

Horizon Montessori Public Schools



Student – Parent Handbook

2018-2019

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Student – Parent Handbook

Dear Students and Families,

We hope you find the Horizon Montessori Public School Student Handbook a useful reference document. We have developed it to provide information about the practices and policies in our district that are important for our parents and students to understand.

You should find answers to questions ranging from issues related to homework. Most topics are listed alphabetically in Section II “Important Information for Elementary School.” The last section of the guide includes a copy of our current Elementary Code of Conduct.

Please read this document carefully. Our expectation is you will be familiar with its contents. If you still have unanswered questions, please feel free to contact the elementary school office as a first step.

Sincerely,

Alim U. Ansari,
Superintendent of Schools

Horizon Montessori Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following District staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these requirements:

Title IX/Section 504

Stephanie

Hernandez

(956) 969-3092

PARENT CONSENT TO ACCOUNTABILITY

I understand and consent to the responsibilities outlined in the HMPS Student Parent Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. I also understand and agree that my child shall be held accountable for the behavior and consequences outlined in the Student Parent Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct at school and school-sponsored activities, including school-sponsored travel and any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location. I understand that any student who violates the rules in the Student Parent Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. I am also aware that the use of tobacco products by any individual is prohibited on all District property.

Regarding student records, federal law requires that 'directory information' on my child be released by the District to anyone who requests it unless I object in writing to the release of any or all of this information. This objection must be filed within ten school days of the time this handbook was given to the student. Directory information ordinarily includes the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended.

In exercising my right to limit release of this information, I have marked through the items of directory information listed above that I wish the District to withhold about my child.

Student's Last Name, First Name (Printed) Signature of Parent (Required by law) Date
ID#

PARENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOKS

This form indicates that the parent named below has received a copy of the 2018-2019 Horizon Montessori Public Schools Student/Parent Handbook and Student Code of Conduct.

Parent's Last Name (Printed)

Parent's First Name (Printed)

School

Grade

Date

Parent Signature

It is the policy of HMPS not to discriminate on the basis of sex, age, handicap, religion, race, color, or national origin in its educational programs.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This booklet is written for our students and their families. It contains required and useful information.

Because it cannot be as personal as we would like, we address students not directly as "you" but rather

as "the student," "students," or "children." Also, the term "the student's parent" may refer to the

parent, legal guardian, or other person who has responsibility for the student. Both students and

parents need to be familiar with the District's Student Code of Conduct. It is intended to promote school

safety and an atmosphere conducive for learning.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware the handbook is updated every year while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout.

Changes in policy that affect portions of this Handbook will be made available to students and parents

through newsletters, web pages, and other communications. Handbooks will be re-issued to students

and families whenever they are updated.

SCHOOL DISTRICT VISION, MISSION, AND GOALS

The **vision** of Horizon Montessori Public Schools is to provide "Tomorrow's Education Today" through:

- ❖ Mission Possible, Everybody Can Learn
- ❖ School, Homes and Community Working Together
- ❖ Education through Space-Age Technology

Horizon Montessori Public Schools, maximizes the education potential and the experience of continuous learning by every student within the school and community environment. It includes instruction in all forms of human potential: aesthetic, ethical, intellectual physical and technological. With this concept of education in mind, HMPS assumes the responsibility for providing a well-organized, flexible and varied program of classroom and out-of-classroom activities. Since students differ in interests, attitude and abilities, and parents have various aspirations for their children; the learning process needs to allow for the personal growth of individuals and families. Our schools empower students to become competent, confident, productive, and responsible young adults who will possess the competencies, skills and attitude to succeed in an educational environment and in life as a member of the workforce for the twenty-first century.

The **mission** of Horizon Montessori Public Schools is to provide the highest quality education possible to all students. To the full extent of their individual abilities, students will be provided the opportunity to develop the capability to think logically, independently, and creatively, and to communicate effectively. The district will promote the worth and dignity of each individual child to prepare each child to become a productive and responsible member of society.

Goal One: Instruction

We will build Horizon Montessori Public Schools into an exemplary district characterized by a cohesive and coordinated academic system with a set of clearly defined performance based outcomes for all students. Our work as a learning community will:

- Emphasize the mastery of knowledge, strategies and skills
- Develop in our students the habits of thinking, cooperation, and self-discipline
- Focus on results
- Ensure excellence and equity of opportunity
- Value diversity
- Instill respectfulness and responsibility

Goal Two: Community Participation

We will actively seek the input and involvement of staff, parents, students, and the community when making the educational decisions necessary to ensure every student’s success.

Goal Three: Communication

We shall communicate to the public, as effectively as possible, our progress, successes, and plans for the implementation of our goals.

Goal Four: Finance

We will develop annual operating and capital financial plans to implement the objectives necessary to achieve our goals and meet our contractual obligations in a manner that is fiscally responsible to our community.

Goal Five: Long-Range Planning

We will develop, communicate, and implement long range educational and facilities plans based on student needs, program needs, equity and excellence, and fiscal responsibility.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In light of the diversity of social, economic and cultural backgrounds of our student population, it is the

responsibility of Horizon Montessori Public Schools to:

- Provide each student the opportunity to obtain an education according to his/her needs and abilities.
- Promote mutual support for the child's education among school staff, parents, and community
- Provide an environment in which each student exerting his/her best effort can develop at his/her own rate physically, mentally, emotionally, aesthetically and socially.
- Provide a school environment that fosters self-respect, respect for others and favorable recognition of individual and cultural differences.
- Provide each child, to the best of his/her ability; with the basic skills in reading, communication, and computation, as well as skills in how to learn, how to solve problems and how to organize information in order to use it.
- Provide students the opportunity to learn additional skills appropriate to the individual to prepare them for the future; to enable them to make responsible decisions, work constructively with others, develop lifelong health habits, function effectively as a good citizen, continue to learn and qualify for higher education or employment.
- Provide an environment, which fosters creativity, encourages imagination, exploration, and innovation.
- Provide each student an opportunity to strive for and experience success in his/her endeavors.
- Promote continuing improvement of service to students through staff development, in-service training, sharing of new ideas, analysis and evaluation of programs, goals and achievements.

We believe school, staff, parents, and the community share equally in the responsibility for maximum student growth.

Principal's Pledge:

- Support and motivate students and teachers to strive for excellence in all educational efforts
- Attend school from Monday through Friday and other days as requested by our district administrators
- Be present when students, parents, or teachers need me

- To strive for excellence in every educational effort by ensuring we implement rigorous curricula and utilize best practices in instructional strategies
- Ensure our campus is a safe and nurturing learning environment
- To build positive and rewarding relationships between students, parents, teachers, and the community.
- Follow all professional standards and model proper dress and behavior

Teacher's Pledge:

- Support and motivate students to strive for excellence in all educational efforts
- Attend school from Monday through Friday and other days as requested by our district or campus administrators
- To strive for excellence in every educational effort by implementing rigorous curricula, utilizing best practices in instructional strategies, and helping students connect what they are learning in class to the real world
- Check homework daily, prepare relevant and complete lessons, and maximize class-time
- Ensure our classroom is a safe and nurturing learning environment
- To build positive and rewarding relationships with my students and their parents
- Follow all professional standards and model proper dress and behavior

Parent's Pledge:

- Assist and encourage my child to always try her or his best when completing schoolwork
 - Encourage my child to speak with the teacher when help is needed
 - Ensure that my child arrives at school on time from Monday through Friday and other days as recommended by the teacher or campus principal
 - Ask my child about school on a daily basis, ensure my child does schoolwork daily, read with my child, help my child connect what she or he is learning to the real world, review my child's planner daily, and sign and return notices from the teacher or campus
 - Ensure my child follows the uniform dress code and understands and uses acceptable behavior
 - To respect my child and school personnel and meet with my child's teacher when I have questions, concerns, or comments
 - To participate in school-wide activities or programs and be available for my child, the teacher, or campus administrator
- Student's Pledge:**
- To always put in my best effort, complete my work, ask questions, and make sure I can explain what I am learning
 - Apply what I am learning in class to what I see and do every day
 - Arrive at school on time and be in school every day from Monday through Friday and other days if they are needed
 - To pay attention and participate in class, complete my homework, talk to my teacher if I have questions or need help

- Follow the uniform dress code, behave properly, be polite, respect others, and respect myself
- Share what I am learning with my parents, show them my planner, and give them notices sent by my teacher or the school
- Attend parent-teacher conferences and participate in school projects

(Student signature)

(Parent signature)

DIRECTORY AND ADMINISTRATORS

**CENTRAL OFFICE
2402 E. Business 83
Weslaco, TX 78596
(956) 969-3092 Office
(956) 969-8614 Fax**

Mr. Alim U. Ansari, Superintendent

**Horizon Montessori I
221 N. Main St.
McAllen, TX 78501
956-668-1400
956-668-1404 (fax)**

Mr. Miguel Castillo, Principal

**Horizon Middle School
320 N. Main St.
McAllen, TX 78501
956-668-1400
956-668-1404 (fax)**

Mr. Miguel Castillo, Principal

**Horizon Montessori II
1222 W. Sugarcane Drive
Weslaco, TX 78596
956-969-0044
956-969-0065 (fax)**

Ms. Janis Montemayor, Principal

**Horizon Middle School
1223 W. Sugarcane Drive
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956-969-0044
956-969-0065 (fax)**

Ms. Janis Montemayor, Principal

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2802 S. 77 Sunshine Strip
Harlingen, TX 78550
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956-423-8207 (fax)**

Ms. Annette Salazar, Principal

PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2018-2019. For this year to be successful for your child, we must all work together: students, parents, teachers, and other school staff members. This student handbook is designed to help us do this:

The HMPS Handbook contains information that both students and parents are likely to need during the school year. The handbook contains the following:

- Important information all parents will need about assisting their child and responding to school-related issues;
- General information regarding school operations and requirements regarding dress code, safety procedures, and fees that may be charged.

Please be aware that the term “the student’s parent” is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Both students and parents must be familiar with the HMPS Student Code of Conduct, required by state law and intended to promote school safety and atmosphere for learning. The document may be found as an attachment to this handbook or as a separate document sent home to parents and posted in the campus library.

The student handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy and Student Code of Conduct. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy that affect student handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters and other communications.

In case of conflict between Board policy or the Student Code of Conduct and any provisions of student handbooks, the provisions of Board policy or the Student Code of Conduct that were most recently adopted by the Board are to be followed.

We strongly recommend that parents review the entire handbook with their children and keep it as a reference during this school year. If you or your child has questions about any of the

material in this handbook, please contact a teacher or the principal. Also, please complete and return the **parental acknowledgment** and **consent form** so that we have a record of your choices. [See **Protection of Students Rights**]

In addition, under TEC§ 12.111 (a) (6), Horizon Montessori Public Schools is authorized to exclude a student with a document history of criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems under TEC Chapter 37, Subchapter A.

We trust that you will find this handbook to be of great benefit to both you and your children as we work together to provide the best education.

Nondiscrimination

HMPS does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following District staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex:
[Stephanie Hernandez \(956\) 969-3092](#)
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability:
[Stephanie Hernandez \(956\) 969-3092](#)

Services for the Homeless and for Title I Participants

Other designated staff you may need to contact include:

- Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, who coordinates services for homeless students:
[Stephanie Hernandez \(956\) 969-3092](#)
- Parental Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs: [Stephanie Hernandez \(956\) 969-3092](#)
- Parents of students with learning difficulties or who may need special education services may request an evaluation at any time. For more information, see Special Programs section and contact [Stephanie Hernandez \(956\) 969-3092](#).

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU HAVE A CONCERN

If a parent/guardian has a question or concern regarding their child's progress or well being within the school program, we urge you to follow the steps outlined below.

Parent concerns about the teaching staff should be referred first to the teacher. If your concern is not addressed to your satisfaction, then please follow the procedure outlined below:

Step 1: Teacher

As soon as you have a concern, send a note, call the teacher, or e-mail the teacher during school hours. Leave your name, phone number and time you can be reached. Please also follow this procedure for concerns about special programs and/or services. Teachers wish to hear more, not less, from parents. The majority of misunderstandings can be resolved with the teacher.

Step 2: Assistant Principal (If applicable)

If the issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction, send a note, e-mail, or call the Assistant Principal.

Step 3: Principal

If the issue has still not been resolved to your satisfaction, send a note, e-mail, or call the Principal.

Step 4: Central Office

If necessary, the principal will direct you to staff at Horizon Montessori Public Schools. The campus office or the Superintendent's office can provide information regarding specific processes for the following complaints: discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual abuse or sexual harassment of a student, or loss of credit on the basis of attendance.

Step 5: Superintendent and Board of Education

After appropriate discussion with Central Office personnel, decisions may be appealed first to the Superintendent and ultimately to the Board of Education. Any appeal to the Board should be in writing and signed.

Your concerns may not always be related to a teacher. Some examples of areas of concern, staff responsibilities and sequential personnel for notification are shown below:

Teacher	Nurse	PEIMS	Assistant Principal	Principal
Adjustment Issues Academic Issues Classroom Policies Homework	Health Records Health Records Immunizations Physicals	Attendance Records	Discipline Testing Information	Board Policies & Regulations

Admission Policy

The admission policy of Horizon Montessori Schools and Horizon Middle Schools is based on the educational concepts of Dr. Maria Montessori. We strive to serve a broad range of socioeconomic, religious, cultural, racial, and ability groups. As often as possible, the ages and sexes of children are evenly distributed in each classroom.

Admission policies, procedures, curriculum, and faculty at Horizon Montessori Public Schools have been approved by the State of Texas Board of Education. HMPS is accredited by The Texas Education Agency, and is an affiliate member of The Texas Charter School Association and the American Montessori Society.

Pre-Kindergarten

I. CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY

Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten Program Ages 3 - 4

- Children must be 3 years old on or before September 1st
- If a child has had previous school experience, copies of transcripts and/or a completed HMPS recommendation form will be required.

To be eligible for enrollment in a prekindergarten class, a child must be at least three years of age and:

- Is unable to speak and comprehend the English language; or
- Is educationally disadvantaged; or
- Is homeless, as defined by 42 U.S.C. Section 1143a, regardless of the residence of the child, of either parent of the child, or of the child’s guardian or other person having lawful control of the child; or

- Is the child of an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who is ordered to active duty by proper authority; or
- Is the child of a member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who was injured or killed while serving on active duty; or
- Is or ever has been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services following an adversary hearing held as provided by Section 262.201, Family Code.

Elementary Program

- Children entering the elementary program must be 5 years old on or before September 1 and meet all requirements for placement.
- Official records and/or recommendation forms completed by the present school are required prior to acceptance to the program.

Middle School Program

- Official records and/or recommendation forms completed by the present school are required prior to acceptance to the program.
- Children who turn 14 on or before September 1st will be considered for Middle School.

II. ADDITIONAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS (for all levels)

- All new parents meet with the Head of School, Administrator, or Registrar.

IV. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- Requests for enrollment information are taken during the enrollment period.
- An information packet consisting of our brochure that states the philosophy and Objectives of a Montessori education and Horizon Montessori Schools and Horizon Middle Schools, and a current tuition schedule, will be included.
- A tour by prospective parents is encouraged by appointment only.
- At the end of the tour the Registrar will review the registration process and at that time you may submit your application and registration forms

V. ENROLLMENT

- Enrollment of students is made on a first come, first served basis given the following priority:

- Staff, siblings and children from other Horizon Montessori schools are given priority over new students.
- The number of children who can be accommodated depends on Montessori guidelines and state regulations. When space is unavailable at the time of application, children will be placed on the waiting list.
- As soon as a space becomes available, the Registrar will contact the parent with regard to a starting date.

VI. INITIAL CLASS PLACEMENT

- All class placements are made by the campus administrator.
- Horizon Montessori Schools and Horizon Middle Schools reserves the right to place children in order to maintain balanced classes.

We welcome all students regardless of race, religion, national origin, disability, or gender.

Attendance

Attendance Requirements in Texas Schools

Parents please help us in ensuring that your child is successful in school by having him/her present and on time. Regular school attendance is important to the education process. Three tardies will count as one day of absence. Students are to be in their seat, ready to learn at 8:00 a.m., the door opens at 7:15 a.m. and children may go to the gym/cafeteria and wait until 7:30 a.m. to enter the grade level. Arriving earlier than 7:55 a.m. will ensure your child is ready for class on time.

The arrival time might vary by campus. Please confirm arrival time with your campus.

Compulsory Attendance

Good attendance is important for many reasons. Your child receives the maximum benefit of education by being in school every day, and numerous studies show a strong link between academic performance and consistent attendance. Because attendance is so critical for the quality of your child's education, Texas has a Compulsory Attendance Law.

Attendance

Students between the ages of 3 and 14 years of age attend school each day during the instructional year unless otherwise legally exempted or excused. A student enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten must attend school and the compulsory attendance state law shall be applied. *Education Code 25.085(c)* The parent/guardian commits an offense of criminal negligence under *TEC 25.093* if voluntary absences for 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period or three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period from school.

Attendance Monitoring in order to promote Student Success

The school will keep track of all absences. Attendance concerns will be addressed in the following manner:

1. PEIMS Clerk/Community Officer attempts to contact the parent daily on absences and keeps a log of contacts.
2. **After 5** absences, a note is sent home notifying the parent.
3. **After 8** absences, an attendance meeting is held with a principal.
4. **After 10** absences, an attendance meeting will be held with Attendance/Truancy Committee and the student/parent will be placed in an Attendance Contract. The contract will be monitored by using a Student Daily Attendance Checklist. The checklist will be signed by all teachers.
5. **After 16** unexcused absences the student will be recommended for withdrawal and the resident district will be notified. Parent conference will be required.

At the end of the school year, if a student has more than 16 absences, a GPC committee must meet to determine if the student can receive credit for the school year. The attendance review committee consists of the homeroom teacher, parent/guardian, and a principal.

Note: By State mandate ALL absences will be documented on the student's report card. Absences will exclude the student from qualifying for perfect attendance, whether they are excused or unexcused.

A student who fails to attend school for 90% of the days school is offered (161 days) cannot receive credit for the class (TEC 25.092). All absences, for the excused and unexcused, are counted for the purpose of determining attendance for credit/promotion and school year. An attendance review committee must meet to determine if the student can receive credit. School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action which may include court action. **Truancy (Education Code 25.093) may also result in assessment of penalty by a court of law.**

Reasons

There are two types of absences - excused and unexcused . Excused absences are given for the following reasons:

- Required screening, diagnosis, and treatment for medical-eligible students
- A documented health care appointment if the student begins classes or returns to school on the same date as the appointment

- A temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the principal, superintendent, including personal illness; or death in the immediate family
- A juvenile court proceeding documented by a probation officer
- Any absences required by state or local welfare authorities
- Family emergency, unforeseen or unavoidable instance requiring attention
- An extracurricular activity subject to board approval
- Other absences which the principal judges as an emergency beyond the control of the student or parent

Any time a student is absent and is seen by a health care professional, a note from the health care professional is always in the best interest of the student so the absence can be specified as excused. Failure to bring a note will result in an unexcused absence.

Unexcused absences include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Any other absence not listed above. This includes tardies.

Students must bring a note from the parent/guardian for any of these reasons. This note must include the child's name, teacher's name, reason for absence, and parent/guardian signature. Any time your child is going to be absent, please contact the school's front office to notify the school of this absence.

Tardy Policy

As we are all aware, excessive tardies policy typically lead to excessive absences as well as a significant amount of lost instructional time. Therefore, in an effort to encourage all students to arrive on time, consequences will be implemented to discourage late arrivals.

The tardy policy will be as follows:

- 1st- Warning
- 2nd-Parent Phone Call
- **3rd- Parent Letter (3 Tardies will equal to an absence)**
- 4th- 30 minute after school detention/Saturday (Per Campus)
- 5th- Meeting with the Attendance/Truancy Committee (the parent will receive a letter regarding the meeting)

Tardies are considered a minor offense according to the STET Student/Parent Handbook. All consequences listed for tardies are considered a minimum consequence, however, serious and/or repeated violations may result in a more severe consequence or referral to the next level.

In order to promote great attendance and student achievement; tardies will count against the Perfect Attendance Award each six weeks. Please help in getting your child to school on time. Together, we can make a difference. Thank You Parents for ensuring that your child receives the maximum instruction allocated for them during the school day.

Truancy Procedures

Truancy Prevention Measures

The Texas Education Code (25.0915) requires truancy prevention measures to be conducted at the school before a referral to a court can be made, at which times a statement from the school must accompany the referral documenting the interventions and stating that the interventions did not improve the student's attendance. The truancy prevention measures must address the student's conduct related to truancy in the school setting, minimize absences and the need for referrals to juvenile court, and minimize filing complaints for failure to attend school. Campus structures apart from the roles and responsibilities of the teacher, administration and attendance personnel, and many schools also include campus committees when developing a comprehensive approach to truancy prevention.

Elementary

The campus Attendance Committee, which hears promotion, appeals cases for absences in excess of 16 absence to develop and advice on individual cases of truancy. A regular meeting between the campus administration and attendance office personnel should include on the agenda a review of :

- Faculty attendance reporting
- Attendance records and data management
- Students with excessive absences
- Student contact, communications, and conferences
- Monitoring of interventions and contracts (as needed with willing parents)
- Issuance of warning letters
- Communications with District Attendance/Truancy Caseworker
- Other campus/district support: Attendance Committee, Counseling

Principal

- Establish an attendance management system including truancy prevention measures.
- Design and implement a process for identifying and counseling students with attendance problems.
- Communicate with parents about student attendance problems.
- Chair the statutorily required School Attendance Committee and facilitate the collection of documentation.
- Develop and implement a system to ensure that parents are notified when a student returns from an absence without an excuse or has been absent for three or more days.

- Develop an attendance referral system for appropriate students, in accordance with district guidelines, which may include a process for teachers to notify parents about absences.
- Review the campus reports for accuracy and completeness. Compare the PEIMS data to locally produced reports for reasonableness and accuracy.

Campus Attendance Committee

The School Attendance Committee has responsibility for reviewing absences of students who have absences in excess of 10 from class according to the HMPS Attendance Policy. After consulting with the teacher, the committee may grant credit if the absences are due to extenuating circumstances, and upon completion of any stipulations made by the committee. The School Attendance Committee shall be appointed by the principal and a majority of the members must be faculty members. The Campus Attendance Committee does not excuse absences nor change the attendance record. A committee determination to grant credit or promotion due to extenuating circumstances does not change the attendance record of the student. An over-ride is initiated to grant the credit or promotion, while the attendance record remains unchanged. The determination of a campus attendance committee can also recommend that the student be sent back to home district when all steps have been taken to reach a reasonable solution for the student, as per the Student-Parent Handbook.

Letter to Parent/Letter to Home District

At this point, HMPS had done their due diligence to try and work with the family to promote a better attendance record for the student. A letter will be drafted and sent to central office for review by the Attendance Officer (Parent Liaisons). Once the paperwork has been reviewed and approved by attendance officer, they will sign and send back to the Principal to send to parent by certified mail. Another letter will be sent to the home district notifying them that we have withdrawn the student and the date of the event. The parent will have 3 days to enroll the student in the home district.

Excessive Absence Violation Letter to Parents

Date:

Student Name:

Student ID:

School: Horizon Montessori

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that _____ will be withdrawn from Horizon Montessori ____effective _____.

The Student/Parent handbook states:

A student who fails to attend school for 90% of the days offered cannot receive credit for the class, (The Texas Education Code 25.092). The school as stated in the handbook can withdraw the student and send them back to home district due to attendance issues.

We will notify home district _____ of your children's status and that they will be returning to their campus. By law, you have three days to enroll them into the district.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact us and we will be glad to help.

Principal

Attendance Officer

**Horizon Montessori Public Schools
Truancy Review Committee**

Date: _____

School Year: _____

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____ Campus: _____

Medical Absences: + Non-Medical Absences: = Total Absences

Tardies: /3= Total Absences

Results of Review:

Committee Recommendations:

1. Due to excessive tardies, student will not be allowed to attend:

- End of year field trips/events
- Graduation (if applicable)
- Other _____

2. Due to excessive excused or unexcused absences (check one or more) the committee

- Recommend summer school
- Recommend withdrawal
- Recommend retention (follow GPC process at the campus) *TEC Code- 25.092
- Recommend skip one school year before he/she re-enroll in the district.
- Other _____

Truancy Officer Signature Date

Principal's Signature Date

Superintendent or Authorized Designee Signature Date

*Must be completed 30 days before last day of school or by:

Early Dismissals

Parent/Guardian, or otherwise authorized person, must come to the office to sign out a student for early dismissal. Any person picking up a student must fill out an Early Dismissal form.

Notes are required for early dismissal. For example, if the student has an appointment, an appointment card should be presented or a doctor's excuse should be brought the next day (even if the appointment is for a parent or a sibling).

Makeup Work

A student will be permitted to make up tests, assignments, and turn in projects due in any class missed due to an absence. The parent or student will be responsible for obtaining the makeup work. Upon return, the student is responsible for completing the makeup work within three school days.

A student, who does not makeup work within the time allotted, will receive a grade of zero for the assignment(s).

Withdrawing A Student

A student under 14 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent/guardian. The school requests notice from the parent/guardian at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. A withdrawal form may be obtained by the parent/guardian from the office. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the parent/guardian and a copy will be placed in the student's permanent record.

A student who is asked to leave an HMPS school cannot transfer to another HMPS school.

CAFETERIA SERVICES

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers to students nutritionally balanced meals daily. The District follows guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day.

Overview of the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy/Elementary Schools

- Portion size restrictions on chips, certain snacks and sweets, milk and fruit drinks.
- Fruits and vegetables should be offered daily on all points of service.
- Must offer 2 percent, 1 percent or skim milk at all points where milk is served.

Breakfast and Lunch Payments:

- The District will provide free breakfast and lunch for all students.
- If a student wishes to purchase an additional meal the cost is \$3.25

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

Good communication between home and school is essential for the student to make the most of the educational opportunities provided to him/her. School communication includes information documents, progress reports, report cards, letters, homework assignments, telephone calls, electronic notifications and parent/teacher/student conferences. Any parent who wishes to schedule a conference may do so by calling the school's office for an appointment.

All communications will be assessed accordingly to student confidentiality and rights.
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
<https://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER

It is important that the school maintain an up-to-date correct address/telephone record for your child in case of an emergency or other administrative reasons. If you have a change of address or telephone number, please notify school personnel immediately.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

COMPUTER RESOURCES / ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

To prepare students for an increasingly computerized society, the District has made a substantial investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these resources; violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

STUDENT AGREEMENT FOR ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

You are being given access to the District's electronic communications system. Through this system, you will be able to communicate with other schools, colleges, organizations, and people

around the world through the Internet and other electronic information systems/networks. You will have access to websites, databases, libraries, and computer services all over the world.

With this educational opportunity comes responsibility. It is important that you read the District policy, administrative regulations, and agreement form and ask questions if you need help understanding them. Inappropriate system use will result in the loss of the privilege to use this educational tool.

Please note that the Internet is a network of many types of communication and information networks. It is possible that you may run across material you (or your parents) might find objectionable. While District will take reasonable steps to restrict access to such material, it is not possible to absolutely prevent such access. It will be your responsibility to follow rules for appropriate use.

RULES FOR APPROPRIATE USE

- Downloading of video or audio streams for personal use is strictly prohibited. Video or audio streams may be downloaded for educational and school business use only.
- You will be held responsible at all times for proper use and the District may suspend or revoke your access if you violate the rules.
- The Internet is to be used mainly for identified educational purpose.

INNAPROPRIATE USES

- Using the system for any illegal purpose.
- Posting personal information about yourself or others (such as addresses and phone numbers).
- Downloading or using copyrighted information without permission from the copyright holder.
- Posting messages or accessing materials that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal.
- Wasting school resources through the improper use of the computer system.
- Gaining unauthorized access to restricted information or resources.

CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE USE

- Suspension of access to the system;
- Revocation of the computer system; or
- Other disciplinary or legal action, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and applicable laws.

The student agreement must be renewed each academic year.

I understand that my computer use is not private and that the District will monitor my activity on this system. I have read the District's electronic communications system policy and administrative regulations and agree to abide by their provisions. I understand that violation of these provisions may result in suspension or revocation of system access.

Student's Signature: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

PARENT OR GUARDIAN

_____ I do not give permission for my child to participate in the District's electronic communications system.

I have read the District's electronic communications system policy and administrative regulations. In consideration for the privilege of my child using the District's electronic communications system, and in consideration for having access to the public networks. I hereby release the District, its operators, and any institutions with which they are affiliated from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the system, including, without limitation, the type of damage identified in the District's policy and administrative regulations.

_____ I give permission to my child to participate in the District's electronic communications system and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Home Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE

Students are expected to behave in a responsible manner, demonstrating courtesy and respect for the rights of other students and District staff. Student cooperation and respect for the property of others, including District property and facilities is essential to the maintenance of facilities, safety, order, and discipline.

Attending all classes regularly and on time, being prepared for each class, and taking appropriate materials and assignments to class is expected of all students. Students are to be well-groomed and dressed appropriately each day.

As required by law, the District has developed a Student Code of Conduct that establishes behavior standards both on and off campus and consequences for failure to abide by the standards. Students need to be familiar with the standards set forth in the Student Code of Conduct in order to avoid violations and subsequent consequences.

To achieve the best possible learning environment for all students, the student Code of Conduct and other campus rules of behavior will apply whenever the interest of the District is involved,

on or off school grounds, in conjunction with or independent of classes and school-sponsored activities. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

School rules apply to school events to which a student brings a guest. Guests are expected to observe the same rules as students attending the event, and the person inviting the guest will share responsibility for the conduct of the guest. All visitors and guests must sign in at the front office.

Infractions and Consequences

Purpose: To have fair and consistent consequences for infractions of school rules and policies.

Procedures: Every teacher and administrator will be required to post and follow the infraction and consequence list. In addition to the level of infraction, the student’s prior conduct and behavior will be weighed by the administrator administering the consequences.

Consequences for Level I infractions are administered by campus personnel as specified. Consequences for Level II-V infractions can only be administered by the Principal or Asst. Principal (if applicable)

Campus security may become involved in infractions which are indicated by an asterisk (*).

<u>LEVEL I INFRACTION</u>	<u>CONSEQUENCE</u>
Excessive talking	<i>Any Campus Personnel</i>
Off-task behavior	1. Verbal and/or Documented warning
Littering	
Gum chewing	<i>Classroom Teacher</i>
No book/Materials	2. Student/teacher conference
Eating/Drinking in class	3. Calling parent/guardian
Name calling	4. Lunch detention
Sleeping in class	5. Documented parent/teacher conference
Dress Code Violation (if correctable immediately)	6. Repetition of infractions – upgrade to Level II
Horse playing	Written documentation will be provided to the
Disturbing Class	Campus principal at the time of the incident
	<i>*Note: Any of the above may be used as consequence for addressing infractions</i>

Before going to Level II, a parent conference/contact must be held by the teacher and it must be documented.

<u>LEVEL II INFRACTION</u>	<u>CONSEQUENCE</u>
Leaving assigned area without permission	Continued Level I offense
Leaving campus without permission	1 day ISS (In-School Suspension)
Spitting	1 st Offense – 2 days ISS
Bullying	2 nd Offense – 3 days ISS
Cheating/plagiarizing	3 rd Offense – Upgrade to Level III
*Truancy/skipping	
*Possessing tobacco	* The Administrator must contact the parent or
Possessing matches, lighters	Guardian before a student is suspended
Public displays of affection	
*Posting or distributing unauthorized written Materials	
Repeated dress code violations	
Excessive tardies	
Insubordination	
Gossiping	
Biting	
Pulling Hair	
Cutting Hair	
Drawing Inappropriate Pictures	
Writing Inappropriate comments	

Suspension as case warrants are from 1 to 3 days.

<u>LEVEL III INFRACTION</u>	<u>CONSEQUENCE</u>
Any Level II infraction on 3 rd offense	1 st Offense – ISS – 2 days minimum
*Gambling or possessing gambling paraphernalia	2 nd Offense – Upgrade to Level IV
*Using vulgar and/or profane language	
*Making obscene or indecent gestures	* The Administrator must contact the parent or
*Damaging property	Guardian before a student is suspended
*Pushing, shoving, or hitting another student	
*Verbal confrontation	
*Disruptive behavior in class	

Suspension as case warrants are from 1 to 3 days.

<u>LEVEL IV INFRACTION</u>	<u>CONSEQUENCE</u>
*Any Level III second offense *Inflicting physical abuse,	Out of School Suspension – Maximum 3 days and Possible Expulsion.
*Fighting	
Starting a food fight	* The Administrator must contact the parent or
*Possession of pocketknife (less than or equal to 5 ½ inches	Guardian before a student is suspended
*Smoking	
Showing defiance, disrespect, disobedience, or non-compliance to school personnel	
*Disruptive behavior in ISS (profanity)	
*Threatening blackmail or extortion	
*Stealing	
*Inappropriate touching	
*Inappropriate use of internet	

<u>LEVEL V INFRACTION</u>	<u>CONSEQUENCE</u>
*Repeated offense of Level IV infractions	Out of School Suspension – Maximum 3 days
*Possessing, concealing and/or using any instrument that inflict serious bodily injury or death	Expulsion Notice will be provided to the student’s home school within 3 days of expulsion
*Firearms	* Police Department/Proper authorities will be notified
*Illegal Knife (less than or equal to 5 ½ inches)	
*Graffiti	
*Setting a fire	
*Sounding false fire alarms	
*Setting off fire extinguishers	
*Possessing, selling or using fireworks or explosives	
*Making bomb threats	

*Possessing or using alcohol or marijuana	
*Possessing, using or selling narcotics, inhalants, controlled substance (felony charge), or prohibited substance	
*Committing sex violations *Committing sexual harassment	
*Inflicting property damage (Malicious destruction, mutilation or defacement of school or personal property)	
*Falsifying or changing permanent records or Documents	
*Inciting violence/riot	
*Possession of drug paraphernalia	
*Behavior requiring mandatory removal to an alternative education program as specified by The Texas Education Code Chapter 37 and as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct	

ADDITIONAL INFRACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

PROHIBITED ITEMS VIOLATIONS	CONSEQUENCES
Elementary only: Pre K – 5 th iPods/Mp3 players, e-readers, personal electronic entertainment devices, laser pointers, DVD players, CD players, pagers, cameras, and cell phones will not be allowed for use in the classroom.	1 st Offense – confiscated and returned to parent only
Wearing earring(s) or other piercings (males)	2 nd Offense – confiscated and returned to parent at the end of the semester.

NOTES

*Criminal charges will be filed by school staff as appropriate and mandated by law.

*Parent conferences are mandatory for all expulsions.

ADDITIONAL NOTE

*Principals may use other options as individual cases warrant such as but not limited to:

1. Restitution of damages
2. Written apology
3. Written essay
4. Behavioral contract

FINAL NOTE:

The principal of each campus has the ultimate authority to increase or decrease consequences at which he/she feels is proper and just.

Students and their parents are encouraged to discuss options with the teacher to ensure the student completes all work required for the course or grade level.

Search And Seizure

Administrators, teachers, and other professional personnel may question a student regarding the student's own conduct or the conduct of other students. Administrators, teachers, and other professional personnel may search a student's outer clothing, pockets, or property upon reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law, the Student Code of Conduct, or other rules of the school.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal Punishment-spanking or paddling the student-will **not** be administered by the District.

Disruptions

In order to protect student safety and sustain an educational program free from disruption, state law permits the District to take action against any person – student or nonstudent who:

- Interferes with the movement of people in an exit, an entrance, or a hallway of a District building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interferes with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Uses force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interferes with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to District property.

- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving District property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disrupts classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of District property. Class disruptions include making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with profane language or any misconduct.

BULLYING CONCERNS

Bullying or Taunting Behaviors

Students must not participate, either individually or in a group, in bullying or taunting behaviors toward another student. Such behaviors may include repeated teasing or ridicule, name-calling, threats, theft, gossip and rumors, or physical intimidation of any kind. A **substantiated complaint** against a student may result in disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense and the Student Code of Conduct.

Reporting an Alleged Incident of Bullying

Any alleged incident of bullying observed **MUST BE REPORTED** to the campus administration in writing. The names, date, and a brief description should be included in the report. Campuses may use their current teacher referral forms for purposes of reporting to the campus administration. Students and families are also entitled to report alleged incidents of bullying anonymously to the campus administration.

Investigating the Incident

Reported incidents must be investigated by building administration to verify if in fact the alleged incident was one of bullying. Counselors may be involved in this process.

Following Up

If the incident is confirmed to be a bullying incident, as defined above, the campus administration must address the issue individually with students and parents involved with the incident as well as staff present during the incident. All bullying situations are considered confidential. Counseling may be offered to all students involved whether a victim of the bullying or the one bullying.

Suspensions/Expulsions

Any student who is suspended from school for more than three days in any single school calendar year shall not participate in any manner for the remainder of that semester in any and all school-sponsored organizations. A school-sponsored organization includes all UIL activities and any student organization that has a school sponsor. Suspensions or other behavior reports may result in loss of field trip or school activities.

CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

With or without Prior Instruction

The district has enhanced the state curriculum to include development of social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and moral competencies. Allowing students to skip a grade would disrupt the developmental process of that student therefore a student **will not** be permitted to take an examination to “advance to a higher grade.”

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

School Materials

School publications distributed to students include school newsletters and district newsletters. All school publications are under the supervision of the teacher, sponsor, and principal.

Nonschool Materials

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the District or by a District-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any District premises by any District employee or by persons or groups not associated with the District. To be considered, any nonschool material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring organization or individual, and be submitted to the principal for specific prior review. The principal will approve or reject the materials within two days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate District complaint policy.

Prior review will not be required for:

- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.
- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours.
- Distribution for electioneering purposes during the time a school facility is being used as a polling place, in accordance with state law.

All non-school materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from District property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

DRESS AND GROOMING

HMPS has determined that appropriate dress and grooming positively impacts the learning environment. The following dress and grooming provisions are established to instill discipline, prevent disruption, avoid safety hazards, and to provide and maintain a safe, secure, and stable school climate.

General Guidelines

Students shall be dressed and groomed in a manner that is clean and neat and that will not be a health or safety hazard to themselves or others. HMPs prohibits any clothing or grooming that, in the principals' and Assistant Principals' judgment may reasonably be expected to cause disruption of or interference with normal school operations.

Required Uniform

Girls' Basic Standardized Clothing: The basic uniform clothing for girls in **Prekindergarten through Eighth Grade** shall consist of a long or short-sleeved blue, such as a polo, oxford, or dress shirt, with a uniform khaki skirt, walking shorts, slacks, skorts, jumper, or similar clothing. Shorts should be worn under skirts. Leggings are permitted during inclement weather. Uniform pants with an elastic waist band may be worn by Prekindergarten students only.

Boys' Basic Standardized Clothing: The basic uniform clothing for boys in **Prekindergarten through Eighth Grade** shall consist of a long or short-sleeved blue polo and uniform khaki pants, or walking shorts. Uniform pants with an elastic waist band may be worn by Prekindergarten students only.

Head Coverings/Sunglasses

Curlers, bandanas, sweatbands, hood, or other similar head coverings or adornments shall not be worn to class or within school buildings or while on campus. Sunglasses (unless prescribed by a physician) shall not be worn to class or within school buildings.

Caps, hats or other similar head coverings shall not be worn to class or within school buildings unless prescribed by a physician, previously approved by the school's administration for religious reasons, or approved by the school's administration for a special school activity.

Lower Garments

Undergarments shall not be visible. Pants and shorts shall be worn at the waist, and shall not extend below the heel of the shoe in length.

Shorts and skirts must be of modest length defined as a maximum of 4" above the knee of the wearer or not above the fingertip of the wearer with the arm fully extended, whichever is longer. Clothing that is torn, ripped, frayed or cut is prohibited.

Footwear

Students must wear tennis shoes for protection and hygienic reasons while on school grounds or participating in school activities.

Accessories

Females: Visible pierced jewelry shall be limited to the ear.

Males: No visible pierced jewelry shall be permitted.

Dog collars, tongue rings and studs, wallet chains, large hair picks, chains that connect one part of the body to another, or other jewelry/accessories that pose a safety concern for the student or others are prohibited.

Outer Garments

The Dress Code Policy shall not prohibit students from wearing coats, jackets, sweaters, or other appropriate outer garments when necessary due to weather conditions or for other legitimate reasons. The outer garments shall be the appropriate size for the student, shall not be overly baggy, nor violate any other provision of this Policy.

Campus-Approved Shirt and Jean Days

The campus principal may assign a day(s) for students to wear a designated shirt. The designated shirt may be worn with blue jeans. This shirt may be purchased at the front office of each campus. If students do not wear the designated shirt and blue jeans, **they must wear the designated Uniform.**

Hair

Hair should be clean and well trimmed. Hair should be kept away from the face. Children with bangs in their eyes are distracted as they continually brush it out of their eyes, particularly when they are working at their desk.

Boy's hair length must not exceed the top of the polo shirt collar. Hair "tails" and pony tails for boys are not acceptable.

The children's hair can't be dyed, bleached, and/or shaved in a non-traditional pattern, worn in spikes, or other "punk" styles.

Nails

Nails must be kept clean and trimmed at all times.

Girls may wear nail polish. However, if the nail polish is distracting, the student will be asked to remove it.

Procedures for Dress Code Violations

Any student not in the correct uniform will be sent to the office to call home to correct the violation, if possible. If the violation cannot be corrected, a written warning will be sent home. On the fourth dress code violation, the student will be sent to In-school Suspension.

DRILLS-FIRE, TORNADO, AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

Students, teachers and other district employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students should quickly follow the directions of teachers or others in charge. Exit routes are posted in each classroom.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

In the event of bad weather or any unforeseen conditions, which would result in school closing, information will be reported to local television and radio stations. Please keep abreast of the situation rather than calling the school as we will do our best to relay information to everyone as efficiently as possible. Bad weather days will be made up.

EXTENDED DAY

In selected campuses the district offers extended care for students beginning at 3:40 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday during school calendar days. The fee is \$5.00 per day. The policy for extended day is as follows:

- Students are to be picked up no later than 5:30.
- In the event of an emergency, parents are to call the campus and notify school personnel.
- Late pickups will be charged \$5.00 for every minute after 5:30.
- The school will notify the police about any student who is not picked up by 6:00 pm.

Services can be discontinued based on:

- Third infraction of late pick up
- Failure to keep account current
- Inappropriate behavior

FUND-RAISING

Any type of fund-raising must be approved by the Principal at least 30 days before the event. Individual staff members (teachers, coaches, etc.) will not be allowed to sell items (candy, ice-cream, pickles, etc.) to students.

GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

Questioning of Students

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school:

- The principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student.
- The principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation.

Students Taken Into Custody

State law requires the District to permit a student to be taken into legal custody:

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the law of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.

Before a student is delivered to a law enforcement officer or other legally authorized person, the Principal will verify the officer's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student.

The Principal will immediately notify the Superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or another authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Since the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a custody action, notification will most likely be after the fact.

Notification of Law Violations

The District is also required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been arrested or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or adjudicated of delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.

HARASSMENT ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, OR DISABILITY

Students must not engage in harassment behaviors motivated by race, color, religion, national origin, or disability directed toward another student.

Students are expected to treat other students and District employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop.

The District encourages parental and student support in its efforts to address and prevent harassment in any form in the public schools. Students and/or parents are encouraged to discuss their questions or concerns about the expectations in this area with a teacher, counselor, principal or designee.

A student who believes he or she has been harassed by another student or by a District employee is encouraged to report the incident to the principal or principal's designee. The allegations will be investigated and addressed. A substantiated complaint against a student will result in disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense and the Student Code of Conduct.

The student or a parent may appeal the decision of the Principal regarding the outcome of the investigation.

HEALTH RELATED MATTERS

Student Hygiene

All Prekindergarten students should be able to access the bathroom independently. **In the case of an accident, parents/guardians will be contacted to come clean the student, and change the student into clean clothes.**

The following guidelines are recommended:

1. Your child must wear clothing that is easy for the child to pull or up or down.
2. **No** pants that require the use of a belt should be worn.
3. T-shirts with snaps between the legs (onesies) should not be worn.
4. The school does **not** rinse out or wash soiled clothing so any clothing that becomes soiled during the day will be sent home daily.

Physical Activity for Students in Elementary Grades

The requirement of the Texas Education Code (TEC), §28.002, as amended by Senate Bill (SB) 530, 80th Texas Legislature, 2007 is thirty (30) minutes a day in grades prekindergarten -5th and grade 6 if on an elementary campus. If a school district determines, for any particular grade

level below sixth grade, that this requirement is impractical due to schedule concerns or other factors, students in that grade level may participate in moderate or vigorous PA for at least 135 minutes during each school week.

Thirty (30) minutes a day of PA are required for grades 6-8 and to be offered at least four semesters during grades 6-8. Grade 6 on an elementary campus follows the requirement for elementary schools. For districts that use block scheduling, students must participate in moderate or vigorous PA for at least 225 minutes during each two- week school period.

For information regarding the District's requirements and programs regarding elementary student, and middle school student physical activity requirements, please see the Principal.

School Health Advisory Council

Information regarding the District's School Health Advisory Council, including the number of meetings scheduled or held during the year and information regarding vending machines in District facilities and student access to the machines is available from the principal.

HOMEWORK POLICY

HMPS has a goal to improve student academic achievement. The home/school cooperative system will help each child reach their academic potential as well as develop student responsibility and self-discipline.

Purpose: All the students will be provided with every opportunity to complete homework assignments every day. All the students will complete their homework assignments on a daily basis to avoid them getting behind on their work and to improve the academic achievement of every student.

Teacher responsibility is:

- Teachers will post all age appropriate homework assignments on the dry erase board at the beginning of the class period.
- Teachers will collect and grade the homework.
- Teacher will indicate, on the student planner, that homework was not completed and show the date student will be required to stay for detention.
- Teacher will check the student planner the following day for a parent signature.
- Teacher will post the missing homework assignments in the grade book.
- Teacher will assign homework no less than 2 times per week.

Student responsibility is:

- Student will use the first 5 minutes of each class period to write down their homework in the student planner.
- Student will complete homework assignments every day.

- Student will turn in the homework to the teacher.
- Student will get a parent signature on his/her planner everyday from Monday through Thursday (other days as required by the teacher).

Parent responsibility is:

- Parent will ensure child completes the homework.
- Parent will check and sign the daily planner every day from Monday through Thursday.
- Parent will communicate with child's teacher on a regular basis.

MEDICAL SUPPORT AND SERVICES

All students who become ill or injured will be referred to the campus clinic for evaluation.

•Medicine at School

A student who must take a prescription medicine during the school day must have on file a written request from his or her parent, medication brought in by the parent in its original, properly labeled container, to the school office. The nurse and/or principal assigned employee will administer the medicine at the proper times. Non prescription and prescription medication from Mexico will not be administered by school personnel.

A student with asthma who has written authorization from his or her parent and physician or other licensed health care provider may be permitted to possess and use prescribed asthma medication at school or school-related events. The student and parents should see the school nurse or principal if the student has been prescribed asthma medication for use during the school day.

•Emergency Medical Treatment

If a student should have a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school will need to have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies to medication, etc.) up to date. Having current files will offer critical information should an accident or injuries occur that requires medical attention. Please contact the school to update any information that the school needs to be aware of.

•Immunizations

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical or religious reasons, the student will not be immunized. Proof of

immunization may be personal records from a licensed physician or a public health clinic with a signature or a rubber stamp validation.

•Exclusions from Compliance

To claim exclusion for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, a signed affidavit must be presented by the child's parent or guardian, stating that the child's parent or guardian declines vaccinations for reasons of conscience, because of the person's religious beliefs. The affidavit will be valid for a two year period. The child, who has not received the required immunizations for reasons of conscience, including religious beliefs, may be excluded from school in times of emergency or epidemic declared by the commissioner of public health.

- (a) A person claiming exclusion for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, from a required immunization may only obtain the affidavit form by submitting a written request to the department. The request must include the following:
 - full name of child;
 - child's date of birth (month/day/year);
- (b) Written requests must be submitted through the United States Postal Service (or other commercial carrier, by facsimile, or by hand delivery to the Department's Bureau of Immunization and Pharmacy Support, 1100 West 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756.
- (c) Upon request, one affidavit form for each child will be mailed unless otherwise specified (shall not exceed a maximum of five forms per child).
- (d) The department shall not maintain a record of the names of individuals who request an affidavit and shall return the original request with the forms requested.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required would be harmful to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition. For further information see the Texas Department of Health Web site: www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize/school.info.htm.

•Physical Examinations/Health Screening

Vision, Hearing, Scoliosis, and Acanthosis Nigricans screenings will be done by health service personnel in accordance to state law. Written notice will be sent to parents of any abnormal findings.

•Communicable Disease/Conditions

To protect children from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. **If a parent suspects that his or her child has a**

communicable or contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

BACTERIAL MENINGITIS

WHAT IS MENINGITIS?

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is the most common form of serious bacterial infection with the potential for serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease, but requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Someone with meningitis will become very ill. The illness may develop over one or two days, but it can also rapidly progress in a matter of hours. Not everyone with meningitis will have the same symptoms.

Children (over 1 year old) and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pain, and drowsiness or confusion. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body.

The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results.

HOW SERIOUS IS BACTERIAL MENINGITIS?

If it is diagnosed early and treated promptly, the majority of people make a complete recovery. In some cases it can be fatal or a person may be left with a permanent disability.

HOW IS BACTERIAL MENINGITIS SPREAD?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as kissing; sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes).

The germ **does not** cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become **carriers** of the germ for days, weeks or even months. The bacterium rarely overcomes the body's immune system and causes meningitis or another serious illness.

HOW CAN BACTERIAL MENINGITIS BE PREVENTED?

Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include when there is a disease outbreak in a community or for people traveling to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. Also, a vaccine is recommended by some groups for college students, particularly freshmen living in dorms or residence halls. The vaccine is safe and effective (85-90%). It can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within 7 to 10 days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to 5 years.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IF YOU THINK YOU OR A FRIEND MIGHT HAVE BACTERIAL MENINGITIS?

Seek prompt medical attention.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Your family doctor and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Texas Department of Health office to ask about meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov and the Texas Department of Health: www.tdh.state.tx.us.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND RIGHTS

HMPS believes that the best educational result for each student occurs when all three partners are doing their best: the District staff, the student's parent, and the student. Such a partnership requires trust and much communication between home and school.

To strengthen this partnership, every parent is urged to:

- Encourage his/her child to put a high priority on education and commit to making the most of the educational opportunities the school provides. Ensure that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects. Be sure your child comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Review the information in the student handbook (including the attached Student Code of Conduct) with his/her child and sign and return the acknowledgment form(s). A parent with questions is encouraged to contact the school principal.
- Become familiar with all school activities offered in the District. Discuss with the teacher and/or principal any questions, such as concerns about placement, assignment, and options available to the child. Monitor the child's academic progress and contact teachers as needed.

- Attend scheduled conferences and request additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. A teacher will usually arrange to return the call or meet with the parent during his or her conference period or before/after school.
- Review the child's student records when needed. A parent may review (1) attendance records, (2) test scores, (3) grades, (4) disciplinary records (5) counseling records, (6) psychological records, (7) applications for admission, (8) health and immunization information, (9) other medical records, (10) teacher and counselor evaluations, (11) reports of behavioral patterns, and (12) state assessment instruments that have been administered to his or her child.
- Grant or deny any written request from the District to make a videotape or voice recording of the child unless the videotape or voice recording (1) is to be used for school safety; (2) relates to classroom instruction or a co curricular or extracurricular activity; or (3) relates to media coverage of the school as permitted by law.
- Temporarily remove the child from the classroom, if an instructional activity in which the child is scheduled to participate conflicts with the parent's religious or moral beliefs. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. Further, the child must satisfy grade-level requirements as determined by the school and by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).
- Become a school volunteer. For further information contact the campus Principal.
- Participate in campus parent organizations. Parents have the opportunity to support and be involved in various school activities, either as leaders or in supporting roles.
- In addition, as a parent, you also have a right to receive notice and opt your child out of participating in:
 - Any survey concerning the private information listed above.
 - School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from your child for the purpose of marketing or selling that information.
 - Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screening, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law.

As a parent, you also have a right:

- To request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teachers, including whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. You also have the

right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide service to your child.

- To review teaching materials, textbooks, and other testing aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum and to examine tests that have been administered to your child.
- To inspect a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to your child.
- To inform the classroom teacher if you want your child excused from participation in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag.
- To request your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3-12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child be excused, (2) the District determines that your child has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity.
- To request in writing, if you are a noncustodial parent, that you be provided for the remainder of the school year a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to misconduct that may involve expulsion.

PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

Students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may notify the classroom teacher if the child needs to be excused from reciting the pledge.

A moment of silence will follow recitation of the pledges. The student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others.

PRAYER IN SCHOOL

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not require, encourage, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

PROTECTION OF STUDENT RIGHTS

No student will be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation-funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education that concerns:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parents
- Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or family
- Sexual behavior or attitudes
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers
- Income, except when the information will be used to determine the student’s eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.
- Religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or parent

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

A student will not be released from school at times other than regular dismissal hours except with the principal’s permission and according to the campus sign-out procedures—FORMS AVAILABLE IN THE FRONT OFFICE. A student who becomes ill during the school day should, with the teacher’s permission, report to the school nurse/office. Students will be released **ONLY** to the child’s parent or another adult who the parent has previously authorized in writing and is listed on school records.

REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Report cards with each student’s absences and student grades or performance in each class or subject are issued to parents at least every 6 weeks.

Teachers follow grading guidelines approved by the principal/Superintendent that have been designed to reflect each student’s academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course.

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the questions are not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the Principal.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school within two days.

•Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten

Achievement or progress in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten shall be reported to parents as follows: ELA;

Math; Sensorial; Social Studies; P.E.; Fine Arts; & Science:

E-Excellent Progress (90-100)

N- Needs Improvement (70-74)

S-Satisfactory (75-89)

U- Unsatisfactory (0-69)

•1st through 8th

Achievement or progress in core subjects from 1st through 8th grades will be numerical grades and reported

as follows:

90-100	(A)	20 % Homework
80-89	(B)	40 % Quizzes
70-79	(C)	10 % Projects
0-69	(F)	30 % Class work

- Core subjects are defined as ELA, Science, Social Studies, Math, and Writing.
- No grade below a 50 shall be recorded on student’s permanent record
- In Pre-Kinder and Kinder, student progress is reported using a developmental continuum representing the knowledge and skills appropriate for the age level of the student
- Report cards are issued every 6 weeks

RETENTION AND PROMOTION

A student may be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter of the course or grade level. To earn credit on a course, a student must receive a grade of 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards. If a student’s grade average in any subject or course is “borderline” or below 70 at the end of the first 3 weeks of any grading period, the student’s parents will be notified. If retention is a consideration, parent conferences will be required.

PROMOTION/RETENTION FOR STUDENTS

Promotion and retention requirements: a student may be considered for retention if they have met any of the following criteria: 1) failed one or more subject areas; (Math & Reading semester grade) 2) not reached the academic expectation in their reading level; and 3) missed more than 10% of instructional days in academic year; (Excused or Unexcused) 4) A committee comprised of the child’s core subject area teachers, the counselor, the parent and the principal must make the decision. **Sufficient advance notice must be given in writing and in person to the parent. For number 4 above, state assessments, a notice must be given in writing and in person to the parent within 5 working days of results coming in from the state.** For any child who is retained, the principal must meet with that child’s parents in person to communicate the rationale and future plan for remediation. If the parent cannot be reached, a certified letter will be sent to the address on file.

PROMOTION/RETENTION 5TH/8TH

In addition to the paragraph above, students who did not meet the passing standard on any of the three opportunities of a STAAR SSI assessment and who meet the eligibility requirements as specified by 19 TAC §101.2003(b) have not met the state-identified assessment criterion for promotion to the next grade level. At this point the student is **retained in the current grade**

(**grade 5 or 8**) unless the parent, guardian, or designee appeals that decision. School personnel may not appeal this decision unless the parent or guardian has designated the remaining members of the GPC as the decision-making entity for all purposes. (See Commissioner’s Rules, 19 TAC §101.2007[b].)

SAFETY

Student safety on campus or at school-related events is a high priority of the District. Although the District has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. Students should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the Student Code of Conduct and any additional rules for behavior and safety set by Principal and teachers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Immediately follow the instructions of teachers and other District employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

Misconduct will result in consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

•Accident Insurance

Under state law, the District cannot pay for medical expenses for a student’s injury. A parent who desires coverage for his or her child will be responsible for paying insurance premiums through their own private insurance carrier.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

•Vandalism –

Littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to make restitution for damages they cause and shall be subject to disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

•Pest Control Information –

The District periodically applies pesticides inside buildings. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application.

•Conduct Before and After School –

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct before-or after school activities on District premises and at school-sponsored events off District premises, such as rehearsals, or tutorials.

Students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter code of conduct, for extracurricular participant, established by the sponsor.

Loitering or standing in the halls between classes is not permitted. During class time, a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

- **Parties at School-**

1. Parents should only bring store food bought items. No homemade (Safety and health concerns)
2. Students inviting others to parties. This should take place after school or outside of school unless the whole class is invited.
3. Students should not share food during snack/lunch time (allergies).

SEXUAL HARASSMENT/SEXUAL ABUSE

The District encourages parental and student support in its efforts to address and prevent sexual harassment and sexual abuse in the public schools. Students and/or parents are encouraged to discuss their questions or concerns about the expectations in this area with a teacher, counselor, Principal or designee.

Students must not engage in unwanted and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed toward another student or a District employee. This prohibition applies whether the conduct is by word, gesture, or any other sexual conduct, including requests for sexual favors. All students are expected to treat other students and District employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop.

A substantiated complaint against a student will result in appropriate disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense and the Student Code of Conduct.

The District will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by student(s) or employee(s). To the greatest extent possible, complaints will be treated as confidential. Limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

A complaint alleging sexual harassment or sexual abuse by another student or by a staff member may be presented by a student and/or parent in a conference with the Principal or designee. The parent or other advisor may accompany the student throughout the complaint process. The conference will be scheduled and held as soon as possible, but no later than five working days after the request. The Principal will conduct an appropriate investigation, which ordinarily will be completed within ten working days. The student and/or parent will be informed if extenuating circumstances delay completion of the investigation.

The student will not be required to present a complaint to a person who is the subject of the complaint.

If the resolution by the Superintendent or designee is not satisfactory, the student and/or parent may present the complaint to the Board at the next regular meeting.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Aiding Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services

For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts and open enrollment charter schools must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts and charter schools to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individual(s) listed below to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine if the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

Special Education Referrals:

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special education services or an administrative employee of the school district or open enrollment charter school, the district or charter school must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district or charter school must give the parent a prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If the school district or charter school agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

Please note that a request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Districts and charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.

If the district or charter school decides to evaluate the student, it must complete the student's initial evaluation and evaluation report no later than 45 school days from the day it receives a parent's written consent to evaluate the student. However, if the student is absent from school during the evaluation period for three or more school days, the evaluation period will be

extended by the number of school days equal to the number of school days that the student is absent.

There is an exception to the 45-school-day timeline. If a district or charter school receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, it must complete the written report and provide a copy of the report to the parent by June 30 of that year. However, if the student is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30th due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply.

Upon completing the evaluation, the district or charter school must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

Additional information regarding special education is available from the district or charter school in a companion document titled *Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

Contact Person for Special Education Referrals:

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services is:

Contact Person: Stephanie Hernandez

Phone Number: 956-969-3092

Section 504 Referrals:

Each school district or charter school must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's or charter school's Section 504 program. Districts and charter schools must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals:

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is:

Contact Person: Stephanie Hernandez

Phone Number: 956-969-3092

Additional Information:

The following websites provide information and resources for students with disabilities and their families.

- [Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process](#)
- [Partners Resource Network](#)
- [Special Education Information Center](#)

- [Texas Project First](#)

STUDENT RECORDS

A student's school records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the District until the time the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18 or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The Superintendent is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours upon completion of the written request form. The records custodian or designee will respond to a reasonable request for explanation and interpretation of the records. If circumstances prevent a parent or eligible student from inspecting the records, the District will either provide a copy of the requested records, or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review the requested records.

Parents of a minor or of a student who is dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employees, agents, or Trustees of the District; cooperatives of which the District is a member; or facilities with which the District contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are:

- Working with the student;
- Considering disciplinary or academic actions on a student's case, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities under IDEA, or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504;
- Compiling statistical data; or
- Investigating or evaluating programs.

The parent's or student's right of access to and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that is shared only with a substitute teacher, records pertaining to former students after they are no longer students in the District, and records maintained by school law enforcement officials for purposes other than school discipline do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

Certain officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. The District forwards a student's records on request and without prior parental consent to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Records are also released in accordance with court order or lawfully issued subpoena. Unless the subpoena is issued for law enforcement purposes and the subpoena orders that its contents, existence, or the information sought not be disclosed, the District will make a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student in advance of compliance. Parental consent is required to release the records

to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release the records.

Students over 18, and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the District refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to ask for a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requestor has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course through this process. Parents or the student have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the District is not in compliance with the law regarding student records.

Copies of student records are available at the campus. Parents may be denied copies of a student's records (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of postsecondary education; (3) if the parent fails to follow proper procedures and pay the copying charge; or (4) when the district is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written request of the parent, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge. Certain information about District students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. The opportunity to exercise such an objection is provided on the form signed by the parent to acknowledge receipt of this handbook. Should circumstances change, the parent can contact the Principal to indicate his or her desire to change the original request.

Directory information includes; a student's name, student's photograph, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended, and the student's e-mail address on the district's computer network.

Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the District is not in compliance with Federal law regarding student records. The District's policy regarding student records is available from the Principal's or Superintendent's office.

•**Special Education Records**

Parents of a student with disabilities who have been provided special education services by the District will

be notified when any information that specifically identifies the student is no longer needed. If the parent requests destruction of the information and the time established by law for retention has expired, the records will be destroyed. However, if the retention period established by law has not expired, the material will be deleted from the records but the records will be maintained until the time has expired.

SUMMER SCHOOL/EXTENDED YEAR

The state of Texas requires that all school districts provide a Bilingual summer school program for English Language Learners (ELL) students entering a Bilingual Kindergarten and a Bilingual 1st Grade. The HMPS ELL program is designed to:

- Provide English Language Learner students an opportunity to receive special instruction designed to prepare them to be successful in kindergarten and first grade.
- Provide instruction which will focus on language development and essential knowledge and skills appropriate to the level of the student.
- Address the affective, linguistic, and cognitive needs of the English Language Learner students in accordance with §89.1210(c) of this title (relating to Program Content and Design).

TESTING

Test results will be reported to students and parents. Parents may wish to discuss the test results with the campus principal, child's teacher, or counselor by calling the school and setting up a conference.

Certain students, such as students with disabilities and English Language Learners are eligible for accommodations. For more information, see the principal, counselor, or special education director.

In order for students to do their best on any test, they must be comfortable and alert. Parents are encouraged to be aware of their child's schedule and to assure that the child comes to school every day – but especially on test days – after:

- A good night's sleep;
- A good breakfast; and
- Dressing for the weather or for the temperature inside the testing center.

•State Mandated Assessment

Students at certain levels will take state assessment (such as STAAR) tests in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3-8 without the aid of technology
- Reading, annually in grades 3-8

- Writing, including spelling and grammar in grade 4, 7
- Science in Grades 5, 8
- Social Studies in Grades 8

Test results will be reported to students and parents.

TEXTBOOKS

State-approved textbooks are provided free of charge for each subject or class. Books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. A student who is issued a damaged book should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return a book issued by the school loses the right to free textbooks until the book is returned or paid for by the parent or guardian. Fees for lost books need to be paid prior to enrollment (textbooks and library books). However, a student will be provided textbooks for use at school during the school day.

TRAVEL – SCHOOL SPONSORED

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by school to and from the event. The Principal, however, may make an exception if the parent personally requests that the student be permitted to ride with the parent, or another adult designated by the parent.

VEHICLES ON CAMPUS

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. The school may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable cause to do so.

VISITORS

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit our schools. For the safety of the school and those within it, all visitors must first report to the school's administrative office. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the Principal and the teacher if their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.