

# **WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT HIGH SCHOOL**

## **COMMUNICATIONS ARTS HIGH SCHOOL**

### **CAMPUS POLICY**

**2026-2027**

#### **ADMINISTRATION OF WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT HIGH SCHOOL**

|                                       |                                           |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Aurelio Hernández.....Principal       | Shelby Blackmon. .... Assistant Principal |
| Jennifer Ríos.....Associate Principal | Michael Nunnery. .... Assistant Principal |
| Daisy Ponce .....Academic Dean        | Israel Perales. .... Assistant Principal  |
|                                       | Kyle Shroyer.....Assistant Principal      |

#### **GUIDANCE COUNSELORS**

Celynsia McGowan – Taft Head Counselor

|                |                      |                 |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Undrae Briggs  | Arturo Bruns-Vargas  | Yvonne Martinez |
| Julia Gonzalez | Anna Salgado-Salinas |                 |

**LIBRARIAN** – Rebecca Fox

#### **DEPARTMENT COORDINATORS**

|                                 |                                        |                                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Athletics.....Richard Stade     | World Languages .....Ana Tijerina      | Science..... Pamela Word             |
| Mathematics.....Melissa Mentzer | Social Studies.....Christopher Wheeler | English.....Kelly Sanchez            |
| Health .....Chassity Gomez      | Special Education.....Jasmine Flores   | CATE .....Tracy Benavides            |
| PE.....Merry Brown              | Fine Arts.....Amanda Pyle              | ROTC.....Shane Peak MSGT, USAF (Ret) |

#### **ADMINISTRATION OF COMMUNICATIONS ARTS HIGH SCHOOL**

Dr. Lisa Baker.....Principal  
Michael Alicea .....Associate Principal

#### **GUIDANCE COUNSELORS**

Dr. Minerva Rosales  
Mary Skidmore

#### **CAHS DEPARTMENT COORDINATORS**

|                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Communications.....Jaime Frias | English.....Julie Davern         |
| Social Studies.....Sam Harris  | Spanish ... .....Cynthia Drigger |

## Section A

### Campus Policy

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## INTRODUCTION TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS:

This handbook outlines the campus policies and procedures pertaining to student activities and responsibilities as set forth by the Board of Trustees of the Northside Independent School District. It is the responsibility of each student to read, understand, and abide by the rules and regulations stated in this handbook.

### To Parents:

The home is the greatest influence upon the child during the formative years; from these influences the child develops his first habits and obtains most of his ideals and attitudes. The influence of a good home environment cannot be duplicated within the classroom; therefore, it is imperative that the home and school work cooperatively for the maximum development of your child.

Please make every effort to encourage your child to attend school regularly and punctually. Chronic tardiness and irregular attendance inhibit school success. The purpose of this handbook is to supply you and your child with information about William Howard Taft and Communications Arts High School. Frequent reference to this handbook will acquaint you with functions of your school. Please feel free to confer with the teachers, counselors, and administration when you deem it necessary. Communication among stakeholders will result in a more efficient and successful school program.

### To Parents and Students:

Questions regarding interpretations of rules and regulations in this handbook should be directed to the campus administration. William Howard Taft High School & Communications Arts HS are fully accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

## WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT *(Sept. 15, 1857 – March 8, 1930)*

*27<sup>th</sup> President of the United States 1909 – 1913*

*Chief Justice-Supreme Court 1921-1930*

William Howard Taft was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on September 15, 1857. His father, Alphonso Taft, was a successful Ohio attorney who served in President Grant's cabinet. He was married to the former Nellie Herron in 1886, the daughter of a Cincinnati lawyer.

Taft graduated from Yale University in 1878, received his law degree from Cincinnati Law School, and was admitted to the bar in Ohio in 1880. His first step up the judicial ladder came when he was appointed as judge to the Supreme Court in Ohio in 1887. From this position he was appointed as Solicitor General of the United States in 1889. As Solicitor General of the United States, he advised and counseled the Attorney General. This position provided Taft with the opportunity to obtain thorough grounding in constitutional law and procedures. He resigned this position in 1892 to accept President Harrison's appointment as a United States Circuit Judge, Sixth Judicial Circuit. His career took a turn toward politics in 1900 when President McKinley asked him to head a commission to establish civil rule in the Philippines. He stayed in this position until 1904 when he was appointed to President Theodore Roosevelt's cabinet as Secretary of War. Taft was known to be a strong supporter of Roosevelt's policies and eventually became Roosevelt's choice to succeed him in the Republican Party as a Presidential candidate when Roosevelt decided not to run again.

President Taft was elected in 1908 and served one term. He was defeated by Woodrow Wilson in the election of 1912.

Former President Taft then became a Professor of Law at Yale University until his appointment as

the tenth Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in 1921 by President Harding. William Taft was the only man in our history to serve as both President of the United States and Supreme Court Justice. During his term as President, he appointed six justices to the Supreme Court, the most of any President until that time. Authors credit his strengths while Chief Justice as that of an exceptional administrator of the Court. His reforms in procedure led to expediency in the Court, and during his first year as Chief Justice, more cases were heard and concluded than ever before.

He was also credited with "welding them together and making them harmonious" according to Oliver W. Holmes who served on the Court, referencing his respect of Taft for leading the Supreme Court to become an efficiently-run organization and one in which each man respected the other, regardless of legal opinion. Taft expanded the role of Chief Justice through his influence with the presidents on lower court appointments. He felt the role of the Chief Justice was that of being responsible for the entire judicial system. He is widely known as a reformer of the system.

His ideal was John Marshall, and he once stated, "I would rather have been John Marshall than any other American." In summary, William Howard Taft was viewed as an extremely successful administrator of the Court, remarkable as a moderator with the ability to bring the Court together and make it harmonious. He expanded the role of the Chief Justice, and his reforms in court procedures led to his respect as a judicial architect. He worked diligently in Congress and asked for the support of the bar association, the media, and others to accomplish his reform goals.

## ALMA MATER

To Taft, our Alma Mater  
We raise our voices strong  
Pride in the white and crimson  
Forever we'll belong

Within your hallowed halls  
Our dreams and goals held fast  
Within hearts and minds forever true  
To William Howard Taft

(written by: Carol Pachecano)

## **CODE FOR THE GOOD CITIZEN OF THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL**

I realize that, as a student in an American high school, I owe an obligation to parents or relatives, whose sacrifices have given me the foundation upon which I am building, to the school which offers me an opportunity to develop my natural powers, and to the community which makes my educational advantages possible, to my country which gives me liberty under law, to my own future as an individual, and as a citizen.

As a token of my determination to discharge this obligation I promise:

That I will use the facilities offered by the classroom to enlarge and broaden my interest, to increase my knowledge, to bring me closer to truth, and to cultivate habits of industry and sound thinking.

That I will broaden my sympathies and practice the arts of sociability, true friendliness and helpfulness in my home, in the school and in all my association; avoiding snobbishness in my own conduct and condemning it in others.

That I will develop habits of reading and conversing which will broaden my culture and enable me to better understand the problems of community, state, and union. That I will carry on discussion in and out of the classroom, not to overcome opponents and gratify my pride, but that I may grow in knowledge and wisdom. That I will avoid every form of cheating or dishonesty and will undertake to discourage all dishonorable practices.

That I will obey every rule or law of school, city, state, and nation, reserving the right to criticize rules and laws constructively, but respecting them so long as they prevail. That I will use my powers and influence for the common good. That I will pursue happiness myself and strive to establish conditions under which happiness and opportunity may be hopefully pursued by everyone in my home, my school, my community, my country, and the world.

*Adopted by the National Association of  
Student Councils.*

## **SCHOOL STAFF**

### **Principal**

The principals are responsible to the Superintendent of Schools for the proper administration of William Howard Taft and Communications Arts High School. It is their duty to organize, supervise, and administer all of the affairs of the school as they affect students, teachers, and patrons. They will be glad to help you with any of your problems.

### **Associate Principal**

The Associate Principal works directly with the principals in the administration and organization of the school. The associate principal assumes the responsibility of the principal in his or her absence.

### **Academic Dean**

The Academic Dean works directly with the principal in the administration of the instructional program of the school. The academic dean works closely with the teachers and department coordinators to ensure student success.

### **Assistant Principals**

The Assistant Principals work to coordinate and supervise the everyday activities of the student body. They handle student attendance problems and student discipline. They also work in the area of teacher service and assist the principal in the development of the school curriculum and the evaluation of the school instructional program.

### **Counselors**

The Counselors assist students with educational, career, and personal concerns through group and individual counseling and classroom guidance sessions. Students are assisted in selecting high school courses which will allow them to achieve their future goals. Assistance is also available in completing scholarship applications, in exploring careers, and in learning effective personal and social skills.

Educational records including courses taken, grades earned, results of standardized tests, and selected personal data are maintained for each student in the registrar's office located in the Counseling/Career Center. This information assists counselors as they advise students regarding their high school programs and future plans.

### **Teachers**

Our teachers are specialists in the fields in which they teach and are eager for every student to get the most out of their classes. They are classroom leaders and are charged with following all policies and procedures established by the Board of Trustees and administration.

Each teacher is assigned a conference period as part of his/her teaching assignment. This period is set aside to give the teacher opportunity for carrying out plans for both classroom work and individual guidance with students. Another purpose of this period is to provide a teacher with a scheduled time to confer with parents. To make an appointment to see a teacher, parents should telephone the office or email the teacher directly.

### **Secretaries**

The Secretarial staff is available to help administrators, teachers, and patrons with situations that deal with the day-to-day operation of the school. Every major office in the school has a secretary to help in any way possible.

## **Instructional Assistants**

The primary responsibility of Instructional Assistants (IA) is to assist teachers in the necessary clerical and record keeping tasks in order to ensure that student data is accurate and current.

## **Custodians and Cafeteria Personnel**

The custodial staff is directed by a plant manager who assigns duties for custodians during both the day and night shifts. They are charged with the responsibility of maintaining and cleaning the entire school grounds and facilities. They also have the duty of keeping all systems and equipment operational for the entire school.

Cafeteria personnel provide wholesome, well-balanced, nourishing meals for the student body and the staff at a reasonable cost. Our cafeteria is managed by an experienced person who is trained in nutrition and management.

Courtesy should be extended to these individuals and concerns may be directed in an appropriate manner to the manager or the vice principal.

## **CAMPUS PROCEDURES**

### **Attendance**

Parents are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that their child comes to school and attends all scheduled classes. Students are expected to attend school and be on time to their classes. The first rule of success for a student is to arrive on time. Attendance is one of the principal's top priorities because students cannot learn in absentia, and the teachers cannot teach empty seats. State law and school policy require attendance every day that school is in session. Illness, doctor/clinic visits, a death in the family, court appearances, religious holidays, and school-sponsored activities are the only excusable reasons for nonattendance. The legitimacy of absences for other reasons will be determined by the principal or designee. Students cannot exceed the following number of absences in order to earn credit: 9 absences for fall semester, 9 absences for spring semester courses and 17 absences for year-long courses. Both excused and unexcused absences account for total number of absences. Any students that are not in compliance with the 90% Texas [Compulsory Attendance Law](#) will lose the privilege of attending social school events such as Prom and/or receiving their Verification of Enrollment.

### **Closed Campus Policy**

Taft has a **closed campus policy**. When students board a NISD school bus or arrive on campus by other means, they are considered to be "in school". Before leaving campus, they must check out through the attendance office even if the first bell has not rung.

Parents picking their child up before the end of the school day must sign their child out at the attendance office. The student will be considered **truant** if they are not properly signed out. This will be considered an unexcused absence.

### **Procedures to Follow When an Absence Occurs**

When an absence occurs for a non-school-related reason, the parent or guardian should provide the child with a note stating the reason for the absence(s) on the day of the student's return. The note should contain the student's full name, student ID #, date and periods of the absence(s). The note must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian, and it should include a daytime phone number where the parent/guardian can be reached. The student will take the note to the attendance office.

### **Leaving School During the Day**

Students who become ill during the day must be excused through the health clinic or attendance office. A student who has a documented appointment with a health care professional during regular school hours will be considered present all day for every class if the student has attended a portion of that school day. The appointment must be supported by documentation such as a note from the health care professional. The parent/guardian must sign the student in and out at the attendance office on the medical log sheet.

### **Late to School**

Being late to school is a violation of Texas state law. If a student arrives at school or class five minutes after the tardy bell, that student will be counted absent and must report to the attendance office for an admit slip. Classes start at 9:00 a.m., and students are expected to be in the classroom. Students who are consistently late will be referred to the Administration office for disciplinary action.

### **Excused Absences**

When students are absent, make-up work will be allowed through arrangements with the teacher. Whenever possible, students should attempt to get assignments in advance of their absences. In the case of a long period of absence (3 or more days), parents may contact the receptionist to request homework assignments. In order to allow teachers adequate time to provide requested assignments, the homework will be available for pick-up with the receptionist one day after the request is made. It is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher for missed assignments at the earliest possible date or upon their return to classes after any absences.

### **Unexcused Absences**

Student absences that do not meet the NISD acceptable reasons for excused absences will be coded as unexcused. Students have three days after returning to school to clear their absence with a note. An attendance warning notice will be issued after the third unexcused absence.

### **Truancy**

Students who are truant will receive appropriate disciplinary action which may include (but is not limited to) a court referral. When a student is determined to be truant, the absence will be coded as "TRU". Absences due to truancy may not be recovered through Attendance Recovery.

### **Tardy to Class**

Students are required by law to be in class at the designated times. Students who are late, are not only violating the law but disrupting the learning environment for other students. Students who are consistently late to class will be referred to the administration office for appropriate disciplinary action, including the loss of parking permits and off-campus lunch privileges. Students arriving late to class after five minutes, will be considered absent and will be referred to the administration office for excessive tardies to class.

### **Attendance Recovery**

The Campus Attendance Committee has designated Attendance Recovery as an alternate way to make up work and class time for students in danger of losing credit due to absences. In order to regain credit due to excessive absences for extenuating circumstances, students will be allowed to recover attendance. Attendance Recovery must take place before school or after school. Making up attendance will be hour for hour during the teacher's regularly scheduled tutoring time (before school or after school).

### **Verification of Enrollment (VOE) Forms**

Before the age of 18, each student must have a Verification of Enrollment (VOE) form in order to receive their initial driver's license. To be eligible to receive a VOE Form, the student must comply with the guidelines set forth by the Texas Department of Public Safety Headquarters. You may view these guidelines as the Texas DPS Website; [www.dps.texas.gov](http://www.dps.texas.gov).

Requests for a VOE must be submitted prior to the student's scheduled appointment at the Texas Department of Public Safety. Submit VOE request at the Taft Attendance Office. After submitting a request, allow 24 hours for processing the VOE request. Completed VOE forms will be available from the Taft Attendance Office.

### **Withdrawals**

When it becomes necessary for a student to withdraw from school, the parent and student should report to the attendance office. The parent may send a note requesting to withdraw their child, but must come to school to sign the withdrawal application. Upon acceptance of a verified note, the student should attend scheduled classes in order to get clearance from each teacher. The student is expected to remove all items from his/her locker, turn in all textbooks and other school-issued items, and pay for any school property he or she has lost. Failure to clear properly will cause a delay in the withdrawal process.

### **Change in Name, Home Phone Number, or Address**

The campus requires current student information in case of an emergency. The attendance office should be informed of any change in the student's name, phone number, or address. Official documentation will be required for any legal name change. Documentation and notification of such changes should be given to the secretary in the attendance office immediately.

## **CAMPUS SAFETY & SECURITY**

Adults and students must follow all NISD safety protocols on the campus of Taft HS and all NISD facilities.

### **Visitors**

All parents and visitors are required to register in the Administrative Office with the receptionist or the attendance office and indicate the reason for visiting the campus. For the safety and security of all students, parents and visitors must show a valid photo ID when registering. Upon sign-in, all parents and visitors must place their Visitor Pass badge where it is visible to faculty and staff. Parents and visitors are **required** to sign-out prior to leaving the campus.

### **Food & General Deliveries Protocol**

For the safety and security of all students, faculty, and staff, absolutely no food or general deliveries from individuals or outside vendors are permitted for students on campus. Any unauthorized deliveries will be subject to confiscation. Furthermore, non-students attempting to deliver food items to students on campus will be considered trespassing.

### **Student ID Card Requirement**

The student ID card is the student's official identification. Every Taft and Communications Arts student is required to wear and visibly display their student ID card at all times while on the campus and at school functions. Students must be prepared to present their student ID card to any school official or authorized representative upon request; failing to do so is a violation and will result in disciplinary action.

The student's first ID card is issued at no cost. Lost or stolen student ID cards must be replaced for a fee of \$5.00. Returning students who do not have their original card will be charged a \$5.00 replacement fee.

Student ID cards are available at the beginning of the school year at Prep Day and during the school year in the Assistant Principal's Office (before, during lunch, after school).

### **Safety Protocols: Gates, Doors, & Supervision**

Exterior gates and doors are to remain closed during school hours. When entering and exiting the campus, students may only go through the main entrance and designated doors. Exterior/Emergency doors may not be used to exit the campus. Propping doors or gates open or exiting through emergency/exterior doors breaches campus safety and WILL result in consequences, including but not limited to suspension.

All students must be supervised while on the campus. During lunch, students are only allowed in the cafeteria and the courtyard area, located by the cafeteria. Students must have a pass to leave the cafeteria during their assigned lunch time. Students must avoid unauthorized locations while on the campus. For the safety of the students, there is no student loitering in unsupervised areas after school.

## Safety Checks

The use of metal detectors will be used randomly throughout the school year. Their use will facilitate random safety checks of students, staff, or visitors, and will be coordinated by NISD Police and Taft Administration. Campus safety is also supported by the use of the NISD Police K-9 Unit on all campuses.

## Personal Communication Device Policy

In compliance with state law, the use of personal communication devices by students is not allowed at any NISD campus during the school day, from the first official bell to the last official bell. Usage of these items will also not be allowed during passing periods or lunch periods. Personal communication devices include cell phones, smart watches, earbuds, headphones, tablets, or any other similar items. Devices of this nature should be powered off and placed into student backpacks and kept in a designated location in each classroom. Students without a backpack will be required to place their device(s) into an identified storage container in the classroom. Students in violation of this State law and district policy will be subject to progressive disciplinary consequences, to include possible confiscation of the device. Confiscated items will be released to the student's parent/guardian.

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

In order to maintain a safe and secure learning environment, students are expected to abide by the laws of the Federal Government, State of Texas, City of San Antonio, and policies and regulations of the [Northside Independent School District Student Code of Conduct](#). Students shall be held responsible for their conduct at school, in transit to and from school, and at any school-sponsored activity.

### Classroom Policies

1. **Be Prepared for Success:** Come to class ready to learn with all your necessary supplies.
2. **Start on Time:** Be in your seat and ready to begin class when the tardy bell rings.
3. **Move with Purpose:** Head directly to your next class to keep hallways clear and orderly.
4. **Show Respect:** Treat your teachers, classmates, and all school property with kindness and care.
5. **Enjoy Meals in Designated Areas:** Please enjoy all food and drinks in the cafeteria or other approved areas.

### Social Behavior

Students are expected to behave properly and treat all adults on the Taft/Communication Arts campus with respect.

### Student Responsibility & Behavior Expectations

The school principal and the administrative team are responsible for ensuring a learning environment that maximizes educational opportunities and minimizes distractions that may interfere with student learning. The Student Code of Conduct is designed to help us all work together to create a school where every student can thrive, learn, and achieve their full potential.

## Northside ISD Student Code of Conduct

The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is as follow:

1. Describe behavior that promotes a positive environment for learning.
2. Describe behavior that is expected of all students.
3. Describe specific examples of student misbehavior.
4. Define consequences that may be imposed for student misbehavior.
5. Provide for District wide uniformity in dealing with student discipline.
6. Define the rights and responsibilities of each member of the school community (students, parents, teachers, administrators).
7. Communicate policies of the Board of Trustees regarding appropriate student behavior.

The [NISD Student Code of Conduct](#) is enforced on all NISD campuses, NISD facilities, NISD school buses or at any school sponsored event.

### Hall Passes

Students out of any class must possess a hall pass signed by a member of faculty or staff. Any student out of class without a pass is subject to disciplinary action.

### Nuisance Items

Students are not allowed to carry a **skateboard** during the school day. Skateboards must be dropped off in the APO upon their arrival to campus and can be picked up after the dismissal bell, 4:20PM. There is absolutely no skateboarding allowed on the premises of Taft High School.

A nuisance item may be anything that creates a distraction or a safety concern, or in some way disrupts the instructional environment. The designation of an item as a "nuisance" is at the discretion of the principal; these items are not permitted on campus.

**Detention Hall**

When a student is assigned to a Detention Hall, the student is expected to attend. Failure to report to the Detention Hall can result in being assigned to In-School Suspension.

**In-School Suspension**

In-School Suspension (ISS) will be used as a disciplinary measure by the associate principal's office to help students assume responsibility for their actions. Students will be expected to successfully complete assigned ISS work, class work, participate in responsibility counseling, and demonstrate their ability to follow rules. Failure to follow ISS rules may result in suspension and a parent conference before a student can return to school.

**STUDENT ACTIVITIES****School Pride**

Students at Taft/Communications Arts demonstrate Raider Pride by respecting themselves, one another, and the faculty and staff. We show pride in our campus by keeping the cafeteria, patio, classrooms, hallways and parking lot clean.

**Internet Use**

The STUDENT AND PARENT AGREEMENT FOR ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM form must be filled out and signed before a student can have access to the internet.

**Financial Obligations**

In order for a senior to participate in school-related activities including but not limited to prom, invitation distribution, cap/gown distribution and graduation rehearsal, the student must be in good financial standing with the campus and the school district. Students must clear all debts and obligations prior to these events. Debts and obligations could be incurred from club, class, or organization dues; spirit, fine arts, and athletic organization supplies and activities; uniforms; textbooks; fundraising events; and any other financial debt or obligation from school-owned items checked out to the student.

**Graduation**

The graduation ceremony is a school function and being such, is part of the school year. The school year for a senior, ends with the completion of the graduation ceremony. Therefore, a graduating senior who violates the Student Code of Conduct, and as a result is assigned to an alternative placement for a period of time that extends through the date of graduation, will not be permitted to participate in the graduation ceremony.

Graduation is a dignified ceremony. Students should dress as if they are preparing to interview for an important job. Facial piercing (other than earrings) will not be permitted. Students are expected to observe proper etiquette during the entire graduation ceremony. While they are on the stage and receiving diplomas, students must keep their hands at their sides at all times. The only time hands may be lifted is when students are receiving diplomas from school board members and shaking hands with the superintendent. Students who raise their hands above their waists for any reasons other than receiving the diplomas or shaking hands may be removed from the graduation ceremony. Students demonstrating any other behaviors that serve to lessen the dignity of the event may be removed from the graduation ceremony.

## School Dances

Dances sponsored by the school, or any organization affiliated with the school, held on campus or at an off-campus site, will be open to Taft and Communications Arts students ONLY at the discretion of the administration. Students must have their student ID card on their person to enter all school sponsored dances. Students must be picked up within 30 minutes following the end of the event. Failure to do so will result in the revocation of privileges for attending extracurricular activities.

## Students Selected for Popularity Courts

Students are elected to courts in conjunction with various events held on the high school campus. Examples include but are not limited to homecoming court and prom court. It is the position of the district that these selections are based on popularity. However, if these court representatives are involved in activities that are extracurricular, or if the activity is held in conjunction with another activity that is considered extracurricular (i.e. Homecoming Court), then the students must meet all eligibility rules relating to extracurricular activities. Student participation in courts that are not considered extracurricular (i.e. prom court) must follow the guidelines as specified by the activity sponsor or the campus principal. Student participation on any popularity court will ultimately be at the discretion of the campus principal.

## Bus Loading Area

The bus loading area is for bus riders only. A separate bus circle is provided for loading and unloading of students. As students wait for the arrival of their assigned buses, they must remain behind the railing or on the curb. Students should not stand in the street. Students must wait until their buses come to a complete stop before proceeding toward the buses. The bus circle is designed with the safety of our students in mind, and students violating the above rules will be subject to disciplinary measure.

## Parking Permits and Lots

Driving and parking a vehicle on the school campus is a privilege reserved for seniors, juniors and sophomores. Eligible students desiring to drive to school must register their vehicles with the campus police in order to obtain a parking permit. Registration of vehicles can be done through the Taft associate principal's office (APO). Registration requirements for each permit issued include a valid Texas driver's license, proof of liability insurance for the vehicle, a current Taft/Communications Arts ID card, class schedule, and a payment of a \$20 fee. Each vehicle must be issued a separate numbered permit. Switching permits from one vehicle to another is strictly forbidden and will result in the loss of the student's parking privilege on campus. Allowing a non-registered driver to drive the vehicle on campus is also forbidden and carries with it the same penalty.

Parking permits are to be permanently affixed to the upper right-hand corner of the windshield. This permit entitles the student to park in the student parking areas only when space is available. The student parking lots are the "A" and "B" lots. The "C" lot is designated for staff parking. Parking in the back behind the campus either behind ROTC or by the B-Building is strictly prohibited by students. Rules governing driving and parking on campus are subject to change if increased security measures are necessary.

Strict adherence to parking and driving rules is necessary to prevent accidents. The regulations also exist to ensure access to emergency response vehicles, buses and other essential vehicles. Furthermore, it must be clearly understood that Texas laws governing vehicular operation also apply on campus. Failure to follow these rules may result in a ticket being issued. Common sense and defensive driving will serve to provide a safe environment at Taft and Communications Arts High School.

Each driver must adhere to the following rules:

1. The 10-mph speed.
2. Parking is prohibited
  - On any curb, sidewalk or island
  - By a red curb, fire zone, in front of a fire hydrant
  - In any place designated as a loading zone or marked "no parking"
  - In front of a movable barrier
  - In any driveway, entrance or exit
  - In two spaces
  - In reserved areas (visitor spaces, faculty parking lot, etc.)
  - On lawn areas
  - If the vehicle is double parked
  - If the vehicle has no permit
3. If the vehicle is sold or is no longer in your possession, remove the parking permit from the vehicle and turn it into the APO.
4. If you have a valid parking permit and need to temporarily use another vehicle that is not registered at Taft and Communications Arts High School, you must report to the APO to get a temporary parking permit. A temporary parking permit can be used for a maximum of five days.
5. Overloading a vehicle with passengers is prohibited. Each person in a vehicle must be wearing a seat belt (e.g., a vehicle with six people must have six seat belts.)
6. Passengers are not permitted to ride in the bed of a pick-up truck.
7. Students who are absent from school or who leave campus earlier than the normal dismissal time are not allowed to return to the campus on the same day without specific permission from an administrator. This includes cases where the purpose is to pick up another student.
8. All persons must report accidents which occur on campus to the APO or campus police.
9. Students late to school three times in a nine-week period will have their parking permit revoked for 30 days.
10. Truancy in any form will result in the loss of parking privileges for all participants for 30 school days. Repeated offenses could result in permanent loss of parking privileges.

All drivers must exhibit responsible behavior when operating their vehicle on campus as noted in the ***Student-Parent Handbook***, Section Parking Permit and Lots. Failing to follow any one or more of these rules will result in the loss of one's driving privilege on the Taft campus.

Additional disciplinary action by the associate principal's office is also possible.

- A. Vehicles that are properly registered at Taft/Communications Arts will receive two warnings (verbal or violation sticker). After two warnings for any violations, a parent will be notified. Any violation after a parent has been notified may result in towing of the vehicle without notice.
- B. Any vehicle that is not registered at Taft/Communications Arts will receive one violation sticker or a verbal warning by an administrator or campus police officer. In addition, an administrator may issue a written violation to the student for the violation which could result in a fine of up to \$25.00. After the second violation notice or verbal warning is given, the vehicle will be towed at the owner's expense.
- C. If a student permit is revoked, the student is not permitted to operate or park any other vehicle on the Taft/Communications Arts campus. Further violations may result in additional consequences, up to and including towing.

### **After-School Pick-Up Procedures**

Taft High School is a closed campus. A closed campus means that the school reserves the right to deny access to individuals onto the school grounds. Individuals arriving on campus for pick-up purposes are asked to keep the entrance lane cleared in order to facilitate a smooth flow of traffic. All non-school vehicles are restricted to the area in the three main parking lots, located at the front of the campus. Parking lot rules and regulations apply to all drivers. Drivers are asked to wait for students in marked parking spaces. The school reserves the right to request identification and/or a reason for being on the campus.

### **Post Football Game Pick-up Procedures**

- 1. Parents may use the "C" lot (far west entrance) to pick up their student.
- 2. Students with proper identification cards may enter the student parking lot for the purpose of picking up a game-related activity participant. Vehicles carrying students without proper Taft identification will be turned away. (Vehicles carrying an excessive number of students may also be directed to leave.)
- 3. Students from other schools will not be allowed on campus without prior approval from the associate principal's office.
- 4. Students waiting to provide rides must stay in the student parking lot. They will not be allowed in any other area.

### **Junior and Senior Lunch**

The junior and senior lunch program is a privilege reserved for juniors and seniors only. Juniors and seniors having written permission on file with the APO may leave campus provided they have the appropriate lunch sticker affixed to their ID card. Teachers must see each student's ID card to ensure the sticker is affixed at the beginning of each semester and term. A note will be made in their grade book. Juniors and seniors returning from lunch late for the third time will lose their off-campus lunch privilege for 30 school days. If a senior does not return from lunch for any reason and their parents do not call the attendance office the same day, the student will lose their privilege. Taking another student off campus who is not qualified for off-campus lunch will result in the driver losing parking and off-campus lunch privileges for 30 school days. Repeated offenses will result in the permanent loss of parking and off-campus lunch privileges.

### **Flyers**

No student or group may distribute or post flyers for any activity or event unless it is approved by the group's sponsor and the administration. Generally, only Northside sponsored activities will be approved.

### **Posting Notices**

Any and all notices must be placed in designated areas only after they have been approved by the sponsor of the organization and administration.

## **SCHOOL SERVICES**

### **Guidance and Counseling**

The Northside ISD Guidance Program delivers services to students, parents, and staff through four program components that Texas law (TEC 33.0005+) now prescribes for guidance services in Texas Schools.: Individual Planning, Guidance Curriculum, Responsive Services, System Support. The Guidance program is a developmental educational program designed to help students acquire skills for social, personal, and academic success through planned educational experiences and activities.

Conferences with counselors are encouraged for students, their parents, and teachers at any time there is a need for special assistance with the student's educational, career, or personal concerns. Each junior and senior will be scheduled for a conference to review his/her school record and to discuss future educational and career plans. Efforts will be made to contact every student in each class during the year to encourage early educational and career planning.

For additional information please visit the Northside web page under Guidance and Counseling.

## College Preparation

The entrance requirements of colleges vary. The individual student should check the website or catalogue of the college he or she plans to attend and follow the particular recommendations of that college regarding high school courses to be taken. The GO Center maintains a library of college catalogues for students' use and computers are available to research college websites.

## Career Center

The GO Center is available to assist students in learning more about themselves and the type of career they wish to pursue upon leaving high school. The GO Center offers many different types of occupational information designed to help students research the career fields of interest to them. The GO Center offers the following services to each student upon request:

1. Scholarship information.
2. Summer programs.
3. Computers for student use to assess interests, likes, and dislikes, possible suitable careers and educational information, and the DISCOVER program.
4. Information on a variety of post-secondary options, not limited to colleges and universities, are available for student use.

## Registrar

### Student Records

The Registrar maintains student records. Educational records including courses taken, grades and credits earned, results of standardized tests, and attendance are housed in the Registrar's Office. Student records are treated as highly confidential, and information is released only to authorized persons concerned with the student.

### Transcripts

Transcripts of a student's scholastic achievement record and state test scores may be obtained on request. Students who want copies of transcripts sent to colleges, employers, or other agencies should make their requests two weeks in advance and online at <https://nisdtx.scribder.com/>. The cost for transcripts is \$3.00 each for current students and \$5.00 for former students. The additional amount is to cover the cost of retrieval and processing. Official transcripts will only be sent to schools or agencies designated by the requesting student (with parental signature if the student is under eighteen years of age). The parental signature is required only one time, allowing the Registrar to send copies as requested.

## Health Service

If a child becomes ill or is injured at school, the school nurse will give first aid only and notify the parent. She does not diagnose illnesses, but takes note of symptoms and notifies the parents of her observations. In an extreme emergency, EMS or an ambulance will be called.

## Lockers

Lockers are optional to all students and may be requested throughout the year in the Assistant Principal's Office. Students may use the lockers when storing books and personal items. Responsibility for lost or stolen items is not assumed by the school or the administration. Every locker left unlocked will be considered out of use and its contents removed. Both **William Howard Taft and Communications Arts High School have sufficient lockers. The sharing of lockers is prohibited.** Locker problems should be reported to the Front Office. Each student is responsible for removing all belongings from his/her locker before the last day of the school year.

## Telephones

Office telephones are for business only and students are not to use them without permission. Telephone messages for students can only be accepted in cases of emergency from parents. Class will not be interrupted for telephone calls.

## Lost and Found

Students who find anything of value on the grounds or in the building are expected to turn it in to the associate principal's office, and the office staff will attempt to find the rightful owner. Students who lose anything should notify the lost and found department in the associate principal's office and identify the article.

## **LIBRARY**

Taft Library Mission Statement: In support of the mission of Northside ISD and the Department of Library Services, The Taft library provides support and leadership for Taft and Communications Arts teachers and students. In the Taft library, the student comes first, and all programs and activities encourage and support the growth, development, and enrichment of our students through their direct involvement in research, reading, and the effective use of technology. Home access to the online card catalog is available at <https://northsideisd.follettdestiny.com/>

### **Library Rules**

1. Library hours are from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.
2. Students may check out up to three items.
3. Books are loaned for a three -week period and may be renewed unless a hold has been placed on the books.
4. The student is responsible for all books checked out in his/her name until the name has been cleared.
5. If a book has been lost or damaged, the student will be required to pay for the book. If a book which has been lost and paid for is found in good condition, the student may request a reimbursement of the amount paid by submitting the receipt and a completed request for reimbursement form.
6. Students using the library are required to sign in and out on the log-in computer.

## **CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Membership and Club Charters**

Students may participate in school-sponsored clubs and organizations only with written consent from a parent or guardian. A completed permission slip must be on file prior to a student's participation in any club meetings, activities, or events. Membership in clubs and organizations is open to all students. Students are encouraged to participate in clubs and organizations as they can profit from a wide range of experiences in their high school career.

All clubs and organizations have charters on file in the VPO. Any student(s) or teacher(s) desiring to start a new club must submit a written charter and have approval of the administration.

### **Eligibility Requirements for All Offices**

#### **Entrance**

1. Candidates must have completed and passed all courses for the previous school year.
2. Candidates must not have more than two (2) "Needs Improvement" and/or one (1) "Unsatisfactory" citizenship grade for the previous school year.
3. Candidates must possess the ability to be a leader by being a hard worker with a good attitude. They must be willing to organize projects, speak in front of groups, if necessary, and be willing to meet before or after school as often as one time a week or more often as necessary.
4. Candidates will be screened by their teachers and administration for citizenship, leadership, and scholarship.

#### **Maintenance - Removal from Office**

1. Officers must maintain an overall average of 75 or higher in all classes throughout the school year with no grade falling below a 70 in any one class.
2. Officers missing more than two (2) scheduled meetings will be placed on probation. Missing a third meeting will result in removal from office.
3. If any officer fails to meet any of the above criteria, the student will be placed on probation for six (6) weeks. If there is a second probationary period, it will result in removal from office for the remainder of the school year.
4. Applications must be submitted by the deadline on the application form. No late applications will be considered.

#### **Class Officers**

Under no circumstances will one person be allowed to hold both a class and student council office at one time.

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Northside ISD recognizes the benefits of teams, clubs, and organizations that represent the school outside of the normal school day. These organizations assist in building leadership and good citizenship and in supplementing the curriculum taught during the school day. School-sponsored organizations may be either co-curricular or extracurricular. FM (LOCAL)

### **Publications**

#### **Taft**

##### **Raider Review**

The school newspaper keeps the student and the faculty members informed of academic, athletic, and extracurricular activities.

#### **Unity**

The school yearbook is a pictorial record of events which occur during a particular school year.

## **Communications Arts**

### ***Unity***

Yearbook classes publish this visual document of student life at Communications Arts.

## **Air Force JROTC**

ROTC is an academic and participation program available to physically fit students in all grades. The curriculum includes air science instruction and exposure to leadership activities such as human relations, management techniques, and speaking skills. Participation in promotions and membership in color guard, drill team, briefing teams, etc., is competitive and based on "the best person for the job." Qualified cadets can receive an academy appointment or AFROTC college scholarship. Uniforms and books are provided at no cost to the cadet. There is no military obligation; however, two and three years of successful AFJROTC completion entitle the enlistee to increased rank and pay upon completion of basic military training.

## **U.I.L. Activities**

William Howard Taft High School will participate in the full range of U.I.L. activities to include academic, speech, literary, drama, music, and athletic competition. It is the purpose of these programs to provide students and sponsors an opportunity to compete.

## **Band**

The William Howard Taft "Raider" Band plays for pep rallies, parades, concerts, and many other events during the year. They perform at football games during half-time activities. The band competes in the following Interscholastic League events: U.I.L. Marching Contest, Solo and Ensemble Contest, and Concert/Sight-Reading Contest.

## **Vocal Music**

The Taft High School Vocal Music Department includes an auditioned mixed choir (Chorale), a women's choir (Treble Choir), and a select small vocal ensemble (Show Choir). These groups present a variety of concerts each year and compete in U.I.L. Solo and Ensemble Contest and Concert/Sight-Reading Contest. An annual spring trip to a choral competition out of town is one of the many rewards for hard work and dedication required of each singer. Students can "letter" in choir and receive a letter jacket for vocal music after meeting the necessary requirements.

## **ACADEMIC AWARDS**

Each year William Howard Taft and Communications Arts recognize the performance of outstanding students in the areas of academic, vocational, leadership, and service to the school and community at an awards assembly. The method of selection of the recipient is at the discretion of the teacher. Teachers may consider academic excellence, achievement based upon ability, or improvement. Service and leadership awards are given at the discretion of the administration.

## **SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS**

Student Council and National Honor Society

## **SPIRIT ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Cheerleaders**

Cheerleaders are the spirit leaders for the student body. An administrative procedure has been developed for membership selection.

### **Highsteppers Dance Team**

This organization is the dance team of William Howard Taft High School. This is the performing group for the Taft Spirit Organization.

### **Silver Star Drill Team**

This organization is the drill team of William Howard Taft High School. This is a performing group for the Taft Spirit Organization.

### **Sidekicks Pep Squad**

This organization seeks to promote school spirit in all aspects of school life. Membership is open to students who are interested in working for this goal.