

# ADMINISTRATION OF DR. JOHN M. FOLKS MIDDLE SCHOOL

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## Section A Campus Policy 2018-2019

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## WELCOME

Welcome to Dr. John Folks Middle School! 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 John Folks Middle School. Be proud of your school and take good care of it. As a Stallion, 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.

Dr. John Folks 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 ensure 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 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.

## OUR NAMESAKE

### Dr. John M. Folks

Dr. John Folks, one of Texas' most respected and beloved educators, devoted more than 40 years of his life to public education as a teacher, administrator, and statewide advocate for students.

Before his 10-year tenure as Superintendent of Northside ISD, Dr. Folks served as Oklahoma State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dean of the School of Education at Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Superintendent of the Midwest City-Del City Public Schools in suburban Oklahoma, and Superintendent of Spring ISD near Houston. Dr. Folks joined Northside ISD in 2002, and during his 10-year tenure, the District racked up numerous honors, all while facing enormous enrollment growth and serious financial challenges. In 2005, Northside was the first district in the state to receive the HEB Excellence in Education Award, and in 2007, NISD was one of five finalists in the nation for the Broad Prize, the Nobel Prize of education. Dr. Folks' most personal achievement came in 2011 when he was named Texas Superintendent of the Year by the Texas Association of School Boards for his statewide leadership and his unwavering and vocal support of Texas public education. Dr. Folks retired in 2012 and currently is a senior lecturer in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

## SCHOOL COLORS

Navy Blue, Columbia Blue, White

## SCHOOL MASCOT

Stallions

## PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU

### Principal

The principal is responsible to the superintendent of schools for proper administration of Dr. John Folks Middle School. It is his duty to organize, supervise, and administer all of the affairs of the school as they affect students, teachers, and parents. He will be glad to help you with any of your problems.

### Vice Principal/Assistant Principal

The vice principal and assistant principal will work directly with the principal in the administration and organization of the school. They are in charge of attendance and handle the routine discipline problems. They handle the day by day operation of the school and assume the responsibility of the principal in his absence. Conferences may be scheduled by calling 398-1600.

### Academic Dean

The academic dean works with the principal to ensure that students are offered high quality instruction and appropriate rigor in their courses. It is her duty to coordinate all testing for the campus and assist teachers in creating a classroom environment that is learner-centered and engaging.

### Counselors

You have a guidance counselor who will be assigned to you while you are at Dr. John Folks Middle School. Your counselor will be happy to assist you with problems concerning both school and/or your personal life. If you want an appointment with your counselor, this can be arranged with the secretary in the guidance office at any time. If your counselor cannot see you that same day, they will make an appointment with you as soon as possible. **The function of the counselor is advisory, not disciplinary.**

### Teacher

Your teachers are specialists in the fields in which they teach and are eager to help you get the most out of your classes. The teachers are charged with the responsibility of carrying out the rules and regulations of the Board of Trustees and any additional policies set up by district or campus administration. Teachers will be on campus each school day from 8:05 a.m. - 3:55 p.m. Your teachers are the classroom leaders and they are charged with the responsibility of supervising and directing all students in the pursuit of their education. Parents may schedule a conference with any of their child's teachers by contacting the teacher directly through phone or email.

### Librarian

The librarian will assist you in the orientation and use of the wonderful Folks library. Before, after or during the school day feel free to consult with the librarian in order to more efficiently use the library.

## **Police Officer**

The police officer assists students when needed and helps maintain a safe environment. He/she helps supervise all after school events and helps monitor traffic. The Northside ISD Police Department maintains a 24-hour, anonymous SAFE hotline number at (210) 397-7233.

## **School 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.

# **GENERAL INFORMATION**

## **Attendance Procedures**

Upon return from an absence, a student must present a parent note to the attendance office prior to the beginning of school. The note must be submitted to the Attendance Clerk within 3 school days or the absence will remain unexcused. Following an absence a student must present a parent note that includes:

1. Reason for absence
2. Date of absence(s)
3. Parent signature
4. A working telephone number where parent can be contacted
5. Student name and Student ID

For absences exceeding three consecutive days, a doctor's note is required. A parent may contact the Attendance Clerk in the morning of an absence so as to request work. Student assignments will then be available at 3:00 p.m. the following business day.

**If a student contacts a parent to pick them up due to illness without going through the nurse, this will be considered an unexcused absence.**

**NOTE:** Please refer to the District policies on attendance in the following section of this handbook.

## **Backpack / Book Bags**

Backpacks and /or book bags may be used to carry books, electronics, and supplies to and from school. Students will be allowed to carry them to the classrooms unless a safety issue arises. Backpacks may be stored in the student's locker if needed. Due to the size of our lockers, it is recommended that book bags or backpacks are not oversized. Rolling backpacks are not permitted.

## **Bus Assignments and Transportation**

Students are expected to ride the 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, 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. Parent contact will be made before the end of the school day to verify the changes. Please keep in mind the number of students assigned to a bus will be taken into consideration prior to granting approval. All bus routes and assignments of students are done through the district's transportation offices. Specific questions regarding bus routing should be directed to the NISD Transportation department at (210) 397-0939.

## **Cell phones/ Personal Electronic Devices/BYOD**

Personal Electronic Devices (PED's) must be turned off and not visible during the school day unless you are in a school designated 'electronic device zone' or using the device for 'teacher approved' instructional purposes. Students who violate this policy will be subject to escalating consequences which might include confiscation of the device and require a parent to pick up the device. Students should follow specific guidelines regarding PED's in Section B and Section E of the Student-Parent Handbook which include the Acceptable Use of District's Technology Resources.

## **Corridor Passes**

Students out of any class will be charged with the responsibility of having in their possession a corridor pass signed by a member of the faculty or staff. The date and time leaving and returning to class will be noted on the pass. Students in the halls without a pass will be subject to disciplinary action.

## Delivery of 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 and house keys. For all other items, the student is expected to come by the office BETWEEN classes to retrieve their belongings. 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 be held in the office until the end of the day when students can pick them up to be taken home.

## Detention Halls

1. Held before, after school or during lunch (as scheduled by administration).
2. Students must be on time and bring ample work and supplies.
3. Students will be expected to complete the detention hall assignment and remain quiet during this time.
4. Each student is given written notification of his assigned detention in advance and is expected to inform his parent.
5. Students who miss an assigned detention are subject to further disciplinary action, to include suspension.
6. For excused absences, detentions can be rescheduled with sufficient, written notification from the parent/guardian.
7. ALL school rules will apply in detention hall.
8. Detention is monitored by a staff member at all times.

## Dress Code

The district's dress code is implemented (Section D page 7); 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 the following will be enforced:

- Trench-style coats are not permitted.
- Undergarments are not to be worn as outer garments (for example: plain white T-Shirt, muscle shirts), including pajama tops or bottoms.
- Pants and skirts must be worn at the waist, no loose waistbands or oversized pants are permitted.
- Skirts or dresses must be no more than 4 inches above the knee.
- Girl's leggings are not permitted unless worn with an appropriate length dress/ skirt or long top that reaches fingertip length on the side. (Legging pants must be thick and not see through.)
- Tight fitting exercise pants are prohibited (e.g. bicycle pants/capris, yoga pants, or spandex tights)
- Pants hems should be worn at or below the ankles and not drag the ground.
- Tear-away pants will not be allowed.
- No clothing with inappropriate holes, rips or tears that expose skin are permitted.
- No over-sized clothing, sagging, bagging, and dragging pants. Pant legs secured at the cuff with rubber bands or other devices will not be permitted.
- Shorts are prohibited for boys and girls.
- Capri pants should be no less than four inches below the bottom of the kneecap.
- Wallet chains, dog chains, dog collars, spike and leash type jewelry is prohibited.
- Inappropriate, indecent, suggestive, low cut, excessively tight, or distracting clothing (some examples: sexual slogans, gangs, tobacco, alcohol products drugs or violence) will not be allowed. This includes patches, drawings, or writing on clothing.
- Sleeveless shirts must be 3 fingers or more in width if worn by a female student. Sleeveless shirts are not allowed for boys.
- Girl's chiffon blouses must be worn with a camisole or tank top that measures 3 fingers or more in width.
- Girls tops with exposed midribs, backs, tank tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, strapless, tube top, camisole type or see through are not allowed. Jackets are not allowed to cover dress code violations.
- No Flip-Flops, slides or house shoes/slippers are permitted.
- Body piercing other than ears is not permitted. Ear rings, like all jewelry must be school appropriate, and earlobe spikes and/or spacers are prohibited. No other body piercing jewelry is allowed.
- Tattoos should be covered at all times.
- Body art in any form to include writing on skin, distracting or inappropriate stickers, and glitter is prohibited.
- Hair must be neat and clean. Unconventional colored, multi-colored or spiked, Mohawk or Fohawk hairstyles are not permitted. Hair must not cover the eyes. Insignias or initials, lines, designs etched in the eyebrows, hair or any part of the scalp are not permitted.

Because fads in dress and grooming are subject to sudden and sometimes radical change, a basic rule to remember is that student dress and grooming should not be suggestive, indecent, or unusual as to detract from the classroom environment. 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 not complying with the dress code may be removed from the regular school setting until the parent is able to provide appropriate attire.

We acknowledge that students form close association/friendships. When those associations/friendships are expressed outwardly by the wearing of specific colors or displaying of jewelry items that stand out from the general student body disciplinary action may ensue.

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

## **Graffiti**

Book covers, folders, book bags, school property, body parts, and/or personal property or clothing displaying obscenities, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, controlled substances, gang related materials or any design or inscription that administration determines to be unacceptable are not permitted Dr. John Folks Middle School. These items will be confiscated and documented in the student's discipline record.

## **Guidance and Counseling**

Counseling services are provided to students at Dr. John Folks Middle School. Students and parents may schedule conferences with counselors in the Counseling Office during the day, and parents may telephone for appointments by calling 398-1600. All conferences are kept confidential. Counselors follow their students from grade to grade, providing consistent student services throughout their middle school career. Counseling services are organized along the four following areas.

1. GUIDANCE CURRICULUM – Lessons are provided for all students systematically based on developmental needs of students. Guidance lessons are most often taught in classroom-sized groups of students.
2. INDIVIDUAL PLANNING – Students are assisted in the monitoring and management of their own educational, career, personal and social development. Students are assisted in setting, planning, analyzing, and assessing the progress of their own goals. Particular emphasis is paid to transition times in students' lives (elementary to middle school; middle to high school.) Pre-registration, interpretation of test results, and educational/career planning are other major activities.
3. RESPONSIVE SERVICES – Counselors use their specialized training to help students face difficult issues or complex problems. Counselors are available to counsel with students, consult with parents and educators, and coordinate school and community resources on behalf of students.
4. SYSTEM SUPPORT – Counselors provide indirect services to students by utilizing other programs established to deliver services to students. Some of the programs include the regular education program, career education, testing, special education, and parent involvement.

Students are encouraged to come and see their counselor at any time.

## **Internet 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.

## **Library**

Our library supports the NISD curriculum and provides a wide variety of materials suitable to the interest and abilities of students in their pursuit of knowledge and love of reading. Information literacy skills for life-long learning are taught, practiced, and applied. Home access to the online card catalog is available at <http://webcat.nisd.net/>. In order for each school to maintain a high quality collection, students learn responsibility in caring for library materials.

In order to provide a well-run, student-oriented learning center, the following policies have been established.

1. Library hours will be posted for students. Students must have a morning pass to visit the library before school. Morning passes are available in the library or from any teacher.
2. Students have a limit of two books checked out at any time. Books are checked out for two weeks.
3. All books taken from the library must be charged to a student's account. The student is responsible for care of the library books and for their prompt return. Students must pay for the loss or damage of library books.
4. Students may use the library during the school day with an appropriate pass from their teacher.
5. Students are urged to be respectful in the library so as not to disturb others. Students may be asked to leave if their conduct is in any way disruptive.
7. Chewing gum and candy are not allowed in the library.
8. Computer data bases are available for student use, provided they are used responsibly and with care.

**Come and visit your Folks library often.**

## **Lockers**

Individual locker assignments are made during the first week of school. Lockers should be kept locked; a student should not divulge the combination to another student. Direct all locker problems to the Vice Principal's 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, including your best friend.
4. Locker problems should be reported to the vice principal's secretary.

## Lost and Found

IF YOU FIND ANY ARTICLE OF VALUE, 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, and students should carefully label each article, such as clothing, books, and supplies for easy identification. If you accept an item that is not yours or are in possession of an item that is not yours, you may be subject to disciplinary measures. **Lost and found items collected and not claimed by the end of the six weeks grading period will be donated to charity.**

## Lunch Money

The school does not loan lunch money to students and, as is district policy, the cafeteria manager will not allow students to charge for breakfast or lunches. Additionally, we do not allow commercially prepared food to be delivered to any student other than your own child.

## Lunchroom Procedures

All students will enter the cafeteria in an orderly manner. Students will be allowed to sit wherever they elect, as long as cafeteria rules are followed. Students must raise their hand for permission to leave their assigned seat and duty teachers will dismiss students. Students may not leave the cafeteria before permission is granted. Visitors must sign in and receive a visitor's sticker before coming into the cafeteria. Parents may bring lunch to their children; however, parents may not bring lunch to other students. No celebrations are permitted in the cafeteria (e.g. birthdays). Food and drink items brought in from an outside vendor/source may not be shared with other students. We will only allow parents and/or adult guardians to eat with their child on occasion. These individuals **MUST** be identified on the students Emergency Card in advance.

## National Junior Honor Society (NJHS)

All NISD students who have attended the same Northside school for the equivalent of one semester, and who have demonstrated outstanding scholarship, character, citizenship, and service will be considered for membership. Students may not apply for membership. The Dr. John Folks Middle School faculty council has set a 90 or above average for a student to be considered for membership.

Membership in NJHS is both an honor and a responsibility. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate the qualities listed above. Members who resign or are dismissed are not eligible for membership or its benefits.

## Nuisance Items

The following items are to be left at home:

- Skate boards – Full size or mini
- CD/MP3 Players/iPod - unless they are being used for a legitimate classroom activity and supervised by a teacher.
- Chewing gum
- Electronic games
- Permanent markers
- Water guns, *cascarones* (confetti eggs), or any other toys
- Distasteful reading materials
- Poppers, "stink" bombs, fireworks, matches and lighters
- Items for sale, such as candy or gum that are not part of a school approved fundraiser
- Laser pointers
- Any other item/toy that disrupts the learning environment

These items cause a distraction from the school's academic atmosphere and can be easily lost or stolen. **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.

## Offices

The offices of the principal, vice-principal, and counselors are open from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. each school day. All school business should be transacted during these hours. Appointments are strongly encouraged.

## PTA

All parents and teachers have an opportunity to participate in and become members of the Parent-Teacher Association. The PTA plans parent receptions, helps organize fund raisers, assists the school in organizing events, helps in the school setting, etc. Meetings will be held periodically and will be advertised through flyers sent home, on the marquee or using the school messenger system. Parent volunteers are welcome and encouraged at Dr. John Folks Middle School. A district background check is required and available online prior to volunteering.

## Parent Pick-up Guidelines

We understand that sometimes parents need to pick students up before dismissal time. However, for safety reasons and possible loss of instructional time, we will not send for a student until the parent arrives and we have checked identification. Due to high volume activity in the Main Office, students will not be called out of class the last 20 minutes before dismissal. For the safety of all children, parents are asked to have ready their photo identification when asking to pick up their child.

A large number of our students are picked up or dropped off by their parents. There are times when traffic may get congested between the hours of 8:10 – 8:30 a.m. and 3:40 – 3:55 p.m. For the safety of our students who walk to and from school, our community and our staff, please adhere to the parking lot markings and safety cones that are placed in specific locations. Most of our students have transportation services available to them from the district. We encourage students to take advantage of this service when possible.

## **Physical Education**

All students are required to take physical education. Students are required to dress out during physical education classes. Any student not able to dress out and participate for a prolonged period of time because of injury or illness must have a written excuse from a doctor stating the nature of the injury or illness along with the time span of inactivity.

## **Public Displays of Affection**

Embracing or kissing is not an acceptable practice on the school campus. There is a time and place for everything and this type of conduct is not condoned in the school environment. This includes practices such as excessive petting, caressing or placing hands on one another in an affectionate manner. Lack of cooperation regarding this policy may result in disciplinary action.

## **Regular Class Periods**

Students will be expected to attend all regularly scheduled classes assigned to them. Students will be expected to bring all of the necessary materials to class each day and will be expected to participate in all class activities and complete all assigned school work. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a proper manner and follow all classroom regulations.

## **Schedule Change**

Schedules will not be changed unless extenuating circumstances exist. A student's schedule will not be changed because of low grades or individual differences or disagreements. Parents and students are encouraged to address all concerns with individual teachers first and then may contact a school counselor and/or Academic Dean. Requests to change teachers will not ordinarily be granted except in cases where the change will assist in equalizing the teacher classroom size.

## **School Day**

The official school day begins at **8:30 a.m.** and ends at **3:40 p.m.**

The doors will be opened to all students beginning at 7:30 a.m. when the first campus staff begins their duty assignments. The cafeteria will begin serving breakfast at this time. Students will wait in assigned grade-level areas until they are allowed to report to their first period at 8:20 a.m.

## **Shadowing**

"Shadowing" or following their child through the school day, gives parents an opportunity to observe their children during an ordinary school day and can help open dialogue between parents and children about school.

Parents are welcome to "shadow," but in order to maximize the benefits of shadowing, we request that parents adhere to the following guidelines:

1. As a courtesy, inform your child's teachers and administration at least 24 hours in advance of your intentions to shadow;
2. Register in the Main Office, secure a visitor's pass, and review shadowing guidelines;
3. Shadowing is not a time for parent/teacher conferences. If you desire a conference, please make prior arrangements with your child's teachers;
4. To preserve the academic environment, please do not take part in the lesson unless invited to do so by the teacher.
5. Do not visit with your child or other students during class time or in the hallways.

## **Stallions Code**

Dr. John Folks Middle School Stallions will:

1. Show respect for self, others and property.
2. Be present, punctual, prepared and attentive to the assigned task.
3. Exhibit non-disruptive behaviors.
4. Take responsibility for their actions.
5. Follow student handbook policies.

## **Student Recognition**

Dr. John Folks Middle School strives to recognize students who display good behavior and academic excellence. Students may be recognized at the end of each six-weeks grading period as well as at the end of the school year.

## **Student Activity Programs**

The aim of our student activity programs is to provide students an opportunity to participate in worthwhile experiences which normally will not be found in regular class-work.

The following criteria apply to all activities in our programs:

1. The organization must be sanctioned by the Principal.
2. The organization must be composed entirely of Folks Middle School students and must have a faculty advisor.
3. Membership in clubs is open to all qualified students.
4. Club constitutions may limit membership by grade averages, conduct, and special activities.
5. Supply fees may be charged.
6. Club officers will be elected using the criteria set forth in the club constitution.

7. Club sponsors may place a time limit on the enrollment in each club.
8. Club meetings will be coordinated through the vice principal and/or the club sponsor.
9. Field trips and fund raising activities will be coordinated through the Vice Principals' office.

## **Tardies**

The efficient student is not tardy. 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. Teachers are not required to allow the student consideration for any unexcused tardies. Should a student be detained by a teacher, he/she should secure a note from that teacher and present it to the teacher in charge of the class he/she is entering. For such an occurrence, the student will not be charged with an unexcused tardy.

### **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. Students who arrive late on the campus may be subject to an administrative consequence. Repeat offenders will be reported to truancy court.

### **3. Excessive Tardies**

Students with excessive tardies will be referred to the administrator for disciplinary action. Repeat offenders will be reported to truancy court.

## **Telephone Calls (front office)**

The telephone in the office is for school business and emergencies. The office telephone is not for general use by students. A student will not be called from class to answer the telephone or make calls. In addition, students are not to make phone calls from their teacher's classroom during the school day. In extreme emergencies or unforeseen circumstances (e.g. car break down, doctor's appointment cancelled, etc.) a message will be taken by the office staff and delivered to the students. **Arrangements of scheduled appointments and rides home from school activities should be made before the student comes to school.**

## **Tutoring**

Students are expected to complete assignments and turn them in on time. If a student chooses not to complete assignments in class or at home, a teacher may assign the student to Tutoring.

## **Visitors**

Our staff encourages visits from parents and patrons. We welcome you. All parents and visitors are required to register in the Main Office with the secretary and 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 must receive a Visitor's Pass. Older siblings are not allowed to visit unless accompanied by a parent. For classroom visitation policy, see **Section B**.

## **Withdrawal from School**

The student should bring a written statement from his/her parents or his/her guardian requesting withdrawal. This written statement should be taken to the attendance office on the morning of the day he/she is to check out of school. The student will receive a withdrawal form to be taken to each of his/her teachers, to the counselor, and to the librarian for signature. Textbooks and all other school material assigned to the student are to be turned in to the front office secretary. Each teacher will list his/her grade for that particular six (6) weeks period up to the time of withdrawal. The librarian must indicate that the student's library record is clear. In addition, before withdrawal is completed, all other records must be cleared. When all necessary information has been secured, the student should return the withdrawal form to the attendance office for final signatures by school administrators. One copy will be given to the student, and the other will be retained by the school.