

UPPER SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Houston Academy

2018-19



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2018-2019 YEARLY SCHOOL CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT DATES

Faculty/Staff Professional Development Days*	August 8, 9 & 10
First Day of School	August 13
Open House (6:30 PM)	August 21
Booster Night (6:30 PM)	August 23
Labor Day (no school)	September 3
Teacher Collaboration Day/Early Dismissal @ 12:30 (Grades 9-12)	September 19
Fall Break	October 5-8
End of Quarter 1	October 10
Teacher Collaboration Day/Early Dismissal @12:30 (Grades 9-12)	November 7
Thanksgiving Holidays	November 19-23
Semester 1 Exams	December 14, 17, 18, 19
Holiday Break	December 20 - January 2
School Resumes	January 3
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (no school)	January 21
Teacher Collaboration Day/Early Dismissal @ 12:30 (Grades 9-12)	January 30
Faculty/Staff Professional Development Day (no school for students)	February 15
Winter Break	February 16-19
End Quarter 3	March 8
Short-Term	March 18-22
Spring Break	March 25-29
Good Friday	April 19
AP Exams	May 6-17
Senior Exams	May 15-17
Senior Last Day	May 17
Semester 2 Exams	May 21-24
US Graduation	May 24

IMPORTANT HOUSTON ACADEMY LINKS

- Houston Academy website: <http://www.houstonacademy.com>
- We Lunch It (Subs & More): <http://www.welunchit.com/>
- PowerSchool: <https://houstonacademy.powerschool.com/public/home.html>
- Uniforms: <http://www.landsend.com>
- Naviance:
<https://connection.naviance.com/family-connection/auth/login/?hsid=houstonacad>
- ACT:
<http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/registration.html>
- CollegeBoard (AP, SAT, etc.): <https://www.collegeboard.org/>
- ACT/SAT Test Prep: www.methodtestprep.org

HA STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

Houston Academy is a student centered institution that educates students within the Wiregrass Area. This handbook is intended to define the rights and responsibilities of school members, enabling all members to learn and function in harmony within the community.

MISSION STATEMENT

Houston Academy is an independent college preparatory institution. Our mission is to prepare all our students for responsible participation in a global society by providing an excellent learning environment and opportunities to achieve their highest academic, social, and creative potential.

PHILOSOPHY

Houston Academy is a college preparatory school. As such, the curriculum is implemented with the goal of developing our students into outstanding scholars. The teachers who implement the course of study maintain high academic standards to insure the development of skills and the mastery of ideas requisite for matriculation at higher levels of learning. Driven by the ideals of the mission statement, Houston Academy seeks to prepare its students to participate in the world around them. We endeavor to develop students who enjoy thinking, analyzing, and expressing. We intend for them to make a significant difference in their community. HA strives to help individual students to develop their personal, intellectual, physical, artistic, and social selves to their utmost capability.

Admission to Houston Academy is without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, handicap or disability.

HONOR CODE & HONOR SYSTEM

Honesty is a fundamental principle upon which our society is based. It is required to create the atmosphere in which friendship, scholarship, and trust can grow. In the strictest sense, honor is a uniquely personal matter. The Honor System cannot and will not force the student to become honorable. It does, however, aid the student in realizing the benefits of integrity to the individual and to the academic community.

The Honor System embodies the concept of personal honor in a framework of law and practice. The result is a system of conducting examinations, writing papers, and performing other academic endeavors with regard to individual honor and without faculty proctoring. The system promotes trust between students and their teachers and peers.

The responsibility for maintaining the validity of academic work is placed on all students. It is upon these goals and principles that the Houston Academy Honor Code is based.

All Houston Academy Upper School students are expected to uphold specific standards of conduct:

- Students will exhibit honesty in all endeavors.
- Students will encourage active participation in the spirit and ethics of the Honor Code.
- Honor Pledges: At the beginning of each test or quiz and at the bottom of each assignment or student piece of work, students will sign the following statement pledging that they have not received, given or used unauthorized assistance of any kind : “My signature affirms my honor.”

Students should always assume that assignments are “pledged” unless the teacher specifically states otherwise.

Any infraction of the Honor Code will be referred to the Honor Council, which will serve as the mediator for the Honor Code.

TYPES OF HONOR OFFENSES

No document or set of procedures can cover every possible contingency, and not set of guidelines for conduct ensures that the standards of the school community will be upheld. In the final analysis, good will, compassion, and common sense should guide in dealings with all students. Any honor violation witnessed by a faculty member or student should be reported to the Dean of Students who will report it to the Honor Council.

- Plagiarism
- Cheating of any kind
- Unauthorized sharing or receiving of another student’s work without authorization or teacher approval.
- Sabotage
- Falsification
- Lying
- Stealing
- Unauthorized use of another person’s property

The Honor Council will not regard claims of ignorance, unintentional error, or academic or personal pressures as an adequate defense for violations of the Honor Code.

ORGANIZATION OF THE HONOR COUNCIL

The Council will operate independently of all other student organizations and will consist of the following:

- 5 Senior Representatives (the four Juniors from the previous year and one member elected at large)
- 4 Junior Representatives

- 4 Sophomore Representatives
- Dean of Students

The Chief Justice, a senior, will be elected by majority vote of the elected Honor Council. New students must wait one year before being eligible for the Council.

A quorum of 9 student representatives must be met in order to hold any meeting or trial.

MEMBERSHIP/ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for election to the Honor Council, a student must have attended Houston Academy for the two previous semesters and have an exemplar disciplinary and honor code record. Annual elections will take place during the last month of school. Members of the Discipline Committee cannot be members of the Honor Council.

If a member of the Honor Council commits a Major Infraction, they will automatically be dismissed from the Council and the Dean of Students will name a replacement based on the results of the original voting process.

HONOR CODE VIOLATION PROCEEDINGS

Prior to any hearing, a preliminary investigation of any violation will be held. After the investigation, the Dean of Students will contact parents, and a trial date will be scheduled. The students and faculty advisors will work closely with the Dean of Students to ensure confidentiality and to protect the rights of the student(s).

STUDENT RIGHTS

All students have been given notice of this Honor Code by virtue of its publication. Regardless of whether a student has actually read the handout or handbook, a student is charged with the knowledge of it. Ignorance of rules is never a defense.

Students who appear before the Honor Council will be granted certain rights:

- They will be provided written statements describing the charges against them and their rights and responsibilities.
- The Dean of Students will work with the Council and the accused student to ensure confidentiality and to protect the rights of the student(s).

HONOR COUNCIL HEARING

If the accused is found guilty, the Council through a majority vote will determine the consequences. All consequences will be presented to the Head of Upper School except in the case of Separation in which the Headmaster gives final approval. If there is a tie, the Chief Justice will vote to break the tie. Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Detention
- Alternatives: an approved apology, redoing work, revocation of senior privileges, Saturday School, etc.
- Honor Probation

- Academic consequences: Zero for part or all of an assignment/test or loss of credit for the course.
- In-School Suspension (ISS)*
- Off-Campus suspension (OCS)*
- Separation from the school.

**Students that are suspended may not participate in any school related activities (practice/game/etc.).*

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The concept of respect is at the heart of Houston Academy's expectations concerning the behavior of its students. As a college preparatory institution, HA offers and honors an environment in which all students can learn in a safe and caring setting. At Houston Academy, we embrace the diversity of our community and attempt to learn from our differences and build on our students' and faculties' individual strengths. In short, respect for each others' rights and respect for our institution affirms the ethic central to our school's culture and ethos.

RESPECT/HARASSMENT/BULLYING/HAZING

As a school community, we aspire to maintain an environment where all members may work, study, and enjoy freedom from harassment or bullying of any kind.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to verbal abuse (oral or written); obscene or suggestive remarks; display of sexually explicit, demeaning, or offensive materials; or comments which are demeaning with respect to race, religion, ethnic origin, physical characteristics or abilities, appearance, sexual orientation, or gender.

Actions considered to be bullying are any written, verbal, or implied communication that may be threatening, intimidating, or demeaning. These actions are prohibited at all times and in all circumstances (including communication on the internet, or social networking sites, via email, through text message, or on personal blogs), whether or not it originates on the Houston Academy campus.

Hazing is any action taken or any situation created intentionally that causes embarrassment, harassment or ridicule and risks emotional and/or physical harm to members of a group or team, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. Hazing often involves some sort of power difference between those in a group and those who want to join a group, or between senior and junior members of a group and is often justified in the name of "tradition." However, an act may be defined as hazing, whether or not the victim is new to the team or organization. There is no place for hazing in the Houston Academy community. Any and all acts of hazing will be treated as a major infraction, at a minimum. Furthermore, hazing may result in a student being separated from the school.

Hazing is also a violation of Alabama Law under Alabama Code Title 16. Education § 16-1-23.

HA students are expected to be UPSTANDERS, not BYSTANDERS. Bystanders may be assigned an infraction for not taking actions to intervene during any conflict or destructive situation. Any retribution taken against students that report incidents will be treated as Major Infractions.

DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

The HA Student Code of Conduct is based on a tier system with all infractions classified as Minor or Major Infractions. Students must be aware that they are representatives of Houston Academy on and off campus and as such are answerable to the school and held to high standards at all times.

MINOR INFRACTIONS

The primary responsibility for classroom and school management lies with the teachers and adults on campus or supervising activities held off campus. Teachers will manage and assign discipline consequences for Minor Infractions of class/school rules and report the infraction to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will assign consequences for general violations of school rules (uniform, cell phone, tardies, etc.).

Minor Infractions include but are not limited to:

- Accumulation of tardies;
- Minor classroom misbehavior/disruptions;
- Disrupting any school activity;
- Not complying with general school rules;
- Inappropriate language or gestures;
- Misuse of technology;
- Not prepared for class (HW, appropriate materials/books, etc.);
- Not disposing of waste appropriately;
- Driving or parking violation;
- Dress code violation;
- Chewing gum in non-designated areas;
- Food/drink in a non-designated area;
- Being present in an unsupervised area or area off limits to students;
- Violation of cell phone or technology policy;
- Failing to attend assigned tutorial;
- Failing to return any communication in a timely manner;
- Missing an assigned detention;
- Other actions that are not consistent with the mission of the school.

Consequences for Minor Infractions include but are not limited to:

- Detentions;

- Restitution;
- Revoking privileges;
- Counseling; and
- Reflection papers or assignments.

Please note that consequences will vary depending upon the infraction and/or extenuating/aggravating circumstances. Additionally, one or more consequence from the list may be assigned depending upon the severity of the situation.

Parents will be notified of Minor Infractions should the situation warrant more than a conversation between a student and the teacher or the Dean of Students. Detentions will be served before school, during break, or after school. A student will have one day's notice so as to arrange transportation or to notify coaches.

If the same Minor Infraction is repeated more than three times in a semester or five or more Minor Infractions are accumulated in any given semester, the next accrued Minor Infraction will be treated as a Major Infraction.

MAJOR INFRACTIONS

For repeated behaviors or more serious rule violations, the Dean of Students and Head of the Upper School will meet with all parties involved and complete a preliminary investigation into the incident. If the Administrative Team deems that a Major Infraction occurred, the student and the guardian will be informed and the case will be managed by the Administrative Team or sent to the Discipline Committee or Honor Council (depending upon the gravity of the situation). A student may be suspended from regular schooling processes during the investigation and as they go through the discipline process.

Major Infractions include but are not limited to:

- Repetition of minor infractions;
- Possession or consumption of alcohol, tobacco or tobacco products including electronic cigarettes;
- Possession or consumption of illegal or harmful drugs or drug paraphernalia;
- Possession of weapons (firearms, knives, fireworks, etc.);
- Dishonesty/Lying/Insubordination;
- Fighting;
- Stealing/willful destruction/vandalism/theft;
- Disrespect;
- Harassment/bullying/hazing/racism/intimidation of any kind;
- Sexual harassment;
- Leaving campus without permission or skipping class;
- Violations of the Attendance Policy or Honor Code;
- Failing to report or intervene in a situation that causes harm to an HA community member;

- Any action deemed a Major Infraction by the Administration.

Should the Head of School, Headmaster, Discipline Committee, or Honor Council conclude that a Major Infraction was committed, a consequence and discipline plan will be implemented taking into consideration extenuating and aggravating situations. Consequences for Major Infractions may include but are not limited to:

- Revoking of privileges;
- Retribution;
- External Counseling;
- Saturday School;
- In-School Suspension (ISS)*
- Out of-School Suspension (OSS)*
- Disciplinary Probation

**Students that are suspended may not participate in any school related activities (practice/game/etc.).*

Please note:

- consequences will vary depending upon the infraction and/or extenuating/aggravating circumstances.
- one or more consequence from the list may be assigned depending upon the severity of the situation.
- if a member of the National Junior Honor Society or the National Honor Society commit any Major Infraction (Student Code of Conduct or Honor Code), it will be reported to their Advisor and the NJHS/NHS Faculty Council will meet to review the case and to consider the offending student for possible separation from the Honor Society.

DISCIPLINE PROBATION AND SCHOOL SEPARATION

A student who commits multiple Major Infractions or any serious act may be placed on Disciplinary Probation for a specified period of time or recommended for immediate separation from school. Being on probation means that further violations of the Student Code of Conduct (Discipline or Honor) could result in that student's separation from school. Separation from the school also may occur when a student's behavior is so flagrant and/or repetitive as to be intolerable in the opinion of the Head of Upper School and the Headmaster.

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

The Discipline Committee is the representative voice of the Upper School community on disciplinary matters when invoked by the Administrative Team. The Head of the Upper School must approve the recommendations of the Disciplinary Committee. The Headmaster must approve any recommendation for separation.

ORGANIZATION OF THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

The Committee will operate independently of all other student organizations and will consist of the following:

- 2 Senior Representatives
- 2 Junior Representatives
- 2 Sophomore Representatives
- 2 Faculty Representatives
- Dean of Students

MEMBERSHIP/ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for election to the Disciplinary Committee, a student must have attended Houston Academy for the two previous semesters, maintained a minimum GPA average of 3.0, and have an exemplar disciplinary record. Annual elections will take place during the last month of school year. A student may only be a member of the Discipline Committee or the Honor Council, not both.

The Disciplinary Committee will form an Executive Council and select a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary from the elected members of the Committee. Members of the Discipline Committee that are parts of the Executive Council of another school organization (SGA and NHS) cannot be voted onto the Executive Council.

If a member of the Discipline Committee commits a Major Infraction during their term, they will automatically be dismissed from the Committee and the Dean of Students will name a replacement based on the results of the original voting process.

COUNCIL MEMBER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the duty of all members to be leaders and to set the example for the school community. If a member is brought before the Discipline Committee and found to have committed a Major Infraction, he or she will be removed permanently from the Committee.

The Dean of Students will call all meetings and preside over the meeting. The Chair shall preside over deliberations and communicate the results to the student brought before the committee. The Vice Chair will assume the duties of the Chair in the event that the Chair is absent for a meeting. The Secretary of the Disciplinary Committee will keep a record of all decisions and will record those decisions as a part of a case log to be used by future Disciplinary Committees when determining precedent.

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Prior to any Discipline Committee Meeting, the Dean of Students will perform a preliminary investigation to determine if a Major Infraction was committed. The Dean of Students will schedule the Discipline Committee Meeting and inform the student and his/her guardian that the student will be brought before the Discipline Committee to review a possible Major Infraction of the Student Code of Conduct. The Dean of Students will present his / her findings that a Major Infraction was committed and the accused student is provided the

opportunity to offer an explanation of their actions. Having heard all of the testimonies, the Discipline Committee will make a determination and assign any potential consequences in accordance with the Student/Parent Handbook. The Dean of Students will communicate the conclusions to the Principal for approval and subsequently to the student and guardian.

STUDENT RIGHTS

All students are expected to understand and to comply with the Student Code of Conduct both on and off campus when representing the school.

Students who appear before the Discipline Committee will be granted certain rights:

- They will be informed of the rule that they are accused of violating and their rights and responsibilities.
- They will be provided the opportunity to explain their actions.
- The Dean of Students will work with the Committee and the accused student to ensure confidentiality and to protect the rights of the student(s).

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

During the 2017-18 school year, Houston Academy modified its Graduation Requirements to include a 1.0 credit Fine Arts requirement. This modification applies only to incoming freshmen (present and future) starting in August 2018.

Graduation Requirements for Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors (Classes of 2019-2021):

DEPARTMENT/DISCIPLINE	# OF UNITS	SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS
English	4	
Social Science & History	3	World History II, US History, Gov/Econ
Science	4	Biology, Chemistry
Mathematics	4	Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II
Physical Education	1	
World & Classical Languages	3	3 units of the same language
Electives	5	
TOTAL	24	

Graduation Requirements for Freshmen (Classes of 2022 and beyond):

DEPARTMENT/DISCIPLINE	# OF UNITS	SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS
English	4	
Social Science & History	3	World History II, US History, Gov/Econ
Science	4	Biology, Chemistry
Mathematics	4	Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II

World & Classical Languages	3	3 units of the same language
Fine Arts	1	Art, Band, Chorus, Drama, Print Design, Digital Media, etc.
Physical Education	1	Athletics and Fitness, Dance, Drama, Band, etc.
Electives	4	
TOTAL	24	

Credit toward graduation is given to 8th graders for successful completion of Algebra I and any Language I class (1A&1B).

Additionally, students must complete 40 hours of community service during grades 9-12.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

All students in grades 9-12 must complete a minimum of 40 hours of service to meet the graduation requirement.

Houston Academy partners with local and global organizations to provide students with opportunities to participate in service based learning experiences. At the beginning of each academic year, **all** students will sign up for a Service Club and complete at least one activity on an annual basis.

Any student that wishes to complete service hours outside of the school club system must have the hours **pre-approved** by the Community Service Coordinator. Students will only receive hours if the activity is completed through a recognized organization (nonprofit or any organization that provides service to underprivileged or underrepresented sections of the community) that serves the greater community and is completed outside of any membership obligations. Students must request and complete a Community Service Form in order to get pre-approval and pass in the completed/signed form within one month of activity in order to receive documented hours. Students will only earn hours for pre-approved activities and the direct service (no hours will be awarded for travel time, etc.) that they complete (Note - students may not earn service hours for any activity that occurs with the regular school or organization schedule.).

If a student transfers to HA as a Sophomore, Junior, or Senior, the total number of hours that they are required to complete for graduation will be prorated.

HOUSTON ACADEMY CREDITS

Course credits and letter grades are assigned on a semester basis. Only courses completed at Houston Academy are posted on the Houston Academy transcript with the exception of a credit recovery course or a course taken online to replace a course that is normally part of the HA Program of Study (prior approval required).

ONLINE CREDITS

Students may request permission from the Upper School Head to enroll in an online course if they wish to expand their learning experience. Courses that are completed online will not be placed on the HA transcript or count toward the student's GPA unless it is a credit recovery course.

REPORT CARDS

Parents and students may access and review student grades at any time online via PowerSchool. Report cards are sent home electronically at the end of each quarter of study with the exception of the fourth quarter when a physical copy is sent home. It is the parent and student's responsibility to continuously review grades and to report any concerns to the teacher.

TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts will be printed within two days of receiving a request from the student or guardian provided that the student is in good standing at the institution. Students must request a transcript and provide a minimum of 48 hours advance notice of any college application deadlines. For college counseling purposes, student transcripts are uploaded to Naviance (college counseling software) and universities subsequently download student transcripts from Naviance.

STUDENT/PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

The School encourages students, parents and staff to schedule teacher conferences **whenever** they have questions or concerns about a student's academic progress. Students are encouraged to take ownership for their learning and to meet with teachers before or after class to review their grades and to receive assistance when required.

Parent appointments may be arranged by sending a communication (written note or email) to the US Head of School or Counselor. Parents are not permitted to make unannounced visits to teachers before the start of the school day or during the school day as at these times faculty are assembling materials for the day's activities and/or assisting with supervision duties. The School also requests that parents do not call teachers at home at any time. The school contact information for teachers and administration are provided on the school website.

COUNSELOR CONFERENCES

The US Counselor is available to meet with any students who have social or academic questions or concerns. Counseling conferences will be scheduled for students throughout the year. Attendance at these conferences is required unless the student has a school conflict. In case of a conflict, the student is expected to see the appropriate Counselor before the appointed time to reschedule.

After Quarter grades are finalized, counselors will meet any students who are having academic difficulty. Plans for improving study habits will be discussed, and parents will be notified if tutoring is deemed necessary.

COURSES

All students in grades 9-11 must be enrolled in seven classes each semester. Of the seven courses, one may be a Study Hall; however, students that aspire to top tier universities are encouraged to forego this option to strengthen their transcript.

Seniors students must be enrolled in a minimum of six classes each semester and may select to take one free block within the schedule provided that they are not placed on probation (academic or disciplinary for any reason).

DAILY SCHEDULE

The Upper School implements a six-day rotating cycle of seven periods. The first six classes meet at a different time each day while the seventh period meets at the same time every day.

PERIOD	TIME	DAY I	DAY II	DAY III	DAY IV	DAY V	DAY VI
1 st	8:00-8:50	A	B	C	D	E	F
2 nd	8:54-9:44	B	C	D	E	F	A
Break	9:44-9:59						
3 rd	10:03-10:53	C	D	E	F	A	B
4 th	10:57-11:47	D	E	F	A	B	C
5 th	11:51-12:41	E	F	A	B	C	D
Lunch	12:41-1:09						
6 th	1:13-2:03	F	A	B	C	D	E
Advisory	2:06-2:26	Community Meeting (M)	G	Advisory (W)	G	Advisory (F)	G
7 th	2:26-3:15	G		G		G	
Tutorial	3:15-3:45						

ADVISORY

At Houston Academy, all students are assigned an Advisor and an advisory group. Advisory provides teachers and students the opportunity to build relationships that foster a greater sense of community and belonging. The purpose of the advisory program includes:

- ensure that each student is known by at least one adult;
- review student grades/social progress and to arrange for the student to meet with the Upper School Counselor to discuss an issue if warranted;
- teach leadership skills; and
- promote communication and collaboration between students, the school, parents, and school organizations, teams and clubs.

*While the regular schedule runs on a 6-day cycle, Advisory runs on a Monday-Wednesday-Friday schedule unless otherwise required.

STUDY HALL

All students that have study halls are assigned a teacher and a defined meeting place. Students must take materials to the assigned class to work on during the period of study. Students that do not bring material will be sent to their lockers to find it and marked tardy in the class. Students **MUST** be engaged in academic work during study hall.

In extraordinary circumstances when students need to work on assignments involving students that are not in their specific Study Hall, the student must make arrangements in advance with the subject area teacher that assigned the group work and communicate this to the study hall supervisor. Students may only meet in supervised areas..

GRADING SYSTEM

Houston Academy reports Semester Grades using a Letter Grade system with the following equivalencies:

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Grade Point Average
A+	100-98	4.3
A	97-93	4.0
A-	92-90	3.7
B+	88-87	3.3
B	86-83	3.0
B-	82-80	2.7
C+	79-77	2.3
C	76-73	2.0
C-	72-70	1.7
D	69-65	1.0
F	Below 65	0.0

CALCULATING SEMESTER GRADES

Houston Academy reports letter grades that are based on a numerical average. Semester grades are calculated in the following manner:

- Cumulative GPA Classes: Quarter 1 (40%) + Quarter 2 (40%) + Semester Exam (20%)
- All Courses Classes: Quarter 1 (50%) + Quarter 2 (50%)

CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGES VS. ALL COURSES GPA

- **Cumulative Grade Point Averages** (GPA) are calculating using the final grades in all core courses (Math, Science, English, Social Studies, and Foreign Languages) as well as grades from any elective courses that have a capstone experience (exam or portfolio). Please note that the Cumulative GPAs also includes Algebra I which is normally taken in grade eight but is considered and evaluated using US Grading Policies.
- **All Courses Grade Point Averages** (GPA) include all courses taken during a student's Upper School career with the exception of any Study Hall.

REGULAR TESTS AND TESTING SCHEDULE

All HA instructional staff are required to schedule tests in advance to ensure that students are adequately prepared and not required to complete more than two tests on any given day. Students should be given a minimum of two days' notice before any test. A Test is defined as any summative evaluation that requires more than half of an academic period. If a student misses a test for any reason, they are expected to make up the test on the day that they return to school (during class or after school). Failure to make up a test on the date and time decided upon by the teacher will result in a 0.

HOMEWORK AND AT HOME ASSIGNMENTS

Homework is a significant and meaningful part of the curriculum at HA. It serves to instill in students the formation and development of good study habits and to reinforce the learned skills and concepts taught in class. Homework will be assigned regularly in all academic classes. If a student misses a class for any reason, they are expected to send in homework electronically whenever possible or may hand in the assignment upon their return to school. If a student fails to hand in the homework in a timely manner, they will have points deducted in accordance with the classroom teacher's policy or they will receive a 0.

Teachers also will regularly assign at home assignments (projects, essays, etc.). This work is designed to provide students alternative ways to express their learning. If a student is absent from class on the day that the assignment is due, they are expected to submit the work electronically whenever possible or may hand in the assignment upon their return to school. If a student fails to hand in the work in a timely manner, points will be deducted in accordance with the classroom teacher's policy or they will receive a 0.

MAKE UP WORK

Work missed due to an absence, including school related activities, **may** be made up; however, it is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher or a classmate to determine what work is required. The teacher will set a timeline for the completion of any work. Completion of work missed due to unexpected absences should take approximately the same time as the time missed from class (i.e., one day missed, one day to make up work).

If a student is knowingly going to miss a class for any reason, they are required to complete a Pre-Arranged Absence Form. Failure to complete the Pre-Arranged Absence Form may result in the absence being considered "Skipping School" or an Unexcused Absence and a grade of 0 will be assigned for all schoolwork that is missed.

All make up work must be completed by the end of each quarter of study unless extenuating circumstances arise. In this case, the student may receive a grade of Incomplete (INC) and the US Head, in collaboration with the student's teachers, will establish a finite timeline for the student to complete any work.

EXAMS AND CAPSTONE EXPERIENCES.

All students in grades 9-12 are required to take either a two-hour Semester Exam (some AP exams may require more time) or a Capstone Experience in each academic subject that counts toward the student's Cumulative GPA unless they fulfill the requirements and qualify for an Exam Exemption. Students take two exams per day. Exams count for 20% of a student's semester grade. No major tests may be scheduled the two days prior to the start of the Examination Period. Students

EXAM EXEMPTIONS (GRADES 9-11)

Students will be allowed to exempt one Semester Exam each semester if they comply with the following requirements:

- Academics: A student must have a 90% in both Quarters prior to the Semester Exam.
- Attendance: Students must be in compliance with the attendance policy.
- Discipline: Students may not have any Major Infractions of the Student Code of Conduct or the Honor Code.
- AP Exams Semester 2: All AP students may exempt the Semester 2 Exam provided that they completed the AP Exam.

Please note that the following conditions apply to Exam Exemptions:

- No exemptions will be allowed in a semester class.
- Students will not be allowed to exempt the same class both semesters.
- AP students cannot exempt the Semester 1 Exam.
- Students cannot exempt a Capstone Experience.

SENIOR SECOND SEMESTER EXAM EXEMPTIONS

Seniors must take all first semester exams; however, they may be exempted from all full year Semester 2 Exams if they maintain a minimum of an 80% (B-) going into the final exam in both Q3&Q4 in addition to meeting all other requirements for general exemptions (Discipline, Honor Code, Attendance Policy, etc.). If a Senior does not meet the attendance requirement in the Second Semester, in order to exempt any exam, the minimum academic requirement will be raised from 80% to 90%.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Standardized testing measures provide valuable data to HA teachers to use to measure academic progress as well as individual and program strengths and weaknesses. The dates for all standardized testing is posted on the school calendar and website. Additionally, data from standardized testing is frequently used as a measure to determine student placement in Honor and AP courses.

Freshmen take the ACT Aspire (free of charge). Sophomores are given and billed the cost for the PSAT 10 and take the ACT Aspire (free of charge). Juniors are given and billed the cost for the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT/NMSQT) and the ACT. All Juniors and Seniors are required to sign up for ACT and SAT for a minimum of one test date during the school year and are encouraged to sign-up for additional testing dates through the ACT and CollegeBoard websites.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT (TUTORIALS)

Upper School teachers are available to provide academic assistance to their children after school on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 3:20-4:00 PM. In some cases, students may be required to attend tutorial sessions. Required tutorials must take priority over any extracurricular activities. Failure to meet this obligation will result in disciplinary action. Tardiness or not attending a required tutorial shall be treated as a minor infraction.

If a teacher notifies a student that their participation/attendance is required in Tutorial and the student fails to attend or provide an excuse in advance of the Tutorial session, the student will be assigned a Minor Infraction for not complying with school rules and regulations and serve detention.

PEER TUTORING

Houston Academy has established a Peer Tutoring Program to assist students that require support. The Peer Tutor Lab is open on Monday from 3:15 - 4:00 PM and Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 7:15-7:55 AM in Library.

SUMMER COURSES

Students may apply to complete a academic course during the summer in order to advance levels in specific subject areas (usually math). Only pre-approved courses, offered directly by HA, will be noted on the student's HA Transcript.

FAILED COURSES

No credit will be awarded if a student earns a grade below 65% in any class at Houston Academy. A maximum of one full credit or two half credits courses can be recovered in an accredited summer program. All credit recovery work must be completed before the start of the next school year or the student will either be required to repeat the course or they will not be permitted to enroll. Students may make-up failed courses that are graduation requirements in one of the following manners:

- Credit Recovery: The student completes a Credit Recovery Course through Houston Academy. If the student passes the credit recovery course, the Credit Recovery credit and grade will be placed on the HA transcript; however, the grade will not be factored into the student's GPA.
- Repeat the Course: If the schedule permits it, a student may select to repeat a failed course at HA and both the new and old grade will be posted on the transcript and used to calculate the student's GPA.

The Head of the Upper School must approve any deviations from these guidelines.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

A student can be placed on Academic Probation if a student earns:

- Grade Point Average (GPA) below a 2.0;
- An F in any class; or
- More than two Ds.

If a student is placed on Academic Probation, the student must sign an Academic Contract and then must demonstrate adequate progress in the class or classes in which they are not meeting the academic standards. If a student does not meet the conditions of the Academic Probation Contract, their case will be sent to the Administrative Council for review and a possible recommendation may result in separation from the school. Student participation in activities and athletics may be limited if they are placed on probation. A failure to meet any of the conditions established in the Academic Contract will result in the student's case being reviewed by the Administrative Council for possible separation from school.

HONOR ROLLS

At the end of each semester, an Honor Roll will be announced and published. The following types of Honors are recognized:

- Headmaster's List: a student must have a GPA of 4.0 or higher;
- Head's List: a student must have between a 3.75 and 3.99 GPA;
- Raider's List: a student must have between a 3.52 and 3.74 GPA.

Please note Honor Roll lists are established using Cumulative GPA formula.

END OF THE YEAR AWARDS

US students are eligible to receive Academic Awards at the end of the year based on their cumulative GPAs as of May 1st. Awards are given for the highest and second highest GPA in each course with an enrollment greater than 12. For courses with an enrollment of less

than 12, only 1 Academic Award is given. Additionally, a Raider Award will be awarded to a student in each class larger than 12 that exemplifies the HA Mission.

A Citizenship Award will be awarded to one or more members of each classroom and is voted upon by the grade level Advisors and students.

GRADUATION CORDS AND HONORS

Graduating students are eligible for special recognition at the Graduation Ceremony in accordance with the following criteria:

VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN:

To be eligible for Valedictorian and Salutatorian, a student must have attended Houston Academy for his/her sophomore, junior, and senior years. Only courses taken at HA count toward determining the valedictorian and salutatorian. The selection of the students who will receive these awards will be made at the end of the first semester of the senior year. During the last semester, the selected Valedictorian and Salutatorian will be monitored closely for any changes in grades, study habits, behavior, responsibilities, etc. If any negative changes are noted during Semester 2, the positions of Valedictorian or Salutatorian can change.

HONOR GRADUATES:

A student must attend Houston Academy two years in order eligible to graduate with honors, and only courses taken at Houston Academy count towards determining honor graduate status. There are three levels of honor graduates at Houston Academy:

- Summa Cum Laude: a student must have earned a cumulative GPA of 4.0 or higher;
- Magna Cum Laude: a student must have earned a cumulative GPA between 3.75 and 3.99;
- Cum Laude: a student must have earned a cumulative GPA between 3.52 and 3.74.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY GRADUATES:

Graduating members of the National Honor Society that are in good standing are entitled to wear special NHS hoods.

COMMUNITY SERVICE CORD:

Students who earn 80 or more hours of community service during their US career will be entitled to wear a Community Service Honor Cord.

ATHLETIC CORD:

Student athletes are eligible for an Athletic Cord if they meet any of the following criteria:

- participated on three varsity sports per year during a minimum of two of their upper school careers;
- participated on a total of 9 varsity teams during their years of eligibility (7-12);

- are named to the Super 12 First Team or All State in one or more individual sport during their US career; or
- are a contributing member of a team that wins a State Title during their US career.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CORDS:

Students who were members of the Student Government Association all four years during their high school career or three years and held an executive position are entitled to wear a Student Government Cord provided that they are in good standing at the time of graduation.

FINE ARTS CORDS:

The Fine Arts Department have created specific criteria that students must meet in accordance to their discipline (Drama, Chorus, Band, Art, Dance, etc.) in order to wear a Fine Arts Cord.

COURSE SELECTION POLICY

HA is committed to offering a challenging program of study that provides students with a diverse selection of courses that prepares students to enter top universities throughout the country. Students typically make their course selections in March. Students are placed in groups in accordance with the schedule parameters and a need to balance and provide an equitable learning environment for all students. For this reason, as a rule, parents and students will not be able to request specific teachers.

DROP/ADD PERIOD:

Students have one week upon entry to class to drop/add courses. The counselor and the course teacher must approve any change in a student's schedule. The Head of Upper School will give the final approval if any changes are required outside the Drop/Add period.

Students may be removed from an Honors or Advanced Placement class due to failure to complete summer assignments, excessive absences, low grades, disruptive behavior, or any other reason deemed appropriate by the Counselor, Teacher, and/or Head of Upper School.

HONORS AND ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) CLASSES:

Given the desire for students to pursue academic excellence and rigor, HA has developed guidelines for enrollment in Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses. The intent of this policy is to ensure that students can succeed in a rigorous course of study. Students considering enrolling in an Honors or AP course should do so understanding that the curriculum requires more time and commitment than a non-AP/Honors course. Performances, athletics, clubs, hobbies, work, and religious or family obligations should be weighed carefully in the decision to enroll in any Honors/AP course.

- A student who selects Honors or AP classes must have a minimum average of 85% or higher (Quarter and Test Grades will be examined) in the prerequisite course, receive a recommendation from the prerequisite teacher, and demonstrate excellence on standardized testing (above the 50th NPR).
- Honors classes receive a quality point of 0.5 while AP classes receive a 1.0 quality point when calculating GPA.
- A student electing to enroll in an Honors/AP course is expected to maintain a high level of achievement, to complete the course. Students that do not maintain a minimum of a C+ average may be recommended and/or required to withdraw from the course.
- A student may only withdraw from an Honors/AP course during the first two weeks of the year (or the first two weeks of the semester in the case of a one-semester AP course). Other than those times, the withdrawal must be supported by and be at the recommendation of the Department Chair and Head of Upper School.
- AP students are also expected to take the AP test in the Spring. A fee is charged for the test. If a student does not take the AP test, the AP label will be removed from the student's transcript (weighting also removed).
- Should a senior withdraw from an AP course at any time during the college application process, all colleges to which the student has made application are notified.

STUDENTS REQUESTING TO MOVE TO HONORS COURSES

Students that are on the regular track in mathematics that request to move to Honors after initial placement in Pre-Algebra are required to:

- Make the request at the time of the course selection process by completing a Math Advancement Application.
- Complete a designated summer program of study to prepare for an examination that will be performed no later than the first week of August.
- Pass the Math Advancement Test with a minimum 75% to show competency and readiness for advanced learning opportunities.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE PLACEMENT

All students that are new to the Upper School will be required to enter Spanish I or Latin I unless they completed Language Courses at their school or have alternative language experiences. In order to determine equivalency and placement, students may be required to complete an initial placement test and depending upon the results, the school will make recommendations that include a summer program of study and retesting or being placed in a lower or higher level.

SUMMER READING AND ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

Students may be assigned summer reading and assignments as a prerequisite for entry to a course, especially AP and Honors courses. Students that received the summer assignments

but did not complete the work may be dropped from the AP or Honors course(s) and/or receive a 0 on the assignment in a summary course. New students to HA may be allotted extra time to complete summer assignments.

SHORT-TERM POLICY

During the week prior to Spring Break, all Upper School students will participate in a Short-Term experience. During this time, all normal class activities cease. Students register for a variety of educational experiences that are provided by our staff and members of the community. Students may select to attend educational field trips or to complete unique courses of study on campus.

Short-Term is considered a vital part of the school curriculum and participation is mandatory. Some Short-Term experiences require additional payments, especially those that include travel outside of Dothan.

During Short-Term, all Senior students are required to perform an internship (job shadows) with professionals in the community.

In rare cases, Sophomore and Junior students may propose “Alternative” Short-Term Projects to complete during Short-Term. Proposals for alternative projects must be completed by March 1st to be considered by the Administrative Council. Only proposals that provide students with quality learning experiences will be considered and students that have their proposals accepted will be required to document and present their learning to Administrative Council upon their return to the school.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Research shows a strong link between school attendance and academic achievement. Each day a student is absent or late is a missed opportunity to learn and it deprives the student the of the opportunity to interact with both teachers and fellow students. For this reason, whenever possible, trips and dental or medical appointments should be scheduled so that students do not miss class.

Absences and tardies to class due to school-related activities (such as field trips, athletic events, or disciplinary action) will not be counted as absences as long as the student attends the event and makes up any assigned work.

All students returning to school following an absence, regardless of the reason, must report to the office with a note signed by a parent/guardian stating the reason for the absence or appropriate documentation from a college or Dr. visit. The office will provide the student with an “Entry Slip” to confirm that the child was absent for a justified reason. It is the family’s responsibility to provide evidence justifying all absences. The evidence will be

submitted to the Administrative Council for review if a student exceeds the maximum permitted number of absences (5 classes in a Semester).

If a student is absent on the day that a Major Assignment is due, they must submit all work electronically. If the work cannot be submitted electronically due to the nature of the assignment, the student must contact the teacher and make alternative arrangements. The student may be assigned academic penalties if these conditions are not met. If a student is absent on the day of an assessment (quiz or test), they must make up the assessment on the day that they return to school or at the time established by the teacher.

All students are strongly encouraged to visit universities and colleges as part of the College Counseling program. Students that schedule College Visits and provide documentation (online registration or email confirmation) of the visit when completing the Pre-Arranged Absence Form will receive a School Related Absence (SRA). Students that do not complete the Pre-Arranged Absence Form or fail to provide adequate documentation, will be marked absent.

All questions regarding attendance requirements should be directed to the Head of Upper School. The Attendance Policy is further elaborated below in the Student Code of Conduct.

Please note that attendance for student athletes is governed by a separate set of rules and regulations described below in the Specific Athletics Policies and Procedures section.

APPOINTMENTS

Students arriving after 8:15 AM must sign in at the office upon their arrival to school. Students who must depart campus before 3:15 PM for an appointment (medical, court date, etc.) must present a note from a parent or guardian confirming the appointment prior to 7:55 AM. The student will be given a pass in order to be dismissed from class at the appropriate time.

Parents are **strongly** encouraged to schedule appointments after school or during periods when Houston Academy is not in session. Please remember that students that miss more than 5 classes in any given class in a semester they will lose their Exam Exemption privilege and may be required to appear before the Administrative Council and petition to receive course credit.

TARDINESS:

Students will be on time for all classes, meetings, and assemblies. The classroom and advisory teacher will record tardies within PowerTeacher. All such tardies will be counted as unexcused unless the student has a note from a teacher or an administrator. Students who are tardy to class may be required to make up any missed work before leaving school that day and are required to make up any work that was graded when they were not present in the class.

Students who accumulate 3 tardies in a single class or 5 total tardies in a Semester will be assigned a Minor Infraction, serve detention and sign an Attendance Contract. Failure to comply with the Attendance Contract will result in further disciplinary action and the assignment of a Major Infraction which may include Saturday School, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion, and the exam exemption privilege will be revoked.

For attendance purposes, if a student is more than 10-15 minutes late for a class, he/she is considered absent from that class and will be assessed a Major Infraction for “skipping school” unless they provide a justified excuse.

Students arriving to school after 8:15 AM will be counted as absent; therefore, they must report to the office to sign in with an excuse.

ABSENCES:

HA community members understand that excessive absences undermine the educational experience of a child and have a negative effect on academic performance. All absences are considered unexcused until they are justified.

If a student is absent more than five (5) classes during a semester, their case will be sent to the Administrative Council for review. The Administrative Council will review the student’s academic, discipline, and attendance history as well as all justifications for the absences provided by the parents (at the time of the absence) and make a series of recommendations including but not limited to:

- Loss of exam privilege; and/or
- Attendance contract.

If a student is absent more than 9 classes in any semester of study, the Administrative Council will meet to reassess the student’s case and to make further recommendations including but not limited to:

- Loss of exam privilege;
- Attendance contract; and/or
- 0 credit for the course.

Any student that misses more than 9 classes will absolutely not be permitted to exempt any exam as exams are capstone experiences used to demonstrate mastery of the content and learning objectives. Seniors that exceed the allotted number of absences must meet a higher academic standard in order to exempt individual exams.

Valid reasons for missing a class include:

- personal illness or scheduled healthcare appointments for which the Upper School Head was previously notified;
- court appearances;

- family medical emergency or death in the immediate family;
- other absences approved in advance by the Head of Upper School.

If a student absence cannot be avoided during a regular school day, the student will be given the opportunity to make up essential assignments provided prior arrangements are made in accordance with the Pre-Arranged Absence Policy, or the absence is justified as an “emergency” or the parent provides a medical excuse.

Written warnings will be sent to the student and his/her parent as absences accrue during a semester of study. A warning letter will be sent after a student has accumulated five (5) absences in a semester.

PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCES:

The school’s vacations are both generous in number and length; therefore, Houston Academy expects parents and students to observe the dates specified on the school calendar. Students that plan to miss school due to any pre-arranged absence must complete the Pre-Arranged Absence Form (available in the office) and have the form signed by all of their teachers and submitted to the Head of Upper School for approval no less than 5 school days prior to the absence. The student must request all assignments from the teachers and make arrangements to take prior, any missed tests or quizzes in advance or upon return to the school (at the discretion of the teacher).

If the student fails to complete or follow the procedures outlined above, it may result in the absence being considered truancy which is considered a Major Infraction. If a student’s academic standing is in jeopardy, a pre-arranged absence may not be granted.

SCHOOL RELATED ABSENCES:

Students that miss school when representing Houston Academy in local, state, or national competitions or events will be assigned a School Related Absence. Additionally, students must complete a Pre-Arranged Absence and must provide documentation of their scheduled visit a minimum of one week in advance of the visit or to have it counted as a School Related Absence.

INCLEMENT WEATHER AND FORCE MAJEURE

In situations of early morning inclement weather or force majeure, the school will notify radio station WOOF at 99.7 and WTVY TV regarding plans for the day and students/parents will receive an emergency, alert solution notification from the school (email, text, and message). On these days, all core academic and honor elective teachers are expected to assign work to be completed at home. All students MUST check their email and Google Classroom/Edmodo pages to see what work is assigned. All work assigned during an inclement weather day is due the day that the students return. Late work will be assigned an academic penalty. The school reserves the right to cancel school or dismiss students early in the case of any Force Majeure.

SENIOR OFF-CAMPUS PRIVILEGES

Seniors may leave campus at lunch and during their free periods. Parental permission for this privilege must be on file in the office. At certain times during the year, the counselor will make appointments for seniors during their free periods. Failure to keep the appointment may result in loss of the free period. Seniors who earn one F or two or more Ds in any subject at the end of a quarter will forfeit this privilege until their progress can be reviewed and their overall semester average improves. Students that do not comply with the Student Code of Conduct and commit a Major Infraction of any kind (attendance, discipline, or honor) may also have this privilege revoked. Students that have their privilege revoked will be assigned to a Study Hall.

CHECKING IN/OUT

Students may not leave campus for any reason during school hours without parental permission that is verified by a school administrator.

Students arriving late must also check in at the main office and provide a note indicating that they had their parent's permission to arrive late. School administrators will consider that students that do not abide by this policy are "skipping school" and they will be assessed a Major Infraction.

VISITORS POLICY

Parents, guests, and visitors must check in at the main office and receive a name badge in order to be present on campus. Visitors are not permitted to be in instructional areas unless they are accompanied by an HA community member. The visitor badge must be worn for the duration of the visit. For the safety of our students, any parent delivering any object or lunch to their child MUST check in through the front office.

GENERAL POLICY

STUDENT ID

Students are required to have a student ID that is purchased and delivered at the beginning of the school year for \$5. The ID will allow students to attend all home regular season athletic events at no charge. Student IDs may also be used to earn students a discount at many businesses, museums, parks, etc.

LOCKERS

Lockers and locks must be rented at the beginning of the school year. The Dean of Students distributes lockers and locks. Lockers should be locked during the day and after school. The school will not be responsible for items taken from unlocked lockers. Students must return their lock and locker in good order at the end of the year. Failure to do so will result in a \$10 fine.

For security reasons, the locker area will be locked at 5:00 PM and opened at 7:00 AM. Students may not call school personnel to come to the school to open the locker area after school hours. No exceptions will be made. The school reserves the right at any time to search lockers on the school premises.

Students are NOT allowed to use their car as a locker. Students should not carry all of their books in their backpacks, as it is unsafe and creates crowding in the classroom. Backpacks should be used, primarily for bringing items to and from school.

PARKING

Students who are licensed to drive may rent reserved parking spaces for \$5 from the Dean of Students. Students who do not rent a parking space may not bring cars to school. If another student parks in your assigned space, please park in one of the visitor spaces on either side of the flagpole in front of the school and report the violation to the front office or the Dean of Students. Students, please note that if it is reported to the school that a student is driving recklessly to or from school, their parking privilege will be suspended.

Parents and visitors are asked to use the visitor parking areas in the front driveway and in the Lower School parking lot. Please do not park in a space on the Upper School side.

CARS

Students may not go to their cars during the school day without permission from a supervising teacher. All books, lunches, and other items needed for the day should be put in lockers upon students' arrival on campus. Bringing a car on campus is a privilege. Any violation of parking or car rules can result in the loss of this privilege. The school reserves the right to search cars located on school premises and students are responsible and will be held accountable for any items that are found within their vehicle.

Students may not be in the parking lot during school hours except for arrival and/or departure from school. Seniors may NOT loiter in their cars when leaving or coming back to school from their lunch and/or free period. No student may leave campus for morning break. All students, including seniors, must attend advisory and all assemblies and pep rallies.

LUNCH

Students in grades 9-11 may not leave campus for lunch unless they are in the company of a parent or guardian. The parent or guardian must sign the student out in the office in Flowers Hall. Telephone permission is not acceptable. The students must sign in at Flowers Hall upon returning to campus.

Students may bring lunch from home or use the catering service provided by the school. Students will eat in Dunning Hall, at the picnic table area, or in the Upper School courtyard. All trash should be put in the containers provided. Trash is not to be left on the tables, floor, or around the picnic area. No food or drink is permitted in classrooms, hallways, the library, locker room, the main office, or the gymnasiums without explicit permission. Approved water bottles are the only exception. In the interest of student safety, fast food delivery will not be allowed. If you are a parent and are delivering lunch, you must come through the office and leave the lunch in designated area in the lobby to be picked up by the student.

Our school lunch service provides a convenient and nutritious lunch for students. Lunch can be ordered online, and the menu changes regularly so that students have a variety of choices. We encourage parents to either take advantage of this service or to allow their student to pack a lunch. If students choose not to purchase lunch through the school lunch service, parents are strongly encouraged to have students pack their own lunch. This is an important step toward the independence and responsibility that we hope to foster at Houston Academy. **We ask that parents only bring outside lunch for students on special occasions.** No fast-food delivery will be allowed during the regular school day.

Cell phones and technology may be used during lunch hour; however, their usage cannot disturb others nor should it inhibit a child from socializing.

MEDICATION

No medication will be administered to a student without a parent's written permission. Written permission for prescription medication must include date, name of medication, dosage, and times to be administered. These medications must be given to the school counselor. At no time should a student have any medication, prescription or nonprescription, in his possession.

WATER BOTTLES

Proper hydration is essential to efficient brain function and effective learning; therefore, students are strongly encouraged to drink water during the school day. Students may carry non-breakable, translucent water bottles. In order to be environmentally responsible, students are asked to use refillable bottles that can be refilled at water filling stations throughout the school. Refillable "Camelback" bottles are available for purchase at Raider Retail. No glass water bottles, soft-sided water bottles, or disposable cups will be allowed in classrooms.

RAIDER RETAIL

Raider Retail (RR) is located in Dunning Hall and is staffed by HA PTO volunteers. It is open Monday through Friday at Break and Lunch. Houston Academy merchandise such as tee shirts, sweatshirts, shorts, hats, etc. can be purchased at Raider Retail. HA t-shirts can

be worn with jeans on spirit days in place of uniforms. HA T-shirts and shorts are a requirement for Upper School PE.

In addition to spirit wear merchandise, snacks and drinks are sold during upper school break and during all lunches. There are healthy options available such as yogurt, cheese, fruit, and water in addition to routine snacks. For convenience, parents may open accounts for the students, but cash is accepted as well. Checks should be made out to HA PTO, and the responsible parent's name and cell phone number should be provided. A record is kept of what is bought and can be reviewed if desired. Since time is very limited during break and lunch, the student's name and items purchased are written down, and after peak periods, it is deducted from the account card. For this reason, it is impossible for volunteers to follow any special instructions or know if a student reaches a negative balance. A volunteer will contact you by text when your child's balance is depleted.

All proceeds from spirit wear and snack sales are donated back to school in various ways. RR is a great volunteer opportunity for parents and a good way to meet and become familiar with HA community members.

LIBRARY POLICY

The library is a resource center for the school instructional program, and the students are encouraged to use it. In order to ensure that students have equal access to the library facilities, the following guidelines must be followed:

1. Responsible care of library materials is stressed to all students.
2. Students may check out as many as 2 books for 2 weeks. This number may be increased for special assignments. At or before the end of the 2 weeks, the books must be returned to the library or renewed for another 2 weeks.
3. Students who have overdue books at the end of the year will not receive their report cards until the library obligation is cleared.
4. The library does not charge fines for overdue books, but it will charge students for damaged or lost books and/or media materials.
5. Books are checked out on an individual basis. The community member who checks out a book is responsible for returning it to the library.
6. The computers in the library fall under the same guidelines as all other school computers.
7. Students must follow the established rules and regulations of the library.

The library is typically open from 7:30-3:30 PM on a daily basis. Students may visit the library before/after class or with a pass from their teacher during the regular day.

COPY MACHINES AND PRINTING

Students are expected to print and make copies of any assigned work at home. Not having ink at home is not an acceptable excuse for not handing in work on time. Students may

print and make copies in the Library Media Center when necessary; however, they must ask the area supervisor in charge of the facility to run the copies.

CHALLENGING CURRICULUM CONTENT

Parents have the right to challenge curricular content due to religious or cultural beliefs. Parents and students that have concerns must communicate with the Upper School Principal and complete a process that includes a justification for the challenge and a plan to complete alternative work.

TEXTBOOKS AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Tuition does not include the cost of school supplies, textbooks, and/or workbooks. Students may purchase their books from any online service that offers textbooks or from another student. The school supplies list and a list of textbooks required for each course offered are available on the website at www.houstonacademy.com. If students do not have the required supplies or textbooks by the end of the first week of school it will be considered a minor infraction.

CHEWING GUM

Recent educational research suggests that chewing gum may enhance learning and test-taking proficiency. Given that teachers have primary responsibility for comportment in their own classroom, teachers may prohibit gum chewing in their rooms. It should also be acknowledged that gum may pose a safety issue in science laboratories and may be prohibited. Additionally, students may be prohibited from chewing gum if they dispose of it improperly or chew it at inappropriate times (e.g., during ceremonies). We believe, however, that if gum chewing is allowed, students will be more likely to dispose of it properly.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES / CELL PHONES / SMART WATCHES

Houston Academy believes that the learning environment should not be interrupted at any time and that distractions within the classroom and school setting must be avoided. For this reason, cell phones **MUST** be turned off, stored out of sight (as defined by the teacher) and may not be used within the classroom unless the teacher provides explicit permission to use it as a learning device. Teachers may also require that students store Smart Watches out of site as well.

Houston Academy believes that authentic, personal communication is essential to both the educational and social environment of our community and discourage students from using social media websites during the regular school day. Students are expected to observe normal rules of “common courtesy” when using a cell phone in public areas which is permitted before/after school, at break and lunch, and in between classes.

The following rules apply to the use of any device by HA community members:

- Under no circumstance can a student use an electronic device or cell phone to post or take a picture, video or recording of any nature of any community member without his or her permission;
- Under no circumstance can a student use an electronic device to post or share any information that can be deemed as disrespectful or demeaning to any community member;
- Use of any device during breaks cannot disturb the environment for others; and
- Students may not use audio earphones in classrooms or public areas unless the teacher provides explicit permission to do so.

Inappropriate use of an electronic device will result in the loss of this privilege and the assignment of a disciplinary infraction.

Students are welcome to use the school office phone for brief communication and emergency calls when necessary.

TECHNOLOGY

All technology falls under the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), which is signed by each student and each parent on an annual basis.

UNIFORM POLICY

Lands End is the official uniform provider for Houston Academy. Some uniform pieces may also be purchased at Sandra Jean Uniforms in Dothan. All shirts, bottoms, and outerwear must have the HA logo and must be purchased from either Sandra Jean or from Lands' End.

OUTERWEAR

The following items are considered part of the Uniform Policy and are available through Lands End:

- HA Squall Parka or Lined Rain Jacket
- HA Fleece Jacket or Vest
- HA Cardigan (girls)

Additionally, all HA approved $\frac{3}{4}$ zipper athletic jackets and letterman jackets that are royal blue, navy, or gray are also considered permissible outerwear.

Please note that non HA jackets and blankets are not considered part of the uniform and are not permitted on campus or within the classroom. Additionally, HA sweatshirts, hoodies, etc. that are sold by Raider Retail or obtained through the Athletic Department are not part of HA uniform policy may ONLY be worn on Raider Days (Fridays).

GIRLS' 9-12

The following items are a part of Houston Academy's Uniform Dress Code for girls:

- White, royal blue, or light blue HA polo shirt (long or short sleeve) *athletic or knit material.
- HA button down white shirt.
- HA khaki cargo short or pant of athletic or knit material.
- Khaki or plaid HA skirt/skort

GIRLS' GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Uniforms must be neat and clean. Clothing with stains, holes, tears, fraying cannot be worn at school.
- Belts must be worn if belt loops are on the uniform.
- Athletic (tennis) shoes* (*RECOMMENDED) or dark (brown or black) closed shoe Wallabee style, deck shoes, saddle oxfords are acceptable. No open toe shoes/sandals/flip flops, boots, heels of any kind, etc. are allowed unless otherwise specified.
- Tights, leggings, and knee socks must be solid in color (navy, gray, black or white).
- Regular socks of solid color (white, blue, black) are preferred; however, students may wear any type of sock provided that it does not contain negative or unacceptable images or words.
- No article of clothing worn at school at any time may advertise drugs, alcohol, or contain any slogans or words that may be deemed inappropriate by the school administration.
- No sweatshirt or sweatshirt material may be worn except on Raider Day.
- Skorts, skirts and shorts may not be short or revealing. Skirts should reflect modesty and a conservative viewpoint.
- Shirt tails may not extend below the hem of one's skort, skirt, or short.
- Solid white camisoles may be worn under uniform shirts.
- Long sleeve shirts under short sleeve are permissible if they are solid white, gray, or black.
- Hats, caps, sunglasses, or other headgear are not permitted on campus at any time from arrival until dismissal.
- Clothing should fit well, be modestly cut, and should not too tight or too baggy.
- No cleavage should show, and the midsection must be fully covered, even when the arms are raised.
- Distracting make-up, hair, or jewelry is not allowed. Hair must be a natural color.
- Visible tattoos are not allowed.
- All articles of clothing should be labeled with the student's name.

The administration retains the right to determine if any article of clothing is inappropriate.

BOYS' GRADES 9-12

The following items are a part of Houston Academy's Uniform Dress Code for boys and are available through Lands End:

- White, royal blue or light blue HA polo shirt (long or short sleeve)* of athletic or knit material.
- HA button down white shirt.
- HA cargo short or pant of athletic or knit material.

BOYS' GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Uniforms must be neat and clean. Clothing with stains, holes, tears, fraying should not be worn at school.
- Belts must be worn if belt loops are on the uniform.
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- Athletic (tennis) shoes (RECOMMENDED) or dark (brown or black) closed shoe Wallabee style, deck shoes, saddle oxfords are permitted. No open toe shoes/sandals/flip flops, boots, heels of any kind, etc. are allowed unless otherwise specified.
- Socks of solid color (white, blue, black) are preferred; however, students may wear
- No article of clothing worn at school at any time may advertise drugs, alcohol, or contain any slogans or words that may be deemed inappropriate by the school administration.
- Clothing should fit well, not too tight or too baggy.
- Short sleeve, solid white, navy, or gray undershirts may be worn under uniform shirts.
- Long sleeve shirts under short sleeve are permissible if they are solid white, gray, or black.
- Hair should be no longer than the top of the collar. No "mohawks" or other distracting haircuts or hair colors are allowed.
- Hats, caps, sunglasses, or other headgear are not permitted on campus at any time from arrival until dismissal.
- No visible body piercing or tattoos are allowed.
- All articles of clothing should be labeled with the student's name.

The administration retains the right to determine if any article of clothing is inappropriate.

*Note - Senior students can select a unique color that they may substitute for regular HA colors during their Senior year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students are required to wear T-shirts, athletic shorts (which must be an appropriate length), and athletic shoes to all classes. Female students may wear approved tank tops that do not show any undergarments. Male students cannot remove their shirts during scheduled classes. Students that do not dress in the appropriate PE uniform will not be permitted to participate and will therefore lose significant participation points.

RAIDER DAYS

Fridays are designated as “Raider Days”. On Raider Days, dress code is relaxed; however, students are still held to high standards and a defined set of rules and regulations. On these days, students may wear any approved HA T-shirt, sweatshirt, or athletic jersey issued through clubs, teams, or PTO sales. Students may wear blue jeans (long) with no holes or fraying; otherwise, they must wear regular uniform bottoms. Although athletic shoes continue to be the recommended shoe of choice (especially if the student is enrolled in PE or Athletics and Fitness), boots (no high heel boots) may be worn with jeans; otherwise, all other regular shoe uniform policies apply. If students elect not to participate in Raider Day, they must wear the regular school uniform.

SPIRIT DAYS

Students are encouraged to participate in Spirit Days by dressing out of uniform according to the designated theme that is approved by the Upper School Head. Although uniforms are not required these days, student attire must still be appropriate and considered to be in “good taste”. No short shorts/skirts, tank tops, etc. are permitted.

TECHNOLOGY: ACCEPTABLE USE POLICIES

Houston Academy seeks to place the latest technological advances into the hands of skilled, active learners. Providing Internet access to HA students promotes educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and research. Responsibilities come with the use of the Internet. It is, therefore, important that all parents are familiar with the school's policies regarding use of the computers, which also includes all policies and procedures listed, and signed by parents and students in the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). Some of these policies and procedures include but are not limited to:

- School computers are for educational use only. Students may not play games using the computers at any time. Music or videos may be played only when part of a teacher's assignment (i.e. music added to PowerPoint presentation) or regular classroom procedures.
- Students may not send messages of any kind using school computers. This includes the use of ICQ, AIM, Microsoft Messenger, WhatsApp, all other chat software, and console messages.
- Food and drink are not allowed in the lab.
- Students may not install programs on a computer without specific permission from the Director of Technology or teacher. No games, utilities, or plug-ins should be downloaded without permission.
- Students may not use school printers to print invitations, flyers, campaign information, game cheat sheets, or any other material deemed non-educational or inappropriate.
- Students are not to open, read, or alter another student's work either on the computer or on the network. Any attempt to copy another student's work will be treated as cheating and/or plagiarism as addressed in the Student Handbook.
- If a student causes damage to the software configuration or the hardware of a computer, he/she will be liable for the cost of repair and/or replacement of the equipment.
- Students may not enter any area protected by a password unless authorized to do so.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND CLUBS

Houston Academy sponsors a variety of clubs and school organizations. Students are encouraged to participate in school activities as an important component of an integral education. Students are required to sign up for one Service Club and are also encouraged to sign up for at least one School Organization or Club.

All clubs and organizations must develop internal rules and regulations and a system of governance. Students may belong to multiple clubs/organizations; however, they may only hold a leadership role in one club/organization.

Some clubs and organizations will have dues and all clubs will require participation of the students in activities outside the regular schedule. Students that do not fulfill their responsibilities and designated roles may be removed from the club/organization.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS

HA offers students the opportunity to participate in a variety of school organizations to further the school's mission and to build school spirit and leadership skills. Organizations include but are not limited to:

RAIDER AMBASSADORS

Houston Academy Student Ambassadors are a prestigious team of HA's top student leaders who participate in special events in an official capacity. These students act as liaisons between the school and prospective students, their families, guests, alumni, business partners and friends of the school. The Ambassador program provides student leaders to assist in admission efforts, college connection efforts, campus wide events, and promote the image of Houston Academy to Dothan and the surrounding community.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY AND NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

The National Honor Society is an organization that recognizes students that who have displayed outstanding, character, scholarship, leadership, and citizenship. Students must meet the minimum GPA requirement and comply with the conditions outlined in the Houston Academy NHS/NJHS Charter in order to qualify and maintain their membership.

Students must maintain an exemplary discipline and academic record and participate in all NHS/NJHS activities in order to maintain membership. Any violations or infractions of the Student Code of Conduct or Honor Code will result in the student being referred to the Faculty Council for review in accordance with the NHS/NJHS Charter.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

The Student Government Association (SGA) is the students' representative body. It promotes school spirit, sponsors the homecoming activities, and organizes activities throughout the year. In the spring, the student body elects a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer to serve as officers for the upcoming year. Students must apply to be members to serve on SGA. The SGA has a charter that governs membership responsibilities and duties.

THE BLUE ZONE

The Blue Zone Pep Club works as a support group to promote school spirit. The Blue Zone sponsors tailgates at various athletic events and helps raise awareness of Houston Academy student activities.

GLOBAL ISSUES NETWORK

The Global Issues Network supports the school's mission to foster global citizenship and encourages students to raise awareness and to work toward developing local solutions to some of the pressing issues that face the world today.

COMMUNITY SERVICE CLUBS

Houston Academy partners with local and global organizations to provide students with opportunities to participate in service based learning experiences. At the beginning of each academic year, **all** students will sign up for a Service Club. All students must complete at least one activity within their Service Club on an annual basis.

OTHER SCHOOL CLUBS

Many school clubs have membership fees and specific requirement for membership. Students often times will represent the school in competitions or seminars throughout the school year. Clubs may include but are not limited to:

LANGUAGE CLUBS

Students may sign up to participate in language clubs to enrich their understanding in a language.

ARCHERY CLUB

Students may sign up to participate in archery and represent HA at competitions throughout the local area and state.

CHESS CLUB

Students involved in the chess club receive instruction in the fundamental strategies and tactics of chess. In addition, they engage in weekly matches with fellow club members.

FCA

Fellowship of Christian Athletes promotes Christian values through participation in outside activities. Students need not be a member of an athletic team to be a member of FCA.

MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Model United Nations, also known as Model UN or MUN, is an educational simulation and/or academic competition in which students learn about diplomacy, international relations, and the United Nations. MUN involves and teaches research, public speaking, debating, and writing skills, in addition to critical thinking, teamwork, and leadership abilities.

ROBOTICS

The Robotics club takes students of all interests and they work together in building a robot for competition. This involves taking a real-life problem designed by engineers within the community and challenges the students to solve the problem using a variety of methods.

DEBATE CLUB

Students that are interested in debate may join the Debate Club.

SCHOLARS' BOWL

Sr. Scholars' Bowl is open to students in grades 9-12. Students study and practice together to prepare for participation in academic competitions throughout the state.

MATH TEAM

The Math Team members are typically selected by the US Math teachers and students represent the school at Math Competitions throughout the state.

SPECIFIC ATHLETIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ANTICIPATED ATHLETIC TEAMS FOR THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR

Houston Academy recognizes and promotes the importance of interscholastic activities. As a member of the Alabama High School Athletic Association the school offers a broad spectrum of organized programs in the following sports:

Fall	Winter	Spring
Cheerleading (V, JV)	Archery (club)	Boys Baseball (V, JV, JH)
Boys Cross Country (V, JV, MS)	Boys Bowling (V)	Boys Golf (V)
Girls Cross Country (V, JV, MS)	Girls Bowling (V)	Girls Golf (V)
Football (V, JV)	Cheerleading (V, JV)	Boys Tennis (JV, V)
Girls Volleyball (V, JV, JH)	Boys Basketball (V, JV, MS)	Girls Tennis (JV, V)
Boys Swimming (V)	Girls Basketball (V, JV, JH)	Boys Soccer (V, JV, MS)
Girls Swimming (V)	Wrestling (V)	Girls Soccer (V, JV)
	Indoor Track (V)	Boys Track & Field (V)
		Girls Track & Field (V)
		Girls Softball (V, JV)

AHSAA STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

All students must have the following information properly signed and on file in the Athletic office before they may practice.

1. Birth Certificate
2. Concussion Consent Form
3. Student Release Form
4. Physical
5. Sportsmanship

All forms may be found on the AHSAA website or Houston Academy's website.

DIRECTIONS FOR SPORTSMANSHIP REQUIREMENT

All athletes are required to register on the www.nfhslearn.com and to complete the sportsmanship elective course for students. The course is free. Make Sure you print the completion certificate at the end and give a copy to your coach or Athletic Director. For

additional rules regarding eligibility and participation, please contact the Athletic Director or visit the AHSAA website at www.ahsaa.com.

Students that do not comply with Sportsmanship rules and regulations are required to pay any fines that are assessed by the AHSAA. Students may reduce their fines by completing an online sportsmanship class.

ACADEMIC RULE AND ELIGIBILITY

Students entering the 9th grade must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance including summer school, if applicable, at least five new subjects with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those five subjects.

Students entering the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades must have passed all subjects during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable. Students must complete at least six new Carnegie units [including four core academic courses (English, mathematics, science, and history)] with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those six units are core curriculum courses.

TRANSFER RULE AND ELIGIBILITY

Students transferring to Houston Academy and entering the 7th grade for the first time are eligible. This is regardless of where they transfer from or where they live. Receiving financial aid from the school would be the only factor that could rule them ineligible.

Students transferring to Houston Academy and entering grades 8th through 12th grades will be ineligible for one calendar year unless they have made a bona fide move to within the Dothan City limits. If a student athlete has made a bona fide move to within the Dothan City limits, the student athlete must meet the following criteria to be eligible.

1. Must have met the course and grade requirements of the AHSAA.
2. Must not be receiving financial aid from Houston Academy.

A student transferring from a non-member school will be eligible at any grade level proving they live within the city limits of Dothan and the student meets the above requirements.

All transfer students and bona fide moves must be pre-approved through the AHSAA.

TRYOUTS

Students are encouraged to contact coaches or the Athletic Director for tryout information and dates. Once tryout dates are established, they will be posted on Tandem Calendar. Students must attend all tryouts or provide a written justification for their absence in order to be selected for a team.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ON GAME DAY AND PRACTICE DAY

Student athletes must be in school the entire day in order to be able to participate in any athletic game or match. Student athletes that are absent for any reason on a game day must request permission from the Head of the Upper School in order to be able to play in game. Permission will only be granted if the student missed less than one period of school or had a prearranged medical appointment.

Student athletes must be in school a minimum of four class periods to be able to practice after school. Any student athlete that is sent home during the day because of illness may not return to school to practice or play in a game or match. Student athletes that violate this policy will be suspended for the next game on a first offense and two games for a second offense. A third violation will result in the student losing the privilege to participate on any HA team.

GAME SCHEDULING

No games or practices will be scheduled the week before or the week of exams or AP tests. Please note that exceptions may be made for Playoff Games; however, the Head of School must approve those games. Additionally, no games may be scheduled during Short Term. Coaches may schedule games during school holidays; however, Coaches must communicate with the players and parents before tryouts and make this expectation clear to student athletes.

Coaches ideally will schedule no more than two games a weekend ideally: only one away game that requires more than an hour and a half of total travel time and one game between Monday and Thursday. Only regional or sectional games will be rescheduled in the case of any cancellation. Coaches will also make significant efforts to minimize student absences from class by scheduling games (taking into account travel time) outside of regular school hours. Coaches must present a proposed schedule to the Athletic Director for approval a minimum of two months prior to the start of the season. Additionally, Coaches must present out of season training schedules to the Athletic Director by Jan. 1st.

TUTORIALS AND REGULAR CLASSES

All student athletes must have the opportunity to attend tutorial sessions before or after school without consequence from the coach. Coaches, teachers, and students must work collaboratively to maximize student academic and athletic talent; therefore, coaches must encourage student athletes to attend tutorials and study sessions whenever available and teachers are asked to work with athletes to assist them to manage their schedules and to make up any work missed due to team sporting events. Student athletes must attend all regularly scheduled classes and may only be pulled from class for away games, never for home games or practice purposes. Students cannot postpone a scheduled test or project due date due to a missed class or late night because of a game.

SUMMER WORKOUTS

All student athletes must be pre-enrolled at Houston Academy before they may start any summer workouts. Transfer students must have officially withdrawn from their previous school and be officially enrolled at Houston Academy in order to participate in any organized activities. Transfers must meet all the AHSAA eligibility criteria before they may participate in any summer team competition.

ATHLETIC FEES

Houston Academy recognizes and promotes the importance of interscholastic activities and therefore budgets and covers all of the major costs for all student athletes to participate in AHSAA sanctioned sports. Houston Academy signs-out game day uniforms to all student athletes in addition to practice uniforms for some sports. If students fail to return the uniforms or any equipment that they are assigned, they will be charged replacement cost fees. Fees may also be collected to cover the costs of: meals, travel costs for games or camps, lodging for camps, banquets, etc. In some cases, coaches may provide student athletes the option to purchase additional gear (shoes, warmups, bags, practice jerseys, etc.)* HA will take steps to minimize these costs by using common warm-up suits and allowing students to wear approved warm-up jackets as part of the general outerwear Uniform Policy.

Parents are responsible for purchasing all personalized equipment, gear (shoes, warm-ups, etc.) and jerseys, preferably through online team purchasing sites.

**Purchase of supplementary gear is not required.*

BANQUETS

At the end of each season, individual sports celebrate the end of the season with banquets where awards are given in accordance to the criteria developed by the coaches. Students and families must pay fees to cover basic banquet costs.

SUMMER CAMPS (AWAY)

Students are responsible for paying all costs for camps that are run off campus as well as any fees for coaches, chaperones, etc. Students may request permission to perform fundraisers to lower team costs; however, all fundraisers must be approved by the Advancement Office and the Head of the Upper School.