

4000 – 4999 CURRICULUM

4020 WEEKS OF SPIRITUAL EMPHASES (SWUEC 4020)

A Week of Spiritual Emphasis is to be scheduled during each semester.

4022 GIFT OF PROPHECY EMPHASIS (SWUEC 4022)

Each school is to utilize the materials, which have been prepared by the North American Division Department of Education in cooperation with the Ellen G. White Estate to acquaint the students with the work and role of the Gift of Prophecy in the Seventh-day Adventist church.

4024 STUDENT PRAYER (SWUEC 4024)

Time is to be provided for regularly organized prayer groups, with voluntary attendance, as an integral part of the school program.

4026 CHAPEL SERVICES (SWUEC 4026)

Chapel services are to be planned to create a positive spiritual atmosphere. All assembly programs are to be opened with a devotional period.

4028 WORSHIP PERIODS (SWUEC 4028)

Each school day is to begin with a devotional period. The local pastor should be regularly involved in the school program.

4030 BAPTISMAL CLASS (SWUEC 4030)

A baptismal class is to be organized each year to give students the opportunity to review the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist church. The school should work in cooperation with the local pastor.

4031 PATHFINDER CAMPOREE POLICY

The Office of Education allows the school to count as a field trip the Pathfinders' attendance at union/conference-sponsored Camporees. The club director or parent, at least a day before, will supply in writing to the principal or teacher a list of the attending Pathfinders in the school and time the students will need to be dismissed.

4032 PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OF STUDENTS (SWUEC 4032)

As a part of the school's program, all members of the teaching staff are to take time for the spiritual guidance of individual students.

4033 OUTDOOR SCHOOL

Once a year the conference sponsors Outdoor School that is generally held in April. The Outdoor School is open only to fifth and sixth grade students. The conference charges each student a fee and then subsidizes the balance of the total cost.

The TXOE covers all conference-hired teachers' expenses for the Outdoor School. All other supervisors' fees are to be paid by the local school. If the attending conference teachers require a substitute due to their absence from the classroom, the Texas Conference Office of Education will pay the cost according to policy.

Teachers are required to bring permission slips and medical consent forms for each student attending Outdoor School. The teachers are expected to provide proper supervision for both boys and girls that attend from their school. Fundraising should begin early in the school year, so students may have the privilege of attending Outdoor School.

4051 FAILING STUDENTS

A letter grade of "F" should never appear on a progress report without prior documented contact with the parent(s). Failing a student is not difficult. A greater challenge is in motivating poor students sufficiently to make it possible for them to pass. Nevertheless, if a student persists in a program obviously leading to failure, his/her parent/s are to be advised. At least a couple of weeks before an "F" is likely to be given, the teacher shall write a letter/email to the parent(s) frankly stating the situation and the possibility of failure. The teacher shall invite the parent(s) to come to the school for a conference and enlist their assistance to prevent the "F" grade. Open communication at this point can do much to prevent poor public relations.

4056 TEACHER SUPERVISION RESPONSIBILITIES (SWUEC 4056)

The teacher shall arrive at school not less than 30 minutes prior to the opening of the school day and is to remain at least 30 minutes following the close of the school day. In no circumstance should a student be left on campus without appropriate supervision. Students are to be under adult supervision at all times during the school day.

Teachers are not to leave the school campus during the school day unless arrangements are made with the administrator. In one-teacher schools these arrangements are to be made with the School Board chair.

4062 STUDENT PERMANENT RECORDS

Statements in this section refer to items prior to 2012 that need to be stored. These items should be treated as permanent and necessary. After 2012 most permanent records are kept electronically on RenWeb or Jupiter SIS.

Each student may have as many as three types of folders.

1. Permanent record folder
2. Health folder or card
3. special education/accommodations folder

The permanent record is to include name, date of birth, sex, scholarship and attendance. The permanent record card is to be kept indefinitely while other information that may have been placed in a cumulative file for the student may be destroyed after five years non-attendance. The individual permanent record is to be available only to authorized personnel, the parents, and the student. The school register used in elementary schools and junior academies is to be kept by the TXOE, including those of academies associated with elementary schools.

The permanent records of senior academy students will be kept by the respective academy. Records of discontinued secondary schools are to be transferred to the Southwestern Union Conference Office of Education.

Permanent record cards (cumulative) and Riverside folders (ITBS) are available at no charge from the TXOE. Reading records, standardized test sheets, and pertinent information about the student are kept in this folder.

When a student transfers to another school, the entire permanent record folder minus extraneous notes and anecdotal records shall be sent to the transfer school, upon request. A copy of the permanent record folder shall be retained in the school file.

A Withdrawal Form should be given to each student withdrawing, providing grades up to the withdrawal date. (Form 8068)

In each school the principal shall be responsible for maintaining a permanent record for every student that is attending or has attended the school.

Active records are kept in the permanent record folder and shall be updated twice each year. Inactive records of students or copies of records shall be kept in a locked file.

The following items are to be kept in the Health Record folder:

- A. HEALTH SCREENING REPORTS** – Arrange for the Vision, Hearing, Diabetes, and Spinal Screenings to be done by a person who is certified to do the screenings during the first semester. Vision/Hearing/Scoliosis Screenings are reported online now. Dr. Elijah Brown can help you- just email him at Elijah.brown@dshs.state.tx.us if you have questions.
Mail code: 1938. The online reporting site is: <http://chrstx.dshs.state.tx.us>
You will need your user id and password to log in, if you have forgotten it, request it using your email address. New schools can set up new accounts.
You will need your facility id # and FIN code as well, these should be sent to your school in September from the health Dept. If you cannot find the letter, contact Dr. Elijah Brown above, or call (512) 458-7111, ext. 6442.
- E. STUDENT IMMUNIZATION RECORDS**—Students are enrolled in the school only after proof of immunization is presented to the school office. Parents who have convictions against immunization will need to follow the procedures listed on Form #8013. The school shall be responsible for maintaining these records as long as the child remains in that school.
(SWUEC 1502)
- F. IMMUNIZATION CARD** – Immunization cards are available from the local Health Department. Cards with current immunization information shall be kept in a separate file.
- G. TRANSFER OF IMMUNIZATION RECORDS** – The original immunization documents shall be sent to the school to which the student is transferring. A copy of the documents shall be placed in the student’s separate health folder.

4110 SCHOOL ENTRANCE

(TXBOE 2011)

- A. Age of school entrance--
Students are not to be admitted to first grade below the age of six years on or before September 1 of the current school year. Proof of age shall be supported by an official birth certificate. School personnel shall copy the certificate and place it in the student’s folder.
- B. Age of kindergarten entrance--
Students are not to be admitted to kindergarten below the age of five years on or before September 1 of the current school year. Proof of age shall be supported by an

official birth certificate. School personnel shall copy the certificate and place it in the student's folder.

C. Age of pre-kindergarten entrance--

Students are not to be admitted to pre-kindergarten below the age of four years on or before September 1 of the current school year. Proof of age shall be supported by an official birth certificate. School personnel shall copy the certificate and place it in the student's folder.

D. Readiness--

Readiness is a basic factor in accepting a child for the first time into the formal school program. Readiness varies with the individual child and is to be determined by interview, observation, and, occasionally, standardized test results.

E. Delayed school entrance--

Seventh-day Adventist schools accept students in accordance with state compulsory attendance laws. It is the responsibility of the union and conference offices of education to be informed regarding these laws and to interpret them to the church constituency. Parents, who for educational or religious convictions, choose to keep children at home until they are older than state law requirements specify are invited to consult the TXOE for assistance in clarifying their position with public school officials. Information regarding the church's philosophy of early childhood education and age of school entrance is available from the North American Division Office of Education.

4114 EIGHTH GRADE COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS (SWUEC 4114)

A passing grade is required in each subject area listed for the satisfactory completion of the eighth grade: (For exception see 4130.)

- Bible/Religion
- Mathematics
- Language Arts (English, Handwriting, Spelling)
- Reading
- Physical Education
- Science-Health
- Social Studies
- Fine Arts
- Keyboarding/Technology
- Texas History completed in 7th or 8th grade

4116 GRADUATE HONORS

(SWUEC 4116)

The designations, valedictorian and salutatorian, of the graduating class are not recommended. Graduation honors are to be based on criteria developed by the faculty and approved by the School Board.

4118 APPROPRIATE ACADEMIC PLACEMENT

Appropriate academic placement of the learner is a fundamental principle of education. The following factors are to be considered in grade or level placement:

- A. Chronological age
- B. Emotional, physical, and social development
- C. Scholastic achievement as determined by:
 - 1. Standard achievement test scores
 - 2. Teacher observation of the student's ability to reason and to express ideas logically
 - 3. Teacher evaluation of academic progress
- D. Prior school performance as evidenced by cumulative records, report cards, and conversations with personnel of the previous school attended.

4120 ENRICHMENT AND ACCELERATION OF STUDENTS

(SWUEC 4120)

Seldom does a child benefit by advancing more than one grade per year. When this occurs, he/she may miss valuable steps in his/her development. He/she frequently does not have the maturity and experience to do the work of the next grade and may display social maladjustment. Therefore, it is recommended that a teacher provide enrichment rather than acceleration. This enrichment may be hobbies, research on related subjects, crafts, art and music, and additional subjects taken by use of programmed teaching methods.

When the child's

- A. Personal work habits and attitudes
- B. Physical development and health
- C. Social adjustment
- D. Achievement in the basic skills as determined by achievement tests and observation of the teacher
- E. Age
- F. Attitude of parents

seem to necessitate advancement, the teacher and superintendent may work out a plan whereby a child, over a period of time, may make up a year's work by taking a subject or two of the next grade while continuing the work of his/her own grade.

In cases where the parent makes a written request the following criteria is to be followed:

- A. The student is expected to have a score which places him at the 90th percentile or above in each area of the union approved standardized achievement test.
- B. The student must demonstrate satisfactory evidence of academic, emotional, and social readiness for advanced placement to the school staff and to the parents.
- C. Prior written requests for advancement of the student in elementary education (i.e. two years in one, or three years in two) must be submitted to the TXOE. Written approval from the TXOE must be on file at the school.
- D. The student must maintain an average or above, level of achievement on the accelerated program.
- E. The content areas (Bible, Science, Social Studies) for every grade must be covered. In Language Arts and Mathematics, the student must be able to function satisfactorily at the higher grade level with the other students in that grade.

The Texas Conference Office of Education will make the final decision about acceleration of students.

4124 RETENTION/ PROMOTION ISSUES

(SWUEC 4124)

Consideration to retain the student at a given level involves counseling with the student and the parents early in the third quarter. A written report, signed by teacher and parent, must be mailed to the superintendent for approval of retention or acceleration. (Forms 8032, 8033)

No student is to be retained for more than two years during their elementary school years. The TXOE recommendation is no more than one year. All efforts are to be made to assist the student. The final decision to retain a student is to be reached cooperatively and must have the written approval of the superintendent.

4128 EIGHTH GRADE DIPLOMA

(SWUEC 4128)

Diplomas are to be issued to all students who satisfactorily complete the subjects outlined for 8th grade. (See 4114) The TXOE issues the eighth grade diplomas upon request of the teacher or principal. The superintendent is to sign the diploma before sending it to the principal.

4130 CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

(SWUEC 4130)

A certificate of completion may be issued to students whose work does not warrant a regular eighth grade diploma.

4132 STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT

(SWUEC 4132)

Elementary schools are to use the electronic student progress reports. Through these reports, and other recommended approaches, information is to be provided regarding the student's subject-area progress, as well as attendance, citizenship, social relationships, and health.

The student progress reports are to be distributed to parent/guardian at the close of each nine-week period.

4134 PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

There are three dates listed in the School Calendar for Parent-Teacher Conferences. The school is to schedule a minimum of two parent-teacher conferences for each student in grades K-8 each school year. Among the purposes of the parent-teacher conferences are the following:

- A. To report the progress of the students in the various aspects of his/her school experience.
- B. To gain insights from the parents which may assist the school in furthering the progress of the student.

(TXBOE)

The following are some techniques that may be helpful in conducting a parent-teacher conference:

- A. Have the student present for parent-teacher conferences unless there is a discussion of sensitive subject matter.
- B. Listen to what the parent is saying with every effort to understand and appreciate his/her point of view.
- C. Maintain the role of a gracious host or hostess throughout the entire meeting. Your first objective is to make the parent/s feel at ease.
- D. Share early in the conference the discussion agenda, the student's academic growth, what the teacher/teachers are doing to promote academic growth, and suggest ways the parent can assist.
- E. Avoid antagonistic conditions if you have no suggestions for improving the condition. (Antagonistic conditions should be addressed as they occur through a special called meeting with the parents.)
- F. Discuss the student's strengths as well as his/her areas of need.
- G. Begin and end the conference with positive comments about the student.
- H. Listen to criticism fully and ask for suggestions. Don't interrupt.

- I. Avoid arguments. When asking the parent/s to consider a different point of view, do so in a gracious and professional manner.
- J. Invite parents to ask questions about the school and its program.
- K. Consider these conferences as highly confidential.
- L. Eliminate any discussion regarding other students even when they are mentioned by the parent/s.
- M. Tell the truth about the child in a very kind and tactful manner. Nothing is gained by unkind or tactless statements.
- N. Respect other teachers, present and former, by not engaging in negative conversation.
- O. Imagine yourself in the place of the student and his/her parent/s, and attempt to understand the effect your remarks may have on them.

4138 STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (SIS)

(SWUEC 4138)

Each Pre-K-10 home room teacher is required to maintain an up-to-date electronic record for each classroom. Attendance and grade records shall be placed in the electronic SIS and updated a minimum of every nine weeks.

The *SIS* is a legal electronic record in which is recorded the names of students, birth dates, scholarship, attendance, and other information which identifies students and parents. It is the permanent record for all schools. (TXBOE)

The electronic SIS records must be complete and up-to-date. Grade classification for the following school year must be completed.

Birth certificate names or legal name changes only are to be used in the *SIS*. Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and first grade students shall be registered directly from the birth certificate, and all teachers in the following years shall continue to record students' names under that exact name unless the student has had his/her name legally changed.

Opening and Closing Reports--

School Opening Reports are to be completed and sent or emailed to the TXOE by the date scheduled by the conference.

At the close of the school year and before the teacher leaves the school, he/she must complete all duties outlined on the closing checklist, as well as any duties required by the conference, principal, or School Board chairperson.

4142 TUTORING

(SWUEC 4142)

Recommendations for summer school tutoring are to be recorded in the *student information system*, the parents notified in writing of recommendation, and documentation of the recommendation shall be placed in the student's cumulative folder. A teacher is not to tutor a student for pay who is in his/her classroom during the school year.

4154 LIBRARY/MEDIA BUDGET

(SWUEC 4154)

The annual budget is to provide for a minimum expenditure of \$35.00 for each student for library and media resources.

4155 COMPUTER-BASED NETWORKED ENCYCLOPEDIA

(TXBOE 2009)

Schools may use a networked on-line encyclopedia to meet the school evaluation standard for published encyclopedia within the last five years. In addition, the North American Division has contracted with Britannica, and this can be used for this purpose.

4157 MULTIMEDIA SELECTIONS

It is recommended that only videos, movies, social media clips, YouTube videos, etc. that are of such high caliber that they will provide a significantly positive experience from their viewing should be shown in the school. They should meet the following standards:

- A. The videos should deliver significant comments on moral, social, or political issues. It should be historical, documentary, or principally factual in nature. It should convey significant artistic or aesthetic values.
- B. Any video that is shown must be specifically tied to the objectives of an academic class. They should very rarely be used for rewards or entertainment and must be previewed by the teacher prior to showing in the classroom. The teacher needs to be cognizant of the community's standards and carefully select only those media that will not compromise the families' standards.
- C. The realism of the video should be presented without glorifying habits, ideals, or practices contrary to Seventh-day Adventist standards (i.e. dancing, card playing, gambling, drinking, smoking, crime, violence, cruelty, brutality, any profanity, ridicule of family, sexual suggestiveness, coarseness, etc.).
- D. The message of the video should convey, without giving undue notice, approval, or sanction to theories, philosophies, or teachings contrary to Seventh-day Adventist doctrines.
- E. The technical aspects of the video should be acceptable (photography, soundtrack, etc.).

4164 DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE

(SWUEC 4164)

Each teacher is to prepare and display a daily class schedule. The print on the posted schedule should be large enough to be easily read from all points in the classroom. It is the responsibility of the principal to make certain that the schedules are posted and a copy

of each schedule is sent to the Texas Conference Office of Education with the opening report.

4165 DISMISSAL

EARLY DISMISSAL – Each school is allowed a maximum of six (6) early dismissal days per year referred to as “minimum school days.” (Handbook Item 4168)

If school is dismissed early, there is to be at least four hours of instructional time exclusive of recess or lunch for it to count as a school day. These days may be used before vacations. (SWUEC 4168)

The secondary school minimum school day is to include four clock hours of instruction. Such minimum days are limited to six per school year that includes each grade level. If only a portion of the grade levels are in school, the day may be counted a half day and the school should alternate the grade levels that attend classes before vacations throughout the school year.

FRIDAY DISMISSAL – The Friday schedule should be a regular school day. Friday dismissal may be shortened during the winter months to accommodate local needs, such as busing, but classes must convene until at least 3 p.m. Any variance from this policy requires TXBOE approval.

4166 WEEKLY TIME REQUIREMENTS

(SWUEC 4166)

The elementary school instructional schedule is to meet a minimum of 30 (1,800 minutes) hours weekly (excluding lunch period and recess) unless state regulations exceed these requirements in which case the state requirements will supersede.

REQUIRED CLOCK MINUTES AND DAYS OF INSTRUCTION FROM TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY – The Commissioner of Education has interpreted the length of the school day to be 7 hours (420 minutes) from the beginning of instruction to the dismissal of the last class for all students in grades 4 through 12. Instruction must be for at least 6 hours(360 minutes), but may include passing time.

The primary grades (1-3) must observe a school day of 6 hours and 15 minutes from the beginning of instruction to the dismissal of the last class for all students.

In grades 9-12, non-laboratory classes shall be scheduled for a minimum of 200 minutes per week. Laboratory courses shall be scheduled for a minimum of 240 minutes per week. Such classes shall include biology, chemistry, physics, shop, home economics, and physical science (when taught as a laboratory class.) (SWUEC 4424) The length of the school day, including the lunch period, shall be 7 hours.

4168 MINIMUM SCHOOL DAYS

(SWUEC 4168)

In cases where early dismissal is necessary for reasons other than weather emergencies, approval must be obtained from the superintendent's office. A minimum school day must include four clock hours of instruction exclusive of the lunch period. Such minimum days are limited to six per year.

To facilitate professional development in-services a School Board may have the option to approve three additional minimum school days beyond the six allowed one-half days of school. (This is not to be used for the two TXOE scheduled after school in-service meetings.)

4169 EMERGENCY DAYS

The principal and School Board shall have a policy in place to regulate emergency days due to bad weather and/or road conditions. The principal is responsible for communication and implementation of this policy. There may be other emergencies that arise where it will be unsafe for students to be in attendance at the school. The Office of Education shall be notified of all such emergencies.

When school time is lost because of adverse weather conditions, the school shall schedule make-up time to meet the minimum 180 days required.

4170 SUBJECT ALTERNATION SCHEDULE

(SWUEC 4170)

Designated subjects in the elementary school may be taught on an alternating basis. An outline of the alternation plan is provided in the *Elementary Textbook List* (K-8).

The textbooks listed in the *Elementary Textbook list* K-8 have been officially adopted by the Southwestern Union Conference Board of Education, and are to be used in all elementary schools in the Southwestern Union Conference unless specific arrangements have been made for alternatives. (See *Elementary Textbook List K-8* for procedures to be used in choosing alternate textbooks.)

4171 TEXTBOOK ADOPTION

1. Schools shall immediately purchase the textbooks as they are adopted by NAD committees. The TXOE will allow a three year full adoption to accommodate finances if necessary.
2. Any school proposing to use textbooks, other than NAD approved textbooks, must submit the alternative textbook form, with reason, for exception to the Superintendent for approval. No purchase should be made before approval. (Form 8041)

(TXBOE 2003)

4173 CELEBRATION OF EASTER, HALLOWEEN, AND CHRISTMAS

Any school celebration of Christmas and Easter should focus on the birth and resurrection of Jesus Christ, not on the worldly symbolism of Santa Claus and the Easter bunny. Halloween should not be celebrated in the school, but a harvest festival may serve to remind students of God's blessings. Care should be taken in any school holiday celebration that no child or family should be offended.