowstone Transportation Change* form. They will be available to you in the front office.
- Send an email to transportationchanges@yellowstoneschools.org with the following information: Caregiver/Guardian Name, Phone number, Driver’s License number, Student Name and Birthdate, Transportation change request
- If the information listed above is missing or incomplete, your transportation change request will not be accepted and your child will follow their normal transportation route.
- You may also submit the *Yellowstone Transportation Change* form by fax at 713-741-8006.
- All change requests must be submitted by 1:00pm. No exceptions.
- Please do not contact your child’s teacher to make requests on your behalf.
- Do not call or text students on their cell phones to request transportation changes.
- All transportation change requests must be submitted by 10:00am on Early Release Days.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures for Yellowstone Upper School

Arrival Procedures

- No supervision before 7:15 a.m.
- Students are supervised in assigned areas from 7:15 - 7:45.
- Teachers accept students into their classrooms beginning at 8:15.
- Students arriving after 8:20 a.m. will be marked tardy by the teacher.

| | Walkers | Caregiver Drop-off | Bus Riders |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Location | Students enter through the gate #9. | Drive up in the rear driveway of the building (Lion’s Way) | Monitors escort students into the building at the Trulley entrance. |

Walkers

- Walkers are the first to be dismissed. Students walking home must leave campus promptly upon dismissal. They should clear the campus by 4:05 p.m. Students are not to congregate on the campus to wait on others.
- Siblings meeting to walk will do so near gate #9.

Food Services

Yellowstone Wellness Policy

- Students are eligible to receive one breakfast and one lunch each day at no charge.
- Seconds or extras will not be served to students from the cafeteria.
- When taking meals, students must make sure they take the required amount of each meal component based upon the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) standards.
- Students may bring their own lunch, whenever they desire. Students who appear to have an insufficient breakfast or lunch will be provided with a meal from the cafeteria.
- If a student has food allergies, please refer to the **PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING SPECIAL DIET MODIFICATIONS** below.

Dietary Needs

If a student has a food allergy, their caregiver or guardian must complete the Dietary Needs form, accompanied by a physician's signed Special Meal Accommodation form, each school year. This form can be obtained through the Office of Campus Services.

Meal Charge Policy

Our school operates under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), which means all students can receive a free breakfast and lunch at no charge to the student for the entire school year.

Yellowstone Schools does not charge full-paid or reduced-price students for meals under CEP and school lunch applications are not required to be completed to receive the free meal(s).

USDA NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027), found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by any of the following methods:

| Mail | Fax | Email |
|---|----------------|--|
| U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 | (202) 690-7442 | program.intake@usda.gov |

All schools within the SFA participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and *any additional programs the school may elect*. All schools within the SFA are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. (The SFA offers reimbursable school meals that meet [USDA nutrition standards](#).)

SERVING THE SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITHOUT DISABILITIES Children without disabilities but with special dietary needs (such as lactose intolerance, allergies, cultural dietary restrictions) requiring food substitutions or modifications, may request that the school meet their special nutrition needs and will be approved on a case by case basis. Documentation with accompanying information must be provided by a recognized medical authority.

While School Food Authorities are encouraged to consult with recognized medical authorities where appropriate, schools are not required to make meal modifications based on food choices of a family or child regarding a healthful diet. Special diet modifications will be completed for children with diagnosed medical conditions and life threatening allergic reactions.

FLUID MILK GUIDELINE

Upon request lactose free milk will be available to a student with a disability (504) when a licensed physician submits a statement that the substitution is necessary.

PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING SPECIAL DIET MODIFICATIONS

- Caregivers of children requiring special diet modifications, may obtain a Special Meal Accommodation form from the school office.
- The special diet form is to be filled out by the child's physician.
- Caregivers should bring the form back to the office manager.
- The office manager will forward completed form to the Food Services Director via email to dgunn@yellowstoneschools.org
- Diet requests will be evaluated to determine whether it will be approved or denied.
- Once the diet is received by the Food Services Director, Department's Dietitian, the special meal accommodation will be formulated within 10 days and will be provided to the Child Nutrition Program (CNP) school staff. A copy will also be forwarded to the campus nurse, as applicable, and a copy placed in the student's file. Households have the right to examine all relevant records and to appeal the decision. The right to examine records and appeal the decision may be conducted in the same manner as an appeal for a Section 504 decision. A caregiver or guardian may have legal representation for this process.
- CNP staff shall make food substitutions or accommodations for students with those disabilities as outlined in the special diet order form.
- Substitutions for students with disabilities shall be based on a prescription written by a licensed physician.
- Under no circumstances is school CNP staff to revise or change a diet prescription or medical order.
- The CNP manager shall ensure that children with Special Dietary Needs are served the appropriate diet according to their paperwork.
- When uncertainty arises or the diet cannot be located, the manager shall notify the Food Services Director so that a diet plan may be formulated.

Student Enrollment Information

Required Enrollment documents

In order for your child to be officially enrolled at Yellowstone Schools, there are some specific documents that must be collected prior to their first day of attendance.

1. Official Birth Certificate (*original*)
2. Social Security Card (*original*)
3. Proof of Residence (*recent within the last 3 months*)
4. Complete immunization records
5. Caregiver/Guardian ID or Driver's License
6. Final Report Card with Promotion Status
7. Most recent STAAR scores (*if applicable*)

These documents must be provided to the Registrar in order for your child to be enrolled and receive a schedule prior to the first day of attendance. There are also required forms that should be completed online in Skyward. Failure to provide this documentation means that the child's file is incomplete, and they will not be allowed to start school until they are in compliance.

Maintenance of Student Information

Throughout the school year it is very important that we keep our records up to date. There are many situations when contact by phone, email or mail is necessary. We must maintain accurate contact information for all students in the event of an emergency. If there are changes to your phone number or address, please contact the front office as soon as possible. If your address has changed, you will need to submit a new proof of residency. Also, we must have at least 2 emergency contacts with accurate phone numbers and addresses in the event we can't reach you.

Immunizations

- Under Texas law, all children are required to follow the state's vaccine requirements each year before enrolling in school.
- A medical exemption statement stating that vaccines would be medically harmful or injurious to the health and well-being of the child can be submitted.
- Claiming an exclusion for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the child's caregiver, legal guardian, or a student 18 years of age or older must present to the school or child-care facility a completed, signed and notarized affidavit on a form provided by the department stating that the child's caregiver, legal guardian, or the student declines vaccinations for reasons of conscience, including because of the person's religious beliefs.
- The form must be submitted to the school within 90 days from the date it is notarized. The affidavit will be valid for a two-year period from the date of notarization. A child or student who has not received the required immunizations for reasons of conscience, including religious beliefs, may be excluded from school in times of emergency or epidemic declared by the state's education commissioner.
- Forms must be requested directly from the Texas Department of State Health Services and submitted prior to the first day students attend school.

All immunization records are reviewed by the school nurse to determine if students are in compliance. The caregiver or guardian will receive written notice if there are missing immunizations and the caregiver will be given a deadline to provide an updated immunization record. If the caregiver fails to provide updated immunization records to show the child is in compliance, the school can exclude the student from school until they

have received their vaccinations. All immunization records are reviewed annually by the school to ensure we are in compliance with state law.

Requests for Withdrawal

Caregivers can request a withdrawal through the Registrar either in person or by phone. You must give her 24- 48 hours to complete that request. Caregivers/Guardians are the only people allowed to request and sign withdrawal paperwork. Please make sure you have your ID and are prepared to speak with an Administrator once you have submitted a withdrawal request.

Request for Student Documents

A caregiver or guardian may request student documents (report cards, transcripts, immunization records, test scores etc.) from the school. You must allow 24 - 48 hours for the request to be filled. The caregiver may pick up the documents from the front office, or the documents can be sent home with the student.

Skyward Account

Skyward is the school's primary student management system and **it is imperative that all caregivers have registered for their Skyward account.** Skyward is accessible via our website at www.yellowstoneschools.org/skyward. The following information is easily obtainable through your Skyward account:

- Your child's grades and assignments
- Attendance and Tardy information
- Campus updates
- Behavior updates
- Report Card
- Schedule

There is also a Skyward App that you can download on your smartphones. It is vitally important for caregivers to stay connected and engaged with what is happening on campus and in the classrooms. This is a tool that caregivers can use to get the information they need.

Front Office Procedures

Caregivers and others are welcome at Yellowstone Schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the main office and comply with all school policies and procedures.

RAPTOR System

When arriving on campus, all caregivers and other visitors should be prepared to show identification. All visitors and volunteers must check in through the RaptorWare® system, before being granted access past the point of the office. RaptorWare® will:

1. Scan your driver's license or state-issued identification
2. Match your information against registered sex offender databases.
3. Print a photo identification badge.

Once the person has been cleared for entry, the badge must be worn at all times while on campus and then returned to the school office upon checkout. Persons without identification will not be granted access. *During high visitor traffic events such as, school parties, awards assemblies, programs etc., check in wait times may be increased. Please remember, this process is for the safety of your children and the school staff.*

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal, and the individual must check in at the main office upon arrival to campus. *Because classrooms and other instructional areas are the most vulnerable to disruption, specific conditions may be imposed upon visitors, including but not limited to:*

- Remaining in a designated place or seat
- Refraining from speaking to students/teacher while the class or activity is in session
- Limiting the duration of the visit to particular times or lengths of times
- Limiting the activities of the visitor to a particular purpose(s)
- Designating particular routes of travel in the building or upon the school grounds
- Requiring that the dress and grooming of the visitor be consistent with the dress code for the students and employees in the building.

Front Office Decorum/Campus Access

- Cell phone conversations should occur outside the front office area and outside the main hallway, preferably outside the building.
- If waiting to pick up a student, wait in the front office, not the hallway.
- All school visitors must provide a valid form of identification.
- Demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct while modeling behaviors of excellence for our students.
- Do not engage in behavior that disrupts the conduct of classes, the school environment, or school activities. Threatening, abusive, or vulgar language towards faculty, students, or staff is unacceptable.

The Executive Director or Principal has the authority to request any disruptive caregiver or visitor to leave the campus. In extreme circumstances, the law does permit the Executive Director or Principal to bar a person from returning to the campus. If necessary, a written notice will be provided to caregivers regarding prohibited campus access.

Visitor Dress Code

At Yellowstone Schools, we believe that our students will mirror the images that they see. To ensure we are surrounding them with examples of excellence, we are asking that adults who enter our building meet the following dress expectations:

- Clothing should be appropriate for a public setting with young children.
- Headwear may be worn if it is part of a religious garment.
- Pants should be worn above the waist.
- Dresses, Shorts, Skirts, Skorts should be fingertip length, near the knee.
- Shirts should have sleeves and free of vulgar language or derogatory images
- All undergarments should be covered and not visible.

Volunteers

There are many opportunities for volunteers to serve at Yellowstone. We so appreciate the efforts of caregivers, grandparents, and community members that are willing to serve our students. Volunteers are required to follow the Visitor Policy and give some additional information, during the initial check-in process.

Family and Student Handbook Acknowledgement and Receipt

Please initial next to each statement:

_____ I have received a copy of the [School Calendar](#).

_____ I have read and understand the [Uniform Policy & Dress Code](#).

_____ I have read and understand the [Academic Honor Code](#).

_____ I have read and understand the [Promotion Standards](#).

_____ I have read and understand the [Attendance Policy](#).

_____ I have read and understand the [Code of Conduct](#).

_____ I have read and understand the [Transportation Policy](#).

_____ I have read and understand the [Front Office Procedures](#).

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

I am the caregiver or guardian of the above-named student. I have received and read the handbook. I understand that by signing this document, I agree to support and promote the goals of the handbook and make every effort to work with the school in resolving all academic and disciplinary matters.

Caregiver Name (*print*): _____ Date: _____

Caregiver Signature: _____