

# DR. HECTOR P. GARCIA MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS HANDBOOK

## DR. HECTOR P. GARCIA MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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### Section A Campus Handbook 2022-2023

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# WELCOME

Welcome to the “Gladiator Empire!” This Student-Parent Handbook has been prepared for your information and guidance. Keep in mind at all times that you, the student, are the most important aspect of school life at Hector Garcia Middle School. Be proud of your school and take good care of it. As a Gladiator, you are expected to conduct yourself with dignity, demonstrate respect and courtesy at all times and to strive to do your best. You will be challenged in the classroom to excel and will be given opportunities to grow as a young adult and to enjoy a variety of experiences associated with middle school including dances, games, clubs and concerts.

Hector Garcia Middle School is dedicated to the well-being of the whole child – mentally, physically and emotionally. Therefore, it is necessary to have certain rules to insure each individual the opportunity to benefit from their educational opportunity. This handbook outlines some of the basic policies around which your school functions. Please use it as a reference to keep you informed of the basic guidelines and allow you to take full advantage of all school offerings.

Please feel free to contact teachers, counselors and administrators when you deem it necessary. Active parental involvement is encouraged and welcomed. The cooperation of school patrons, based upon the knowledge of the school, will result in a more efficient and successful school program.

Conferences may be scheduled by calling the school at (210) 397-8400.

## OUR NAMESAKE

### **Dr. Hector P. Garcia (January 17, 1914-July 26, 1996)**

Dr. Hector P. Garcia was a Mexican-American physician and surgeon. He began by attending Edinburg Junior College after his parents (both teachers) cashed in their life insurance policy to fund his education. In 1934 he attended UT Austin and graduated with a degree in zoology. Among the top ten in his class he then enrolled in medical school at University at Texas at Galveston earning his doctorate in medicine in 1940. After residency he volunteered for the army and fought in World War II earning many honors including the Bronze Star. After his years of service he settled in Corpus Christi where he practiced medicine and continued his mission to help others by becoming a civil rights advocate, and founder of the American G.I. Forum. As a result of the national prominence he earned through his work on behalf of Hispanic Americans he was named alternate ambassador to the United Nations in 1967, was appointed to the United States Commission on Civil Rights in 1968, and was named to the Order of St. Gregory the Great by Pope John Paul II in 1990.

In addition, Dr. Garcia’s efforts to desegregate Texas public schools resulted in the closure of many substandard schools for Hispanic children. Dr. Garcia, who grew up in Corpus Christi, was the recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, in 1984, making him the first Mexican American to receive the nation’s highest civilian award

## SCHOOL COLORS

Silver and Black

## SCHOOL MASCOT

Gladiator

## Mission and Vision

**Mission** - At Dr. Hector P. Garcia Middle School, we grow critical thinkers who positively impact society, reflect on our relevant and rigorous instruction, inspire a love of learning, and take ownership of every student’s learning experience as a team with parents and community.

**Vision** - Garcia Middle School will educate and empower lifelong learners who are responsible, contributing citizens in a diverse, evolving world.

## PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU

**Principal**

The Principal is responsible to the Superintendent of schools for proper administration of Hector Garcia Middle School. It is her duty to organize, supervise, and administer all of the affairs of the school as they affect students, teachers, and patrons. He will be glad to help you with any of your concerns.

### **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.

Due to morning duties and responsibilities on campus, administrators are not available for conferences prior to 8:40 a.m. We strongly suggest that if you wish to speak to an administrator, or have a conference with them, that you call 397-8400 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.

### **Academic Dean**

The Academic Dean works directly with the Principal in the instructional processes of the school to improve student performance at Hector Garcia Middle School. She is in charge of all campus testing, both at the district and state level. She handles the day to day operations of the school that address academics and may assume the responsibility of the Principal in his absence. Conferences may be scheduled by calling 397-8400.

### **Counselors**

All students are assigned a guidance counselor. 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 through the online referral system posted in the counseling tab of student's schoology accounts. If your counselor cannot see you that same day, he/she will make an appointment with you for the next day. Conferences with students receive first consideration of the counselor's time. ***The function of the counselor is advisory, not disciplinary, and all information is confidential.***

### **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 in 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 not have to wait longer than 15 minutes for parents to pick them up after a school 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 could 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. Formal attire and/or limousine transportation are not appropriate for these events. Any clothing deemed inappropriate or suggestive is not permitted.

#### **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

- withdrawal from Garcia Middle School (athletic events may be permitted.)

## **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

Following any absence, students should bring a dated note signed by the parent explaining the reason for the absence. If a doctor saw the student, a note should be obtained from the doctor explaining the absence. All doctors' notes should be sent to the school to substantiate absences. All notes should be turned into the attendance office within 5 days of the student's absence. Students should bring all notes to the attendance office between 7:55 and 8:40 a.m. A note for a student's absence may also be faxed to the attention of the Attendance Secretary to 210-695-3830 or can be emailed through the CONTACT SCHOOL link on the Garcia website. Please add your child's id number on the note to ensure that the absence is appropriately processed.

**Tardies** - Passing periods allow for sufficient time for students to go from one class to another. Sufficient time is provided to pass from one class to another. If you are not in class at the end of the passing period, the teacher will consider you tardy. All unexcused tardies will be subject to a penalty.

### **1. Tardiness to class**

If a student is tardy to class, he/she should report directly to his/her teacher, who will evaluate his/her reason for tardiness and assess an appropriate penalty.

### **2. Coming to school late**

If a student arrives on the campus late, he/she will report immediately to the attendance office for a class admittance slip.

### **3. Excessive Tardies**

Students with excessive tardies will be referred to the administrator for disciplinary action.

## **BACKPACKS / BOOK BAGS**

Backpacks and/or book bags may be used to carry books and supplies to and from school, and may be taken to classes during the school day. Rolling backpacks are only allowed if there is a documented medical need.

## **BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROCEDURES**

All students will enter the cafeteria in an orderly manner. There are specific rules on how students sit in the cafeteria, and the majority of the time students will be allowed to sit with their friends, as long as cafeteria rules are followed. Students must raise their hand for permission to leave their seat. Duty teachers will dismiss students and students may not leave the cafeteria before permission is granted. Students are required to keep their area clean. While in the cafeteria line, students are to only touch the food items they intend to buy.

Visitors must sign in and receive a visitor's pass before coming into the cafeteria. No celebrations are permitted in the cafeteria (e.g. birthdays). No food deliveries will be accepted at the campus for students.

Breakfast/Lunch Money - 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.

## CAMPUS OPERATING HOURS

- Classes begin for Hector Garcia Middle School students at **8:40 a.m.** and end each afternoon at **3:55 p.m.** each day, Monday through Friday.
- The doors will be opened to all students at 7:40 a.m. and supervision of students will start at 7:45 AM. Students who arrive at school before 8:30 a.m. are allowed to eat breakfast (if they choose) and to report to the grade level designated areas.
- Front Office Hours are from 7:45 - 4:30 PM.
- Students will not be allowed to be checked out after 3:35 PM due to dismissal procedures.

## CAMPUS VISITORS

All Parents and Visitors are required to register in the Front Office with the Principal's secretary regardless of how long they plan to stay on campus, and must indicate the reason for visiting the campus. They are also required to sign-out prior to leaving the campus. Upon sign-in, all Parents and Visitors should receive a Visitor's Pass, and must wear this pass where it can be visible to staff. These precautions are taken to ensure a safe environment for our students and staff. All volunteers and mentors are also required to do a criminal background check before volunteering on campus or field trips. The background check may be done on-line through the NISD website.

## DELIVERY OF ITEMS/ OUTSIDE FOOD ITEMS

In an effort to minimize interruptions and maximize instructional time, **we do not deliver items directly to students.** However, we also recognize that students will sometimes forget an item at home. We will deliver glasses, school items (books, assignments, etc), house keys, and lunch money. For all other items, the student is expected to come by the office BETWEEN classes to retrieve their belongings. No food deliveries will be accepted at the campus for students. This procedure helps the school to maintain an academic environment and is effective in helping students practice personal responsibility. **Flowers, balloons, birthday presents etc. will not be delivered and will be held in the office until the end of the day when students can pick them up to be taken home.**

## Dress for Success

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 Hector Garcia. 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 abundantly at Garcia Middle School. Everything from testing reading levels of students to accessing the Library's card catalog database requires the use of networked computers. 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 Garcia Middle School or have their work published on Garcia's website.

To function effectively in this environment, students must assume personal responsibility to behave ethically, even when

technology provides them the freedom to do other- wise. The use of Northside network and the Internet is a privilege, not a right, which may be revoked at any time for inappropriate behavior. Users assume responsibility for understanding the Acceptable Use Policy and guidelines as a condition of using the Northside network and the Internet. Use of Northside network or the Internet that is inconsistent with this policy may result in loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

When a student is referred to the Associate Principal's office for a discipline infraction, students will turn in their phone while administrators conduct an investigation. Administration reserves the right to hold the phone until the conclusion of the investigation and/or the end of the school day.

### **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. The teacher may require the students to have you sign and return each progress report sent home to verify that you received your child's report. If the teacher deems necessary, you may be contacted by phone to make sure you received the report. This is especially true if the progress of your child is not acceptable or if the grades or conduct are below average.

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. We implore you to make sure that you receive a report card every grading period. 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 should be kept locked; a student should not divulge the combination to another student. Direct all locker problems to the office. Sharing lockers is not permitted. Students found sharing lockers will be subject to disciplinary action.

Students should observe the following practices:

1. Valuable items should be left at home, not kept in a locker.
2. Do not share lockers - Sharing lockers can lead to the loss of expensive textbooks and personal items.
3. Do not give your locker combination to anyone.
4. Locker problems should be reported to the associate principal's secretary.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

IF YOU FIND ANY ARTICLE OF VALUE, PLEASE TURN IT IN TO THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.

As the school assumes no responsibility for lost articles, students are encouraged to take every precaution to protect their possessions. Students should not bring expensive or valuable items to school. Students should carefully label each article, such as clothing, books, and supplies for easy identification. If you are in possession of an item that does not belong to you, you will be subject to disciplinary measures. Lost and found items collected and not claimed by the end of each grading period 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.

### **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. All textbooks and library books must be returned. Any fines owed the school need to be paid before records may be released. On the day of withdrawal, the student should report to the Counselor's office and pick up

a check-out form which must be signed by each teacher. Textbooks must be returned to the textbook administrator. The check-out form must be returned to the Counselor's Office before a final clearance can be granted. 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.

When a student is referred to the Associate Principal's office for a discipline infraction, students will turn in their phone while administrators conduct an investigation. Administration reserves the right to hold the phone until the conclusion of the investigation and/or the end of the school day.

### **GARCIA BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

In the classroom, Gladiators will:

1. Report to his/her assigned class before the tardy bell rings.
2. Have all required materials in class each day.
3. Obtain the teacher's permission prior to engaging in communication of any kind or prior to leaving his or her assigned seat.
4. Be dismissed by the teacher, not the bell, at the end of the period or assigned activity.

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