

SUL ROSS MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS HANDBOOK

SUL ROSS MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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Section A Campus Handbook 2023-2024

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WELCOME

This Student Handbook has been prepared for your information and guidance. From it you will better understand the spirit, ideals, and objectives of Sul Ross. It is hoped that you will keep this book as a source of accurate and ready information. In it you will find the answers to many of your questions. Sul Ross Middle School is a community in which all students are citizens. To live together in the school community so that everyone may receive the greatest benefit from their school citizenship, it is necessary that certain rules be understood by all. When students accept the privileges of citizenship, they also accept the obligations of following rules and directions. You will be expected to observe all rules and regulations listed in your handbook and all other administrative directives. During your years at Sul Ross it will be our goal to help you develop your interests, talents, and capacities so that your success and happiness in the next stage of your school life –high school – will be assured. You will have many opportunities to explore and to analyze your own abilities and interests. Your counselor and teachers are anxious to help in this process. The time you spend in this school will prove to be happy and exciting if you will follow a few simple suggestions:

1. Know your capabilities and always present the best quality of work that you can achieve.
2. Take full advantage of every educational opportunity.
3. Learn to budget your time. Allow plenty of time for study as needed; play hard when it is appropriate and possible; save time in your schedule to follow some wholesome interests, such as leisure reading and hobbies, and to develop your individual talents.
4. Take an active part in school life according to your interests and abilities. This is one way you can make valuable friendships, develop your social personality, and become a well-rounded citizen.
5. Be responsible for your attitude, for your behavior, for your educational attainment, and for the organization and care of your personal belongings and materials. Be on time and prepared for class and follow the classroom behavior expectations.

Following these suggestions can help you be successful in school and in later life. May you have a happy and profitable experience here at Sul Ross Middle School.

Sincerely,
Faustino Ortega
Principal

LAWRENCE SULLIVAN ROSS

Sul Ross Middle School was named for Lawrence Sullivan Ross, the eighteenth governor of Texas. Ross was born in Ohio in 1838, and his father moved the family to Texas a year later. After attending such schools as the frontier afforded, he entered Florence Wesleyan University in Alabama from which he graduated in 1859. Shortly after his graduation, "Sul", as he was popularly known throughout his life, was commissioned a captain in the Texas Rangers by Governor Sam Houston. He took part in numerous campaigns with the Comanches and earned a commendation from Governor Houston. With the opening of the Civil War, Sul Ross joined the Confederate Army. He participated in more than a hundred battles in the War Between the States and attained the rank of Brigadier General. At the close of the war General Ross returned to Texas. He took up farming for a brief period until the citizens of McLennan County persuaded him to enter politics. He served in the State Senate and then was elected Governor of Texas in 1886. From 1887 until 1891 Sul Ross gave Texas one of its best administrations. At the expiration of his second term as governor, Ross became president of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, a position he held until his death in 1898. Under his leadership, Texas A & M grew into a college that commanded the respect of all Texas. Sul Ross Middle School in the Northside Independent School District, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas, now proudly bears the name of the distinguished Confederate soldier, eminent statesman, and successful editor — Lawrence Sullivan Ross.

SCHOOL COLORS

Green and Gold

SCHOOL MASCOT

Rebel

Mission

Build a culture of community and collaboration.

Vision

All scholars will grow to respect, believe, and achieve.

Core Beliefs

The Ross Community delivers a quality education that embraces all scholars and prepares them to engage, contribute, and succeed.

The Ross community promotes the success of the whole student through a United Voice.

The Ross Community connects with scholars to foster a safe and caring learning environment.

Classroom teachers have the most impact on student achievement followed by campus principals.

The Ross Community is essential to foster and develop engaged citizens.

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU

The Principal

The principal is responsible to the Superintendent of Schools for the proper administration of Sul Ross Middle School. It is the duty of the principal to organize, supervise, and administer all of the affairs of the school as they affect students, teachers, parents, and other community members. Conferences can be scheduled by calling 397-6350.

The Associate Principal/Assistant Principal

The Associate Principal and Assistant Principal work directly with the Principal in the management and organization of the school. They handle the day-by-day operations of the school and assume the responsibility of the Principal in his absence. We strongly suggest that if you wish to speak to an administrator, or have a conference with them, that you call 397-6350 to schedule an appointment. If you are unable to reach an administrator directly by phone, please leave a message and a campus administrator will return your call within 24 hours.

The Academic Dean

The Academic Dean assists the principal in the organization, administration, and implementation of instruction, curriculum, personnel, parent relations, state testing, 504s and public information. The focus of the Academic Dean is to enable the staff to provide appropriate learning experiences so that all students at Sul Ross Middle School can achieve their potential. This focus will be maintained by addressing writing and implementing curriculum, supervision of instruction, application of research, interpretation of assessment, staff development, personnel assimilation, and programs.

The Counselors

All students are assigned a guidance counselor by grade-level. Your counselor will be happy to assist you with problems concerning both school and your personal life. If you want an appointment with your counselor this can be arranged with the secretary in the guidance office before and after school. Parents can refer their child by contacting the counseling office and students can refer themselves. They also spend time in individual classrooms as part of a group guidance program. *The function of the counselor is advisory, not disciplinary, and all information is confidential.*

The Nurse

The school nurse is available to help you at school with medical emergencies and will work closely with your parents and physician in administering prescribed medication. The clinic is located by the main office. Please notify the school nurse of any medical conditions that may be of concern. The school nurse is unable to administer over-the-counter medication to your child and can only administer prescriptions in their original container.

The Police Officer

The Police Officer assists students when needed and helps maintain a safe environment. He/she helps supervise after school events and helps monitor traffic. The SAFE hotline number is 397-7233 or text safe@nisd.net.

GENERAL INFORMATION

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

All school and U.I.L. rules apply to conduct and dress code for students who attend after-school activities. Written permission and/or an admission fee may be required for many events. Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parents for these activities; parents are expected to pick up their child immediately at the conclusion of each activity. Children should be picked up within 15 minutes of the event. If a parent or guardian does not pick up their child in a timely manner, the protocol and procedure set forth by NISD in the Crisis Handbook will be followed by the administrator or staff member if they deem it necessary. Students who are not picked up in a timely manner after a school event or school function could be denied the right to attend future after school functions for the remainder of the year. Students who exhibit inappropriate behaviors will be removed from the activity.

Circumstances that restrict students from attending after-school events are the following:

- out of school suspension/in school suspension assigned for the day of the event
- other disciplinary actions that may warrant non-attendance of the event
- absence from school the day of the event
- repeated misconduct at after-school events
- assignment to an alternative educational campus

ATHLETICS

Seventh and eighth grade students at Sul Ross Middle School may become involved in organized sports. Athletic participation for boys and girls is optional and the programs come under the jurisdiction of the University Interscholastic League of Texas. All athletic programs are extracurricular activities. Students must have a physical exam and be academically eligible prior to participation.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

It is the parents' legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time to school. Written confirmation of the absence is due when the student returns to school. The excuse note should be delivered to the attendance office the day immediately following the absence. The excuse note should contain the following information:

1. Student name, Student ID# and Grade level
2. Parent name (printed) and parent signature
3. Date(s) of absence and the specific reason for absence
4. Telephone number where parent can be reached

When a student's absence for personal illness reaches three or more consecutive days, a statement from the physician or health clinic verifying the illness or other condition should be provided. The school will not excuse an absence if documentation is submitted more than 3 days after a student returns to school from an absence. If a student has 10 or more absences to date (both excused and unexcused) or establishes a questionable pattern of absences, a doctor's note will need to be provided for future absences to be excused. The school administration, attendance secretary, and a district attendance officer monitor school attendance.

BACKPACKS / BOOK BAGS

Students will use backpacks to transport homework, supplies, and textbooks during the school day. There should be no writing on the backpack or straps of the backpack.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS/PBIS

Ross MS implements a system called PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) that encourages and rewards positive student behavior and clearly defines student expectations. Every area of the campus has a posted matrix with student expectations.

- Positive
- Prompt
- Polite
- Productive
- Prepared

Students receiving referrals for behavior will be assigned consequences through the VPO.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROCEDURES

- Food and drinks may only be consumed in the cafeteria. These items may not be taken to any outside area.
- Clean up after yourself.
- No food deliveries by uber eats or other companies. These items will be returned to the delivery driver.
- Parents may join their child for lunch. Visitors must sign in and receive a visitor's pass before coming into the cafeteria. Parents may bring lunch to their children; however, parents may not bring lunch for other students. To ensure that other students do not feel uncomfortable or left out, parents who bring outside food and drinks should eat lunch with their children at a designated table in the cafeteria. The parent or guardian may drop outside food off for their child and must report to the front office. Outside food may not be shared with other students.
- No celebrations are permitted in the cafeteria (e.g. birthdays).

For student Breakfast/Lunch Money for additional purchases, please go to <https://www.nisd.net> to access your student's cafeteria account and add money as needed. We encourage parents to monitor their student's lunch account online to prevent any problems that deal with your child's purchases.

BUS ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSPORTATION

Students are required to ride the designated bus assigned to them by transportation. Riding a bus is a privilege, not a right. Students may be assigned a specific seat on their bus. Only a family emergency would warrant assignment to a different bus. (Staying overnight with a friend is not an emergency.) In order to ride a different bus home, and receive an official bus change form, a note must be sent by a parent/guardian the day prior to or the morning of and be brought to the vice principal's office for administrative approval. This approval must be obtained prior to the end of the school day (these will not be approved after school in the bus loop) for a student to ride a different bus. Students will be given a note from the Vice Principal's office that needs to be given to the bus driver. The number of students assigned to buses and the systemized route system are disrupted when ineligible students ride on alternate routes. All bus routes and assignments of students are done through the district's transportation offices.

STUDENTS WHO WALK, RIDE A BUS, OR ARRIVE BY CAR ARE TO REMAIN ON CAMPUS ONCE THEY ARRIVE IN THE MORNING. Any student that arrives or leaves campus without first signing out in the attendance office will be subject to disciplinary action.

- Students arriving after 8:40 AM must report to the attendance clerk. Students will be required to sign-in and will be issued an admit slip to class.
- A parent, or parent designee, must sign the student out. Students leaving or returning to school during the day must check in/out with the attendance secretary.

CAMPUS OPERATING HOURS

Classes begin for Sul Ross students each morning at 8:40 a.m. and end each afternoon at 3:55 p.m. Students may arrive at school no earlier than 7:40 AM and must be off campus by 4:20 PM. Students will not be allowed to be checked out after 3:45 PM due to dismissal procedures.

CAMPUS VISITORS

The Front Office Hours are from 7:45 - 4:30 PM. All parents and visitors are required to report to the front office and provide proper identification and indicate the reason for visiting the campus. Visitors are also required to signing/out prior to entering/leaving the campus. Upon sign-in, all parents and visitors should receive a Visitor's Pass. This includes lunch periods. Only a parent/guardian will be allowed to eat lunch with their student.

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Every student will profit from the varied experiences enjoyed as a member of a club or organization. Meeting times and locations are announced during morning announcements, and they are scheduled on the monthly activity calendar. Membership in clubs is open to all students who meet the established guidelines of each organization and who are eligible.

DELIVERY OF ITEMS/ OUTSIDE FOOD ITEMS

In an attempt to minimize interruptions of the learning environment, we do not deliver items directly to students. However, we realize adolescents may sometimes forget school-related materials. Therefore, we will gladly accept any necessary school items delivered by a parent to the office. Students will be expected to come by and pick up the item(s) between classes. This procedure has proven effective in teaching students responsibility and ensuring an uncompromised classroom environment. We prohibit the delivery of balloons, flowers and fast food items. They will not be delivered to the classroom. Food items may not be shared with other students during lunch.

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

In order to promote a safe and positive school environment, Northside ISD has approved a mandatory uniform policy for ALL students at Sul Ross Middle School. The student's uniform must fit properly and should not display any profanity, obscenity, gang graffiti, or logos of any kind. A student will not be permitted to attend class if his/her uniform is out of compliance with the Sul Ross uniform policy. If you have any questions regarding the uniform please contact a campus administrator. The campus administrator will make the final decision on any questionable garment.

ALL OTHER NISD DRESS CODE POLICIES WILL BE ENFORCED IN ADDITION TO THE CAMPUS STANDARDS OUTLINED BELOW.

The following guidelines apply to all students regarding dress code:

- The campus requires solid khaki pants, solid khaki skirts (with no holes) for all students. Solid khaki shorts or skirts of mid-thigh length may be worn. Sweat pants and leggings are NOT allowed.
- Skirts may be pleated, full or long; however, tight-fitting skirts are not permitted. No inappropriate slits in skirts allowed.
- Shirt may be long or short sleeve polo-style with a collar or a School-sponsored spirit shirt.
 - 6th grade wears Black collared shirts or Black Spirit Shirts

- 7th grade wears Yellow collared shirts or Yellow Spirit Shirts
- 8th grade wears Hunter Green collared shirts or Hunter Green Spirit Shirts
- Shirts must be long enough to remain tucked in at all times when a student is on the Sul Ross campus.
- Jackets may be worn in addition to the uniforms as long as the shirt is visible. Zippers must be half-way down and no pullovers or hoodies are allowed.
Jackets must be one of the following colors: black, green, yellow (gold), white, or gray. No additional colors allowed.
- Hats and hoods may not be worn on campus.
- Shoes must not have steel toes or cleats.
- No flip flops, strapless sandals, mules, house shoes, such as slides, or other types of slip on shoes. Shoes deemed a safety hazard by administration will not be allowed.

OTHER dress code guidelines include the following:

- Hats, headgear and bandannas are not to be worn on campus. Sunglasses are not to be worn inside the building.
- Hair must be neat and clean. Unconventional hairstyles that distract from teaching and learning will be prohibited.
- Designs on clothing or jewelry should not reflect or suggest gangs, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, profanity, sex, weapons, or unhealthy messages.
- Gang related colors and ornaments are prohibited. No gang related graffiti is allowed on school property, personal items, clothing, or skin, including backpacks.
- Body piercing jewelry is prohibited except for rings, studs or other traditional jewelry. Any piercing that distracts the teaching and learning environment will be prohibited.

The district's dress code is implemented (Section D); therefore, students will be expected to follow the guidelines set forth by the district. Dress code standards are extended to extra-curricular activities held on the campus. In an effort to promote a safe and positive school environment which is conducive to learning, students should wear appropriate clothing that will not cause disruptions in learning or safety. Inappropriate, indecent, suggestive or distracting clothing will not be allowed. Changes in dress code, deemed appropriate and necessary by the school principal, may be announced, implemented and enforced during the course of the academic school year. Students out of compliance with dress code may be removed from the regular school setting until the parent is able to provide appropriate attire. Students will be asked to change into school issued clothing if parents cannot be reached. Book covers, folders, book bags, school property, body parts, and/or personal property or clothing displaying obscenities, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, controlled substances, weapons, gang related materials or any design or inscription that administration determines to be unacceptable are not permitted at Ross Middle School. These items will be confiscated and documented, if necessary, in the student's discipline record.

Final determination of acceptable dress code and grooming rests with the Principal or his/her designees.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES/ TECHNOLOGY

School districts throughout the country, including Northside ISD, have moved into the "Information Age" by providing network and Internet access for students. Technology will be used frequently and with this privilege comes responsibility. Students must use the Northside network and the Internet in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the Northside ISD Acceptable Use Policy. At the beginning of each school year there are two forms that must be signed and returned to the school before your child will be able to use a networked computer at Ross Middle School or have their work published on the campus website.

- Cell phones must be off and put away from 8:40-3:55 PM. Students may use their phone during their scheduled lunch period. Cell phones will not be allowed in the classrooms or hallways. Earbuds are not allowed during school hours 8:40-3:55 PM.
- Any use of cell phones, or disruption during the school day will result in the phone being confiscated and/or disciplinary action taken. Camera use is not permitted on campus.
- NISD Chromebooks are for instructional use only. Any violation of acceptable use or damage to equipment will result in disciplinary action. Please refer to NISD Device Lending for more information.

GRADE REPORTING THROUGH HOME ACCESS CENTER (HAC)

Parents are encouraged to regularly monitor their student's progress throughout the year by utilizing NISD's on-line Parent Portal. Students will receive a progress report in the middle of each nine weeks grading period. The progress reports are designed to inform parents and students of current classroom performance and grades. Report cards will be issued at the end of each grading period. They provide the student's academic grades, citizenship grades, plus other pertinent information. If a parent did not receive their child's report card, please contact the counselor's office for assistance. If a parent/guardian has any questions or concerns regarding your child's education, please start by contacting the teacher, then if the question or concern is not answered/solved, then contact the counselors' office and administration.

LOCKERS

Lockers will not be assigned. Backpacks are required to store and transport homework, supplies and textbooks during the school day.

LOST AND FOUND

If you find any article of value, turn it in to the office immediately. Students are urged to take every precaution to protect their possessions.

Please note that Sul Ross MS is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Students should not bring expensive or valuable items to school, and students should carefully label each article, such as clothing, books, and supplies in order that each may be easily identified. If you accept an item that is not yours or are in possession of an item that is not yours, you will be subject to disciplinary measures. Lost and found items not claimed will be donated to charity.

NUISANCE ITEMS

Items that cause a distraction from the school's academic atmosphere are not permitted. The school cannot be held responsible for any of these lost or stolen items. Confiscated items will be returned to the parent only. Students who bring these items to school are subject to disciplinary action. Please note that Sul Ross MS is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

In order to maintain a professional atmosphere of learning and mutual respect on campus, intimate physical expressions of affection (holding hands, kissing, or embracing) are not permitted at school, on the school bus, or any school related events and activities.

REGISTRATION/WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Registrations - To register your student, please go to <https://www.nisd.net/schools/registration> and complete the pre-registration. A counselor will contact you and schedule an appointment to complete the registration process.

Withdraw of Student - When it is known that a student is going to withdraw, the parents or guardians should notify the Counseling Office at least one day in advance, if possible. NO records will be released until all obligations (textbooks, fines, release forms, etc.) have been fulfilled. A parent signature will be required for final clearance to be given.

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Please refer to Section B of Northside's Student and Parent Agreement for the Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Communication System policy.

****Note: As policies and procedures change, administration reserves the right to update the campus handbook.**