



Student-Parent Handbook 2026-2027

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School Colors
Maroon Grey & Gold



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The History of The Lawson Academy



The Lawson Academy was conceived by Mrs. Audrey Lawson and established to meet the critical academic and social development needs of inner-city youth. Since opening its doors in the fall of 2002, The Lawson Academy has attended to middle school males enrolled in grades 6 -- 8, providing them an authentic, enriched learning community that believes all students can learn and that, given the right guidance and preparation, all students can become their best selves.

Early on in its development, The Lawson Academy purposefully implemented a single-gender strategy for education. Located on the Texas Southern University campus and warmly embraced by non-profit, for-profit, fraternal and community organizations, this model has demonstrated a positive impact on the students and families it serves. Within our single-gender educational program, teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders can address students' unique physical, social, and emotional needs, and provide them with a safe, secure, and nurturing environment that fosters their academic growth.

In 2011, the academy expanded its model to include a girls' program. Female middle-school students had an opportunity to benefit from an equally rigorous academic experience as well as build meaningful relationships and reinforce invaluable character traits that continue to make The Lawson Academy program so successful.

The Lawson Academy is an open-enrollment public institution with established academic requirements and requisite parental commitment. We welcome any students who willingly accept the challenge to become college ready and to demonstrate personal integrity and a responsibility.

Each scholar who attends The Lawson Academy is recognized as an individual who has unique abilities, needs, and interests. For that reason, we foster a student-centered learning environment that models high expectations for academic achievement and that provides an atmosphere of mutual respect for students, staff, family, and community members.

The **vision** of The Lawson Academy is to create a student-centered, collaborative learning environment in which our scholars utilize innovative learning approaches and technology to become college-ready and to develop into civic-minded, contributing members of the global community.

Our **mission** is to provide a comprehensive education in single-gender environment based on four cornerstones:

- Relevant curriculum
- Rigorous instruction
- Respect for self and others in the learning community
- Reciprocity, or give and take, of ideas and talents

Our **values** rest on six pillars of excellence:

Scholarship
Work

Integrity
Culture

Brotherhood/Sisterhood
Liberty



From the Principal's Office

Dear Lawson Academy Parents and Students,

Greetings and welcome to a new and exciting school year at The Lawson Academy! As your principal, I am thrilled to partner with you in ensuring our students are well-supported, well-prepared, and inspired to *Level Up to the Next Stage of Excellence*.

At The Lawson Academy, we believe that clear communication and shared expectations are vital to a thriving school community. To that end, I am proud to introduce **The Lawson Academy Parent-Student Handbook** for the 2026–2027 school year. This handbook is an essential resource designed to help families and students understand the policies, procedures, and values that guide our work together.

Inside the handbook, you will find important information regarding:

- Daily schedules and attendance expectations
- Academic programs and grading policies
- Campus safety procedures
- Student conduct and behavior expectations
- Uniform guidelines
- Parent involvement opportunities
- Communication protocols

We ask that all families take time to review the handbook together and discuss its contents. It is our shared responsibility to ensure students are informed and ready to uphold the standards that define our school culture.

Please note that both students and parents will be asked to sign an acknowledgment form indicating that you have read and understood the handbook. This helps us maintain a consistent and respectful environment for all members of our school community.

The Parent-Student Handbook will be available both in print and digitally on our school website. Should you have any questions or need clarification on any part of the handbook, feel free to reach out to our main office or schedule a time to speak with a member of our leadership team.

Thank you for being a valued part of The Lawson Academy family. Together, we will continue to build a school community where every student is empowered to learn, grow, and succeed.

In partnership,

Dr. Jonathan Sutton
Principal
The Lawson Academy

General Information

Attendance

When a student is absent, the parent is to call The Lawson Academy office (713) 225-1551 before 9:00 a.m. and report the absence by giving the following information: student name, grade, and the reason for absence. Failure to provide a proper written excuse (within three days of return to the school) will result in an absence being considered an unexcused absence. Students must always maintain a 90% or higher attendance rate. Excessive absences will result in loss of credit for coursework. Three or more consecutive absences will result in an attendance referral. Excessive absences can result in retention in the current grade level.

Upon returning (from an absence) to school, the student is required to do the following:

- a. Bring a written excuse/note from a parent or doctor stating the reason for the absence.
- b. Deliver the written note to The Lawson Academy office which opens at 7:15 a.m.

Note to Parent: Absences are excused for personal illness or a death in the family. It is very important for every student to be in class every day to maximize their every opportunity for academic success. To that end, please do not schedule any vacations, family trips, or doctor's appointments (if possible) etc. during school hours. **In addition, please do not check your child out of school (as a matter of convenience) prior to the end of the school day. Early departures from campus will not be honored after 2:45pm (Elementary)/ 3:45pm (Middle). (Emergencies only) Interruptions to the instructional setting (even the last five minutes of the day) are not appropriate.**

Daily Attendance Time

The state requires that daily attendance be submitted by 9:30 a.m. However, attendance will be taken at first period. Parents are asked to schedule appointments (dentist, doctor, orthodontist, etc.) after school.

Tardy Policy

Students should arrive to school on time. Breakfast is served on campus daily from for 30 minutes. Students should begin the day promptly. It is important and demonstrates their commitment to success. **A student arriving to school after 7:35 a.m. (elementary) 8:35 a.m. (middle) is considered late and must be escorted directly to the school office to sign in by a parent or guardian.**

7:00–7:30 AM – Breakfast

7:35 AM–3:30 PM – Instructional Day

11:00 AM–12:00 PM – Lunch



Elementary

Middle



8:00–8:30 AM – Breakfast

8:35 AM–4:30 PM – Instructional Day

12:15–1:00 PM – Lunch

The Lawson Academy Tardy Policy has been developed to emphasize the importance of each student being in the classroom for the entire period, as well as arriving on time to school every day. Learning the responsibility of getting to class on time is an integral part of The Lawson Academy standard of excellence, which prepares students for success. During the first few days of school, all teachers will be working with their students, focusing on getting organized and arriving to class on time daily.



The student's responsibility is to consistently improve personal efficiency in transitioning between classes, while still moving safely and orderly through the hall traffic. Students must be in class and in their seats before the tardy bell rings.

The teacher's responsibility is to encourage students to discover the best routine for transitioning between classes. All teachers will be standing at the classroom door to supervise students during transition time and upon the sound of the tardy bell, classroom doors will close. Classroom instruction starts when the tardy bell sounds.

The parent's responsibility is to discuss this policy with his/her child, reinforcing the student's ability to meet this responsibility of learning promptness, and supporting the necessity for the school's establishing immediate consequences to prevent chronic tardiness.

Student Schedule

The Lawson Academy students follow a regular daily schedule designed to maximize instructional time and address instructional deficiencies. The master schedule ensures the required state minutes.

Student Check-Out and Visitor Procedures

All visitors are required to sign in at the main office and will be given a **Visitor's Pass** that must be worn and clearly visible. *For school safety purposes, visitors access to classroom are strictly limited.* When students are checked out of school they must be signed out at the main office. Only authorized parents/guardians listed on the enrollment form will be allowed to check students out.

Academic Program

Grading periods at The Lawson Academy are divided into nine-week periods. Over the course of each nine-week period the student's progress will be assessed by in-class assignments, participation, weekly exit tickets, quizzes, and projects which will be reflected in the student's grade for the term.

Students are graded on the following scale:

100-90	A	Demonstrates exceptional mastery of material
89-80	B	Demonstrates mastery of material
79-75	C	Demonstrates average mastery of material
74-70	D	Demonstrates minimum mastery of material
69-below	F	Demonstrates lack of mastery of material

Citizenship

Student behavior is graded on the following scale:

E	Excellent behavior
S	Satisfactory behavior
P	Poor behavior/Needs improvement
U	Unsatisfactory behavior

Consequences

Academic and poor/unsatisfactory conduct grades that are below average will prohibit students from participating in school-sponsored extracurricular activities such as sports, dances, and field trips.

Retention

A student who receives one or more F's in one or more core classes on their final report card may be subject to grade level retention.

Make-up Assignments

Upon returning to school, scholars who have been absent will be up to 3 days to make-up missed work. It is the student's responsibility to see that the work is made-up. During extended absences (**3 days or more**), parents may contact teacher to request missing assignments.

Academic Reports to Parents

School officials communicate the student's academic progress through the following methods:

- Teacher-issued Progress Reports:** Teachers may send home a progress report (via electronically) to parents any time during the grading period that shows a decline or improvement in students' academic performance.
- School-issued Progress Reports:** The school will send home an electronic copy of the student progress reports every **third week** during the six-week grading period. Included will be campus-wide assessments results from NWEA MAP, Exit Tickets and Panorama Student Surveys.
- Report cards:** At the end of the six-week grading period, will receive an electronic copy of the student report card documenting the level of academic mastery for the six-week period.



PROGRESS REPORT DATES

Interim Progress reports will be sent to parents in the middle of each six-week grading period. Teachers can also send them home to parents or to individual students as needed.

REPORT CARD DATES

Report Cards will be sent home with students during the week following the end of the nine-week period on the following dates.

Nine Week Grading Cycle	Teacher Due Dates	Report Card Dates
Period I: August 10 - Sept 18	September 23	September 25
Period II: Sept 22 - October 30	November 4	November 6
Period III: Nov 2 - December 18	December 18	January 8
Period IV: Jan 5 - Feb 19	Feb 24	February 26
Period V: Feb 22 - Apr 15	April 14	April 23
Period VI: Apr 19 - May 28	May 28	June 2

Request for Student Records

All requests for student records should be made formally to the registrar. Only the parent or legal guardian is allowed access to a student's records. A minimum of 48 hours is required to reproduce a student's records.

Textbooks/Library Books

The Lawson Academy provides textbooks for students use during the school year. Students are responsible for the care of textbooks, laptops and other school equipment and property. Parents will be charged for lost or damaged books and equipment.

Activities & Organizations

The purpose of the activities and organizations of The Lawson Academy is to promote scholarship, integrity, and sisterhood/brotherhood. Each student is encouraged to become a part of the organized activity life of the campus. Information regarding specific clubs and organizations may be obtained from organization sponsors.



School Celebrations/Parties

There will be three (3) “official” classroom parties per year – A Valentine’s Day, Christmas, and End-of-year celebration.

Due to state guidelines for student nutrition, The Lawson Academy will not be able to offer or serve any food item considered to be a “Food of Minimal Nutritional Value” at any time during the school day (with the exception of our three classroom parties). However, parents will still be allowed to send store-bought “**treat bags and/or cupcakes only**” to share with the entire class for their child’s birthday. These treats are limited to the last fifteen minutes of the school day or recess. Parents may drop off these birthday treats in the front office. **Please do not send balloon bouquets or- any items that don’t fit in the bookbag to the school.**

Personal Items

Students shall not bring toys, trading cards, athletic items, electronic equipment, or any non-essential personal items onto school property. The Lawson Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Our cell phone policy allows students to bring cell phones to school but ALL cellphones/smartwatches must be checked in at the start of the day and retrieved at the end of day. Cell phones **MUST** be turned off and remain inside of the cell phone storage unit (administrative office area) during the instructional school day. Cell phones that are visible or heard ringing will be confiscated and held until a parent/guardian following the cell phone policy. State testing guidelines (STAAR) strictly prohibit cell phones to be present during testing.

Field Trips/Assemblies

The Lawson Academy hosts several assemblies each year. We choose our assemblies based on cultural and educational value they will add to our students. All students are provided access to on-campus assemblies at no cost. However, during the course of the year, some off-campus field trips **may** be priced to cover the cost of admission tickets, and/or transportation.

Information about prospective field trip costs will be sent home with students well in advance of the actual event or activity. All parents are required to complete a field trip permission form that remains valid the entire school year.

Student Council

The Lawson Academy is proud to sponsor the Student Council, which is an honor organization whose purpose is to recognize students who excel in academics as well as leadership, citizenship, service, and character. This organization is open to all 7th and 8th grade students who maintained a grade point average of 93 or above, and an E average in conduct for each nine-week period. Parents may request further information regarding the Student Council at the main office.

Code of Student Conduct: Rights and Responsibilities

The Lawson Academy teachers and administrative staff have the right and responsibility to respond to student acts of misconduct that interfere with the goals of education. Students and parents are expected to become familiar with the provisions outlined in The Lawson Academy *Code of Student Conduct*. Carefully review the responsibilities of the students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the school board. All stakeholders must work together to ensure the educational and social development of the child.

Parents and students are to review the information below and sign and return the acknowledgement page.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Level I | These offenses generally occur in the classroom and can be corrected by the teacher, i.e., excessive talking, getting out of a seat without permission, or any other disruptive act which violates the S.T.R.O.N.G. principles. |
| Level II | These offenses are more serious than Level I and/or represent the student's inability to control Level I misconduct. Level II offenses call for administrative intervention, i.e., disrespect of faculty/staff members, horse playing (or "playing"), or using vulgarity or profanity. |
| Level III | These offenses seriously disrupt the educational process in the classroom, the school, and/or at school related activities, or are a continuance of repeated Level I or Level II offenses. Level III misconduct may result in student's assignment to The Center for Redirection and Reinforcement (ISS) in-school suspension, out of school suspension optional removal to student's home school location i.e., gang-related activity, stealing, fighting, persistent bullying/cyberbullying deliberate destruction of school and/or The Lawson Academy family property. |



Student Telephone Usage

Lost/Stolen Cell Phone- The Lawson Academy will assume no responsibility for a lost or stolen cell phone. Cell phones are brought to school at the STUDENT'S risk.

Cell Phone Policy and Procedures

Cell phones are useful tools required as means to communicate and ensure student safety before and after school. However, cell phones are often a constant distraction to students through unauthorized use during instruction and will not be allowed in classrooms. In addition, students may not keep their phones in unsecured places such as their backpacks, pockets, or purses. Lastly, air pods, apple watches or any electronic devices including personal laptops or iPad will not be allowed in class during the school day.

Each first period teacher (homeroom) will collect all cell phones and place it in a zipped locked bag labeled with the student's name. **All cell phones will be stored in a locked secured place in the main office.** Student cell phones will be returned to the last period teacher by designated personnel at the end of each class period. **No student will ever be assigned the responsibility to pick-up or return cell phones to students.**

There will be a **\$20.00 return fee** if a student fails to comply with the campus cell phone policy and procedures as outlined. For school safety reasons, we strongly encourage all parents to support the school's cell phone policy.

All classrooms are equipped with telephones. With teacher permission, students may use the classroom telephone or in the main office in case of an emergency. The telephone is not to be used for general conversation or to call home for non-emergencies.

Students will not be allowed to leave class to make telephone calls if it is not considered an emergency by the teacher.

Messages will be delivered to students **only** in case of emergency, otherwise the school staff will **not** be responsible for delivering messages to students. Parents should always ensure students are informed on the morning prior to school, of family related matters, appointments, change in transportation, or special after-school directions.



Dress Code

The Lawson Academy is a uniform school. Our dress code should be strictly adhered to.

Faculty and staff will conduct routine uniform checks. Please see the dress code below for The Lawson Academy.

The Lawson Academy is a **full** uniform school. It is our collective belief that students develop school pride not only by attaining honor in extracurricular activities and in scholastic accomplishments, but also by maintaining high standards of behavior which are reflected in their dress and grooming. Boys and girls are expected to be clean, neat, and appropriately dressed in uniform daily.

Hairstyles, hair color, jewelry, and fashions, which cause or may cause a distraction are unacceptable.

Uniforms may be purchased from Ibiley Uniforms at www.ibiley.com.

Uniform Requirements for Girls Scholars

- Uniform Black/ Khaki slacks (no leggings or black tight fitted jeans allowed)
- Uniform Black/Khaki skirt
- Maroon/Black long/short sleeve polo style
- **All Black** dress/casual shoes (no slides, open-toe shoes, tennis, or crocs are allowed)
- Socks (white or black socks only no colors)
- Jacket – solid black, dark navy, or grey with front zipper or front opening so uniform can be plainly seen (no pull-over tops, or outside graphics or hoodies allowed)
- Hair- Natural colors (distracting hair colors, blue, orange, purple, green, pink or styles not allowed)
- Eye Wear – (Girls should not wear artificial eye lashes or wear glasses (as a fashion statement) that are not prescribed by a physician)
- **Students** will not be allowed to wear nails of an unnatural length or colors considered distracting
- **Caps, hats, head wrap or scarves of any kind are not to be worn on the head to school.** Female students may wear headbands that reflect school colors, black, gold, grey, white, or maroon
- **Jewelry such as multiple beaded bracelets/bangles, large hoop earrings, or long dangling earrings and chain necklaces are considered a safety hazard**

Uniform Requirements for Boys Scholars

- Uniform black or khaki dress slacks
- Maroon/Black long/short sleeve polo style
- Black dress/casual shoes only (**no tennis, open-toe, slides, or crocs allowed**)
- Black/white dress socks only
- Jacket solid black, navy or grey must have a front zipper (no pull-over tops, outside graphics or hoodies allowed)



- Hair – Natural color, appropriately well groomed (no distracting hair designs allowed)
- Visible nose piercings not allowed
- Caps, hats, or head wraps of any kind are not allowed
- Necklaces or chains not allowed
- Tattoos on the skin that are visible not permitted

The administration of The Lawson Academy reserves the right to make the final decision regarding the appropriateness of clothing and/or accessories.



Dress Code Violation Procedures

1 st Violation	Warning and reminder phone call to the parent and a violation letter sent home with the student.
2 nd Violation	Parent Conference and loss of school privilege, including sports enrichment activities etc.
3 rd Violation	Parent/Teacher Administrative Conference
4 th Violation	Possible in- school suspension or out of school suspension from The Lawson Academy

If the violation is one that can be corrected, such as removing a colored undershirt, it should be done so immediately. If a student is not wearing the appropriate top or bottom, a phone call will be made to the parent in an attempt to correct the problem. Frequent violations of the Student Dress Code could lead to more serious consequences up to suspension from The Lawson Academy.

On Spirit Fridays, ALL Students can wear the following:

- ☐ The Lawson Academy Spirit T-shirt.
- ☐ Dark blue or black jeans (no writing, rips, gems, or designs)
- ☐ Tennis shoes or close-toed shoes of student's choice

On Free Dress Days, ALL Students can wear the following:

School appropriate clothing:

- ☐ Shirt of student's choice (no negative slogans, no skulls, or offensive illustrations)
- ☐ Jeans (no khaki, ripped pants, embellishments or offensive illustrations)
- ☐ Tennis shoes or closed-toe shoes of student's choice

Stay S.T.R.O.N.G Policy

At The Lawson Academy, the acronym S.T.R.O.N.G has a special purpose for our students and is essential to every student's success:

- S** – Stay Seated
- T** –Track the speaker
- R** –Raise your hand before speaking
- O** – Offer constructive comments
- N** –Never distract others from learning
- G** –Gain respect by giving respect



Transportation

Riding the school bus is a privilege. Transportation is provided as an auxiliary service and can be discontinued at any time per The Lawson Academy *Bus Rider Contract*. Responsible student behavior is important for the safety of passengers. Bus conduct reports are forwarded to the principal if the student exhibits misconduct. Please review the bus contract with your child, sign it, and return the document to school and parent contact is made immediately.

Student Arrival Procedures

All students arriving to school by **car** should be dropped off along the curb in the student drop off zone near the cafeteria entrance. Parents should follow the single lane of traffic through the parking lot and stay to the right. Please make sure students are prepared to exit vehicles when entering the **drop off** zone. Please use caution as you travel through the parking lots.

*****If parents need to enter the campus for drop off, Parents may park in marked spaces in front of the building and proceed to the main entrance.****

***** Students should NOT be dropped off along the curbs of the streets. These are NOT supervised areas.****

Student Dismissal Procedures

All of our dismissal procedures are for the safety of our students. We ask that you assist us in maintaining a safe environment for them by following the student dismissal procedures. All students will be assigned a **dismissal number** regardless if they walk/ride bikes home, ride the bus, or get picked up.

All students leaving school by **CAR** will use the following procedures:

STUDENTS:

Staff members will escort all car riders to the cafeteria. Upon entering the cafeteria, students will report to their assigned number line and be seated quietly as the teacher assigned stands beside supervising them. As parents arrive, students' **dismissal numbers** will be called (all family members will have the same number). At that time, students will leave the building through the cafeteria doors to the student pick-up zone. Staff members will assist and support students.

PARENTS:

Parents will receive two tags with their student(s)'s assigned **dismissal number**. One copy should go in the main vehicle that picks up your student(s). The other copy may be used in a second vehicle that may also pick up your student(s). Parents shall enter the single car pick-up lane in the back parking lot, making sure to display their **dismissal number** tag in the front windshield. As cars enter the lane, the number(s) will be reported to staff members in the cafeteria. Your student(s) will be waiting for you in the pick-up zone by the time you pull around. After loading, parents may proceed to exit the parking lot.

*****Parents/vehicles not displaying a DISMISSAL NUMBER will be asked to park in the front parking lot and enter the front office for student check-out and ID verification.**



*****Please do NOT leave unattended vehicles in the pickup lanes during dismissal times. Parents are NOT to leave their vehicle in attempt to grab their child during dismissal. This interferes with the dismissal process and the parent will be asked to return to their vehicle.**

*****Students will NOT be allowed to wait for parents outside of the building. All car riders will be required to wait in the cafeteria for parent pickup.**

*****Parents and daycare providers who arrive late (after 3:40p.m.-Elementary; 4:40pm-Middle) will need to sign their student(s) out in the front office.**

All students leaving campus by BUS or DAYCARE VAN will use the following procedures. Staff members will escort all bus riders to their bus or van.

*****Parents wishing to pick up a student who has already been dismissed from the classroom as a bus or daycare van rider must get a dismissal pass from the front office. No transportation changes by will be made by parents after 2:45 (elementary); 3:30 (middle). Timing is extremely important as we ensure our systems are effective and safe for all.**

All students leaving campus by WALKING or RIDING BIKES will use the following procedures. Staff members will escort all walkers and bike riders to commons area. They will be escorted off campus and across the adjacent streets if needed. *Any student walkers/bike riders who ignore staff directives and present a safety hazard to themselves, other students or school staff will be required to be parent pickup.*

*****In the event of rain, walkers/bike riders will be held at school until the rain clears or someone arrives to pick them up. DISMISSAL NUMBERS will need to be displayed in the vehicle's windshield.**

*****Parents are asked to keep their student(s)' dismissal routine as consistent as possible. Students and teachers will NOT be allowed to change a dismissal routine without a written note from a parent/guardian. In the event of an unplanned change, please contact the front office by 2:45 pm.**

Bus Transportation

Riding a school bus is a privilege extended to students. For the safety of the students, all riders must observe proper behavior while on the bus AND at the bus stop. Failure to comply with bus rules will result in temporary or permanent removal from the bus.

*****Transportation will only be provided based on the student(s)' home address.**

Cafeteria Management Plan

The Lawson Academy students eat in the cafeteria or in their classrooms at the designated lunch periods. The assigned lunch period is an opportunity to enjoy being with friends and enjoying a well-prepared lunch from the cafeteria or sack lunch from home that follow the campus list of healthy food guidelines. Students are required to maintain their eating areas and are to **remain seated** until they are dismissed by the cafeteria monitor. These guidelines will assist all in making lunchtime an enjoyable experience.

In the serving line students will:

- enter the cafeteria in an orderly way.
- use quiet voices when standing in line.
- respond respectfully to adults in the serving line.
- get appropriate items (napkin, fork/spoon, straw, milk, snack, ketchup, mustard, etc.) for lunch before they leave the serving line area as they will not be permitted to return to the serving line

In the cafeteria students will:

- walk to designated table and sit down.
- use quiet voices when talking in the cafeteria.
- stay in their seats and raise their hands to get help.
- use good manners and eat only what is on their plate. (Touching another student's food is not permitted.
- keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
- make sure their eating space is clean for the next class.
- dump their trays one at a time, one side at a time.
- walk to the designated area and wait to be picked up by their teacher.
- exit the cafeteria quietly.

Everyone will treat others with dignity and respect.

Fundraising

All collections of fees from students and all fundraising activities must be approved by a campus administrator. Students are not allowed to sell or purchase non-approved items without permission.

Damage to School Property

The Lawson Academy students take pride in their school. They must not destroy or deface school property. Any scholar who participates in acts of vandalism on campus may be referred to the proper law enforcement agency. In any case, students will be required to pay restitution or perform civil remuneration.



Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent concerns can best be resolved at the campus level, where most issues arise. Arrangements can be made for parent conferences with individual teachers, and school administrators. These meetings must be prearranged and cannot be guaranteed on a walk-in basis.

Parents should call the school at (713) 225-1551 to schedule a conference. Upon arriving to campus for a scheduled visit, parents are not allowed to report directly to the classroom. However, must check in at the main office and receive a visitor's pass. Conferences will not be scheduled during teachers' instructional periods.

To resolve concerns, parents, guardians, and/or students can meet with a teacher at appropriate times to discuss existing challenges. If the parents, guardians, or students are dissatisfied with the teachers' decision or explanation, they can schedule an appointment to meet with the school principal by completing an Administrative Consultation Form in the main office.

Closing of School/Shelter in Place

During the school year, the district may see the need to cancel classes because of weather conditions or other unforeseen reasons. If circumstances force the closing of school, all local radio and television stations will carry the announcement. Our district also will utilize an automated phone "call out." Because the system will call the main contact number listed for the student, it is imperative that you notify school personnel of phone number changes as they occur.

Students need to know where they should go in case of an early dismissal. After school care is closed whenever school is cancelled for an unscheduled reason. Past experience has shown that a large number of students are not informed by parents where they are to go in case of an emergency closing. Phone lines become overloaded, parents cannot call in, and students cannot call out.

In the event of an emergency, the school may be ordered to "shelter in place". In this situation, the school will lockdown and no one will be allowed to enter or exit the building until the order is lifted. During this time, the students will be supervised and secured.



Health Services

The Lawson Academy does not staff a full-time nurse. If a student is to take medication during the school day, the parent must supply the school with a doctors' permit, allowing a designated school staff or the student to administer medication. Otherwise, The Lawson Academy staff is not permitted to administer over the counter medication of any kind to students without full parent consent.

All medication that is administered on campus must be dispensed from the bottle/container provided by the pharmacist and cannot be transferred into a baggie or other receptacle. The Lawson Academy staff will not be permitted to dispense medication to students without written parent consent. All medication must be registered with the Principal and school registrar and, thereafter, can be administered only in the school's main office.

Medication Policy

According to state policy, a school is required to dispense medications only to students with long-term chronic illnesses or disabilities where failure to take the medication would jeopardize the student's health or educational progress. The following rules govern our ability to assist your child:

1. A physician's order for administration of medication must be on file at the school.
2. The medication must be in the original prescription bottle with the student's name, physician's name, medication name, schedule of administration, dosage, and date clearly marked.

It is the students' responsibility to remember to come to the main office and take their medications. The school is not always able to remind the students of daily medications.

Texas Immunization Requirements

Varicella Vaccine: All students entering seventh grade will be required to have two (2) doses of varicella vaccine. A written statement from a parent (or legal guardian or managing conservator), school nurse, or physician attesting to a child's positive history of varicella disease (chickenpox), or of varicella immunity, is acceptable in lieu of a dose of varicella vaccine.

Tetanus, Diphtheria, and acellular pertussis-containing vaccine (Tdap): All students entering the seventh grade will be required to have one dose of Tdap vaccine, students in the seventh grade will be required to have a booster dose of Tdap only if it has been five years since their last dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine, students in grade eight is required to have a booster dose of Tdap if it has been ten years since their previous dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine, Td is acceptable in lieu of Tdap if a contraindication to pertussis exists.

Meningococcal Vaccine: All students entering seventh grade will be required to have one dose of meningococcal vaccine.



School Safety

Fire Drill

State law mandates that the school conducts monthly fire and emergency evacuation drills. At the request of their teachers, students are expected to exit the building quickly and quietly. It is imperative that students follow directions so that teachers can take attendance and ensure that every student has safely cleared the building. During these drills, students' failure to adhere to these expectations is considered a severe behavior violation.

Active Shooter Training

All Lawson Academy staff will receive updated Active School Training prior to the start of school. All staff have the capacity to notify the appropriate personnel in case of imminent danger or emergency.

Lost and Found

Many items are lost and found during the school year. We strongly encourage students to be responsible by taking care to secure their personal items to avoid losses. Unclaimed student items will be donated to local charities. **The Lawson Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen items.**

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is organized parent engagement activity that is developed to maintain a positive communication with parents and The Lawson Academy staff. The PTO/Parent Engagement meets on the third Thursday of each month.

Student Supplies

A school supply list has been provided to all parents. Students are required to enter each classroom ready to learn. Please make sure that your child comes to school with the following materials daily:

- Interactive Notebook
- Notebook paper
- Pens and pencils

All consumable school supplies should be replenished by parents/guardians on a regular basis



Honor Code

In accordance with the mission of the school, The Lawson Academy students will not participate in dishonesty, cheating, stealing, bullying, or harassing.

The Lawson Academy students will conclude an orientation annually by promising, in writing, to uphold the Honor Code:

I pledge to uphold The Lawson Academy Honor Code in letter and in spirit throughout this school year.

The Lawson Academy students will also use a pledge on all tests, projects, papers, reports, and long-term assignments:

I pledge that I have upheld The Lawson Academy Honor Code in letter and in spirit.

“The Lawson Academy students will not participate in dishonesty, cheating, stealing, bullying, or harassing...”

Integrity

At The Lawson Academy, we believe it is vital to tell the truth at all times, recognizing there is honor in telling the truth even when that truth reveals a mistake or an error in judgment. It requires courage to face mistakes and accept responsibility for their consequences.

Telling the truth includes explaining accurately why work was not completed on time or was incomplete, why one was absent or late from school, why one missed an obligation, how one interacted with other students or a teacher, and any other specifics about one's actions. A student who makes false excuses for his or her behavior has not upheld our Honor Code.

Academic Integrity

At The Lawson Academy, we believe students must engage in honest scholarship. Honest scholarship in student work means that the product comes from a student's own mind and effort. Such work includes all tests, exams, long-range projects, and homework. Written work, for instance, needs to reflect a student's ideas, organization, punctuation, and sentence structure. To help families and students alike understand types of habits and help which are suitable or not, we provide the following examples of permissible and non-permissible help that can be given and/or received, keeping in mind that the spirit of the law is more important than the letter. All families should review and discuss these examples at home.

Students who give or receive help with the intent of providing or gaining an unfair academic advantage are not living up to the Honor Code.

Permissible Help from Fellow Students and Parents

- Telling another student what the assignment is
- Repeating specific directions given by the teacher

- Identifying weakness in organization, style, word choice or content. It is permissible to comment: “This paragraph is weak,” or “These words are misspelled,” or “You didn’t answer all the questions.”
- Sharing notes (unless the notes are the assignment)
- Showing another student how to do a problem by using another example
- Brainstorming ideas on creative writing assignments
- Reviewing material in preparation for a test or exam
- Discussing concepts that were addressed in class or engaging in discussion of course material for better understanding

Non-Permissible Help from Fellow Students and Parents

- Giving another student your answer or answers to any given question
- Telling another student how to re-write something (i.e. “...just write this down.”)
- Sharing with another student any content that is part of an answer
- Letting someone read your answers, knowing, or suspecting he or she intends to paraphrase those answers
- Showing or explaining to another student where to find information for an assignment (i.e. “look on page 34 for the answer”)
- Looking at another student’s paper and/or using his or her ideas or answers
- Using a calculator when not permitted
- Having another person, including a parent, assist with the production of an assignment, including typing or word processing written work. (Exceptions are made for students with special learning needs.)
- Discussing any aspect of a quiz, test or exam before all students have taken the test
- Letting a project partner do all of the work and then putting your name on the final project
- Using any part of someone else’s work without proper acknowledgement
- Accessing websites during class assignments, exit tickets, unit or interim assessments is strictly prohibited

Homework, Papers, Projects

Our Honor Code does not expressly address plagiarism, though it is clearly a form of dishonesty. When doing research, students may use the ideas, even the exact words, of other authors. Whether quoted directly or paraphrased, however, such borrowed material must be properly cited. Students will learn and practice how to use proper citations in their composition classes. All teachers assigning papers requiring research will reemphasize the importance of proper citations and will expect compliance.



All rough and final drafts of assigned papers and written projects must reflect the student's ideas, organization, punctuation, and sentence structure. All projects must reflect the student's own labor, design, and artwork.

Homework schedule:

Mondays (Math)

Tuesdays (ELAR)

Wednesdays (Science/CRS-ELAR/Sci)

Thursdays (Independent Reading)

Exams, Tests, Quizzes

Honest scholarship in test situations means that students refrain from looking at other students' papers, even if the information is not used. Obviously, taking answers from another test and using them or looking at one's notes or a text is forbidden. Any time a student is unable to finish a test during a given period and the teacher allows the student to return later to complete it, the student may not talk to others about the test or look at related materials in the interim. Moreover, if any aspect of a test (content, format, or level of difficulty) is discussed between students who have and who have not taken the test, students on both the giving and receiving end of this conversation are guilty of breaching the Honor Code. Students also may not give advance notice to others of pop quizzes.

Collaboration among students is often directed by faculty, but students should know that unless specific directions for collaboration are given by their teacher, it is understood that assignments are to be done individually. When appropriate, students will be encouraged by the teacher to help each other by critiquing writing, clarifying the directions, comparing the length of answers, sharing resource books, discussing a group project or lab experience in preparation for writing it up, and giving examples.

There are several very difficult "gray" areas. For instance, we strongly discourage students from comparing answers (the familiar "What did you get on number 12?") because while the intent is simply to identify errors (permissible), the result is often to supply answers (a violation).

Similarly, we urge parents to use discretion when providing correct spellings; in many cases, looking the word up and copying it from a dictionary stimulate better retention.

Theft

At The Lawson Academy, we believe in respect for one another's property. A student who demonstrates this respect never defaces anything that belongs to another student or the school, never "borrows" property (including money, clothing, books, academic work, papers, calculators, uniforms, art supplies, library books or classroom supplies) without specific permission, never takes or hides food or other items that were intended for another person, never takes things from the "Lost and Found" that are not his, and never violates a student's or teacher's privacy by entering her room, computer files or folder, locker, or other personal property without permission.

Use of the school's computers and network is a special privilege, and analogous standards of integrity apply in this realm. Tampering with operating systems or other students' files or folders is analogous to "taking" or "hiding" property. Using another person's E-mail account is dishonest. The *Guidelines for Acceptable Internet Use and Statement of Student Responsibility* signed by all students elaborates on these guidelines.



Harassing Behavior and Bullying

At The Lawson Academy, we believe every person deserves to be treated with sensitivity and respect. Students who uphold the Honor Code will strive to make all members of the community feel accepted from the first moment they arrive at the school and will treat everyone, regardless of physical, mental, or other differences, with respect.

As a community, we will not tolerate harassment of any kind, whether it is of a general nature or falls within the specific examples listed below.

- Ethnic harassment: abuse of an individual or group on the basis of ethnic origin
- Religious harassment: abuse of an individual or group on the basis of religion
- Gender harassment: abuse of an individual or group on the basis of gender
- Sexual Orientation harassment: abuse of an individual or group on the basis of sexual orientation
- Sexual harassment: use of sexuality to harass
- Cyberbullying: use of technology to harass, threaten, or defame another person's character

Harassment includes both the more easily identified acts of verbal, written or physical abuse, (i.e., persistent derogatory comments, persistent demeaning remarks, threatening remarks, racial or ethnic slurs, leering references to someone's body) and the subtler, but equally damaging forms, such as graffiti and stereotypical jokes.

In our world, to "look the other way" is often to condone, and there is no better time than the middle school years to harness our students' idealism by joining together to make our school a community where honesty and integrity prevail.

The staff hopes to create an environment in which students expect their peers to adhere to the Honor Code and feel comfortable reporting violations or confronting one another. Because the age of our students and the size of our student body make the burden of *required* reporting of violations too great, students will be encouraged, and taught how, to speak up when they observe another student violating the Honor Code. Likewise, all other members of the school community – parents, teachers, and staff – will be called upon to do their absolute best to protest, in an appropriate way, behavior that lacks integrity.

Bullying

Bullying occurs when a person is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he/she has difficulty defending himself or herself. Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions. Bullying involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time. Bullying also involves an imbalance of power or strength, for example, an eighth-grade student repeatedly harassing a sixth or seventh grade student.

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. “Cyber-bullying” occurs when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed, or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the internet, interactive and digital technologies, or mobile phones. It has to have a minor on both sides, or at least have been instigated by a minor against a minor. Once adults become involved, it is plain and simple cyber-harassment or cyber-stalking.

It is important for each student to report any bullying or threats, whether made during school or away from school to the nearest teacher or adult at school as soon as possible so school officials may take appropriate action. Similarly, parents who have concerns about bullying should meet with the campus administrator. If your child is receiving SpEd/504 services, go to the ARD committee to focus on the problem and arrange a plan to intervene at the campus level.

Cyber-bullying is considered a serious offense and is strictly prohibited at The Lawson Academy.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The Lawson Academy is a “Bully-Free” School, and as such, acts in full compliance with House Bill 1942 as well as the policies outlined by the United States Department of Education. **This Anti-Bullying policy is compliant with State of Texas requirements that school board trustees adopt a policy on bullying that prohibits bullying and the retaliation against any person.**

Definition of bullying

Every individual should have the right to be spared oppression and repeated, intentional humiliation, in school as in society at large. A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students. The following are some negative actions associated with bullying:

- **Physical aggression** – Engaging in assault not involving bodily injury, which is defined as intentionally or knowingly threatening another with imminent bodily injury, i.e., hitting, kicking, destroying property, claiming to have a weapon, or referencing family members who will
- **Social aggression** – Engaging in socially alienating behaviors that interfere with another student's willingness to participate in the educational process, i.e., spreading rumors, excluding someone from a group, persuading other students to give someone else the silent treatment
- **Verbal aggression** – Engaging in threats or other acts of intimidation that interfere with another student's desire or willingness to participate in the educational process, such as name calling, teasing, threatening, or making intimidating phone calls
- **Written aggression** – note writing, graffiti, slam books, cyber-bullying
- **Sexual harassment** – comments or actions of a sexual nature which are unwelcome and make the recipient uncomfortable, i.e., inappropriate touching, grabbing, comments about someone's body, sexting
- **Racial and ethnic harassment** – Making comments containing racial or ethnic content which are unwelcome and make the recipient uncomfortable, i.e., ethnic jokes, racial name calling, racial slurs



The Lawson Academy Code of Student Conduct considers bullying a Level III disciplinary offense. A student may be suspended, placed in in-school suspension, or, if serious or persistent behavior occurs, removed from the regular classroom, suspended up to expulsion from school.

Campus procedures for addressing incidents of bullying

If a student believes that he or she is the victim of another person's bullying, that student is expected to immediately inform a teacher and allow the teacher to conduct a timely investigation. * If the teacher is able to substantiate the student's claim, then the teacher will inform the appropriate campus administrator.

Once the administrator has been informed and/or has substantiated that the student has engaged in bullying, the administrator will immediately contact parents and schedule separate conferences between the aggressor, the victim, any witness (es), their parents, and the academy counselor.

Campus responsibilities related to bullying prevention policies and procedures:

All faculty and staff have engaged in professional development related to bullying, and they are trained in the acceptable and effective methods they must practice.

The Lawson Academy District responsibilities related to bullying prevention policies and procedures:

The procedures for reporting bullying will be posted on the district's Internet website to the extent practicable. *If a student does not follow the correct procedure and retaliates against his/her aggressor, he/she will be susceptible to the same consequences that govern students' discipline. (See The Lawson Academy Code of Student Conduct).

Title I at The Lawson Academy

Title I is a federally funded program designed to improve educational opportunities by providing aid to elementary and secondary education. The intent of Title I is to expand learning opportunities while supplementing basic skills instruction in reading and math. This program serves students who need to improve their reading and/or math skills.

The goals of the Title I program are to:

- Develop positive attitudes toward reading/language arts and math
- Individualize reading/language arts and math instruction according to student needs
- Increase reading/language arts and math achievement
- Increase student self-esteem
- Involve children with parent(s) in reading/language arts and math activities at school and at home

The Lawson Academy is a School-wide Title I school. Title I Schools that operate under a School-wide Plan use the funds received to provide academic services to eligible children who have been identified by the school as failing or most at-risk of failing to meet the State's student achievement standards. The Title I program is designed to reach as many students as possible providing them with the opportunities and support needed to achieve higher standards of performance within the classroom. Individual or small group help is provided to students who are "struggling" with a given concept – determined by the classroom teacher through the use of pre/post testing, daily work, and informal observations.

Children are selected to receive services on the basis of multiple, educationally related, objective criteria established by the district and supplemented by the school. Services for these eligible students must provide instruction that will enable the students to reach proficiency.

Highly Qualified Staff

The Title I staff has met the criteria set by the State of Texas for certified teachers and or highly qualified teachers.

Parents Right to Know

According to **Student Success Initiative (SSI)**, parents have the right to know the qualification of his/her child's teacher(s). Please contact the school's principal for this information.

Title I Parental Involvement Policy Statement of Purpose

The Lawson Academy is committed to the goal of providing quality education for every student and recognizes that some students may need the extra assistance available through the Title I Program. It also recognizes the extremely important role a parent plays in the educational success of a student. As such, this **Parental** involvement policy has been established to promote parental involvement within the school.

The Lawson Academy believes that activities to increase involvement are a vital part of the Title I Program. Parents will have an opportunity to design, implement, evaluate, and suggest changes to



improve the program. Components of the Title I Program include parental notification, parental in-service, student program reports, parent-teacher conferences, parent visitation, parent advisory committees, meetings, in-service for teachers, announcements, and policy dissemination.

Notification of Progress

Student academic progress will be monitored, and written notifications will be provided electronically to parents monthly, through progress reports and report cards. The Lawson Academy teachers are also available for consultation during scheduled parent-teacher conferences held upon parent request. Parents are encouraged to talk to the Title I staff if they have concerns about their child's progress or the Title I program.

Student/Parent/Teacher Compact

A student/parent/teacher compact has been established to encourage shared responsibility for high student performance and achievement. This compact will be sent home at the beginning of the school year, along with The Lawson Academy Student-Parent Handbook. Parents are encouraged to discuss the compact with their child.

Types of Parental Involvement

Parents can become involved with their child's education in many ways. The Lawson Academy values the at-home contributions and those that take place at school. Reading to students at home, helping with homework, or discussing the day's activities over the dinner table are as important as volunteering at school. The Lawson Academy will work to assist parents in understanding the academic standards and assessments, help parents work with their child(ren) to raise achievement, and plan activities throughout the year for families.

Evaluation of the Title I Program

Parents of students participating in the Title I program will have the opportunity to evaluate the Title I program. This evaluation will include a section pertaining to the effectiveness of the parental involvement policy, areas of strengths and weaknesses, and barriers to be overcome. The Title I staff, with the help of the PAC, will use this information to evaluate the program and to make changes within the program as needed.



Special Education

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

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services is: **Dr. Jonathan Sutton, Principal, 713.225.1551**



Title I School Parent Compact

The Lawson Academy - Parent Compact is an agreement between the school, parents and students that firmly unites us.

The School - Parent Compact was developed jointly with school staff, students, and parents.

As a school community, The Lawson Academy will focus its School - Parent Compact on the academic standards to support all students and help them reach proficiency or beyond in reading, writing and mathematics.

Below are ways each team member will be accountable for helping to achieve this goal.

School Staff/Teachers Will:

- ☐ Provide high quality, rigorous, "best practices" instruction daily.
- ☐ Use student achievement data to make instructional decisions and to address the diverse learning styles of students.
- ☐ Create a positive learning environment for all student to experience success.
- ☐ Welcome parents as partners in the education of their professional development experiences that continue to improve classroom instruction.

Families/Parents Will:

- ☐ Ensure that my child attends school regularly and on time.
- ☐ Support The Lawson Academy and offer ideas to improve the educational process.
- ☐ Provide a safe and positive place for my child to do his or her assignments.
- ☐ Welcome teacher as partners in the education of my children.
- ☐ Participate in opportunities to learn about the school, needed services, and ways to support my child.
- ☐ Talk with my child daily about his or her school experience.

Students Will:

- ☐ Attend school regularly and on time.
- ☐ Support The Lawson Academy and ask for help when needed.
- ☐ Completing all assignments giving by Teachers and staying engaged in classes.
- ☐ Welcome teachers and parents as partners while they work to help me achieve.
- ☐ Participate in school activities and always try my best.
- ☐ Talk with my parent(s) guardian(s) daily about my school experience.



My signature indicates that I have carefully reviewed with my child the 2024-2025 Lawson Academy Parent/Student Handbook and Title I School-Parent Compact.

I acknowledge and adhere to all policies and procedures as outlined.

Student's Name: _____ Grade Level: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date signed: _____

- Please return this page to the main office to be placed in the student's permanent record folder.



Notes
