

# Lower School Handbook

## Houston Academy

2021-22



Houston Academy  
901 Buena Vista Drive · Dothan, AL 36303 · (334) 794-4106

Welcome to Houston Academy's Lower School!

We look forward to an exciting and rewarding year as teachers, students, parents, and administrators work together to take advantage of all that is offered in the Lower School at Houston Academy.

This Handbook has been developed to enhance communication among all members of the school community. It serves as the starting point for information regarding school policies and procedures. Parent awareness and support of these policies and procedures is essential to the academic, social, and emotional growth of our students. We are happy to be working with you.

Karen Boothe  
**Head of Lower School**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Houston Academy is an independent college preparatory institution. Our mission is to prepare all our students for the 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 aims quite properly toward fine scholarship. 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 not merely to endure the world about them, but to thrive in it. We endeavor to develop students who enjoy thinking, analyzing, and expressing. We intend for them to make a significant difference in their community. The Academy 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, gender, handicap, or disability.

## **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

Houston Academy establishes and communicates policies and procedures to ensure the effective administration of the school. Community members are required to use the established communication channels and to follow the chain of command. Should a community member get dissatisfied with Houston Academy in any way, that individual should strive to resolve the matter with the person(s) involved as privately and compassionately as possible, rather than

spreading criticism and negativity verbally or through social media. Issues will be resolved as privately as possible and with the best interest of the student(s) at heart. Parents are encouraged to speak directly to the appropriate teacher(s) when there is an academic or behavior/discipline issue in a specific class. Lower School students and parents are encouraged to speak to the Lower School Counselor if there is a general academic or behavior/discipline matter that requires attention.

If the student and parents are not satisfied with the attempted resolution of the matter, the Head of Lower School should be contacted and a meeting arranged that will include all relevant parties.

If the student and parents remain unsatisfied with the outcome, a joint meeting between the Headmaster and the involved parties will be scheduled. Neither the Head of Lower School nor the Headmaster will discuss a specific issue, matter, or incident with a parent if that parent has not followed the chain of command described above.

The Board of Trustees exists to create plans, to set policies, and to make decisions that will ensure the viability of the school's mission for future generations. The Board is not involved with the day-to-day operations of the school as its authority exists only when a board meeting is in session and a quorum is present. It lives in the future, concerning itself with those issues that impact the future viability of the school. The Headmaster is the sole employee of the Board and is responsible for running the school and making operational decisions on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, issues or conflicts involving students and Houston Academy should NOT be addressed to the Board of Trustees but should, instead, be addressed to the appropriate teacher or counselor (as described in the paragraphs above depending upon the nature of the issue).



# Important Dates

## 2021

First Day of School	August 17
Labor Day	September 6
Teacher Collaboration Day/Early Dismissal	September 22
Fall Break	October 11 & 12
Grades 1-4 Conference Days/Early Dismissal	October 20 & 21
Teacher Collaboration Day/Early Dismissal	October 27
Preschool Conference Days/No School 3P-5K	November 3 & 4
Veterans Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Holidays	November 22-26
Christmas Holidays	December 20-December 31

## 2022

School Resumes	January 3
Martin Luther King Day	January 17
Faculty/Staff Professional Development Day*	February 17
Winter Break	February 18 & 21
Preschool Conference Days/No School 3P-5K	February 23& 24
Grandparents Day	March 4
Spring Break	March 21-25
Good Friday	April 15
Teacher Collaboration Day/Early Dismissal	April 27
Student Recognition Day/Last Day/Early Dismissal	May 26

\*No School for Students

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# **PRESCHOOL ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

## **Curriculum**

Each young child is unique in personality and pattern of growth and development. The Preschool curriculum responds to these individual needs by providing appropriate experiences to stimulate physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. Classroom environments encourage active exploration and interaction with adults, children, and materials. Learning to become a responsible group member is an important area of growth in preschool. All components of the preschool curriculum encourage the development of a child's self-esteem and positive feelings toward learning.

Math, reading, science, language arts, social studies, music, and art objectives are integrated through meaningful activities. Enrichment classes in art, music, PE (5K only), Spanish, STEAM (5K only) and library enhance the program.

## **Parent Conferences**

Individual parent/teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of each trimester. Parents will be notified of the exact appointment time.

Parents are encouraged to schedule teacher conferences whenever they have questions about their child's progress. Appointments may be arranged by sending a note or email to the classroom teacher. The School requests that parents do not call teachers at home.

## **Progress Reports**

Students receive progress reports three times a year. These reports are issued at the scheduled parent/teacher conferences.

# **GRADES 1-4 ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

## **Curriculum**

The School affords a challenging academic program to students in grades 1st-4th. Reading, math, language, history, science, and spelling comprise the core curriculum. Ability grouping in the areas of math (Grades 2-4) and reading (Grades 2-3) provides the opportunity to develop intellectual capacities of each student to the utmost. The curriculum also offers art, music, computer, library, Spanish, STEAM, classroom guidance, and physical education to all students.

## **Technology**

Students in Lower School access educational resources via the wireless network on school provided iPads for each student in kindergarten - 4th grade. Teachers, the Head of Lower School and the Technology Director collaborate to identify and make accessible the appropriate applications, websites, and online resources to support and enhance the curriculum at every grade level.

## **Textbooks and Supplies**

The cost for textbooks and workbooks is not included in tuition. Parents are assessed a fee usually in October for the cost of consumable materials and the use of school owned textbooks. Workbooks are charged on an individual basis.

## **Homework**

Homework is a significant and meaningful part of the curriculum at Houston Academy. It serves to instill in students the formation and development of good study habits and to reinforce the learned skills and concepts in all subject areas. In addition to preparing students for the next day's class, homework helps students develop independent study habits and work skills necessary for middle and upper school.

Each day's homework assignments will average 20 minutes in 1<sup>st</sup> grade;

30-45 minutes in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade; 30-60 minutes in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade; and 45-60 minutes in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Because these times are averages, they may vary, depending on the assignment and the rate at which a student works. It is essential that students assume the responsibility of completing all homework.

### **Make Up Work**

Work missed due to an illness may be made up at school upon the student's return. Requests for missed assignments may be made by calling the school office or emailing the teacher by 10:00 a.m. on the day the assignments will be picked up. Teachers have limited time during the school day to compile work to be sent home, so homework assignments will not be ready to be picked up until 3:00 p.m. The student will be responsible for completing and turning in any work missed due to an absence. All makeup work should be completed and returned to the teacher in a reasonable amount of time.

### **Parent Conferences**

Parent/teacher conferences are held at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> 9 weeks grading period for grades 1-4. Parents are notified of their scheduled appointment time. The School encourages parents to schedule teacher conferences whenever they have questions about their child's progress. Appointments may be arranged by sending a note or email to the classroom teacher. Please do not make unannounced visits to teachers before the start of the school day or during the school day. At these times faculty are assembling materials for the day's activities and/or assisting with carpool traffic/duty. The School also requests that parents do not call teachers at home.

### **Report Cards**

Students in grades 1-4 receive report cards four times a year. The report card for the first grading period will be issued at the scheduled parent/teacher conference. Thereafter, report cards are sent home on Thursday following the end of each grading period. These grading periods are posted on the Tandem calendar. Parents may check grades

at any time on PowerSchool, Houston Academy's online grade book program.

### **Grading System**

In grade 4 all academic areas receive letter grades:

A+	100-98	B	86-83	C-	72-70
A	97-93	B-	82-80	D	69-65
A-	92-90	C+	79-77	F	Below 65
B+	89-87	C	76-73		

These letter grades are also used in grades 1-3 for math, spelling, language, and reading. All other curriculum areas in grades 1-3 receive the following letter designations:

E	Excellent	N	Needs to improve
S	Satisfactory	U	Unsatisfactory

All enrichment areas in grades 1-4 receive the letter designations of E, S, N, and U. All grades are derived from the required course of study. Students are encouraged to do their best academically and are supported in their efforts to achieve. Teachers will not allow students to retake a test, nor will they give extra credit assignments to enhance a grade. In the event of a course failure for the year, students could be allowed to attend summer school in order to return to Houston Academy. The Head of Lower School must approve any summer school work for credit. Summer school attendance is allowed only one time. Any deviations from these guidelines must be approved by the Head of Lower School. Any student who fails two or more subjects will be retained.

### **Testing Policy**

Students will have no more than two major tests on a single day. Students who are absent on a test day should be prepared to take the missed test immediately upon return to school unless other arrangements have been made with the teacher during the student's

absence.

### **Achievement Tests**

Each year students in grades 3-10 will take the ACT Aspire. The ACT Aspire is an assessment that measures academic achievement in the areas of English, reading, math, science and writing. It is aligned to the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards. The Otis-Lennon School Ability Test is given yearly to students in 2nd grade.

### **Student Academic Support Services**

The Learning Specialists in the Department of Student Academic Support Services provide individual and small group instruction to Lower School students who have identified academic weaknesses and to students for whom English is a second language. They also provide speech and language therapy and Orton-Gillingham direct instruction in language and math. Sessions are scheduled in cooperation with the student's classroom teacher. Students may be referred for Academic Support Services by their classroom teacher, guidance counselor, Lower School Head, or parents. Tuition does not include the cost of Academic Support.

### **Guidance and Counseling**

The goal of the Lower School guidance and counseling program is to provide students with the support and encouragement needed to help them grow and thrive in all areas. The counselor works closely with administration, teachers, students, and their families to offer support for academic, social, emotional, and behavioral concerns. The counselor provides individual and group counseling as needed for students and parents.

Houston Academy's Lower School counseling program provides weekly guidance classes for 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade students. These guidance classes provide students with an opportunity to discuss a variety of topics while sharing and learning from each other. Weekly guidance classes also involve activities that include partner and group activities, team building

activities, interactive lessons, role-play, and games. The goal of these guidance classes is to educate and encourage students to make decisions that help them thrive academically, emotionally, and socially as they develop.

### **Activities**

Activities are designed to broaden student interests and to help develop academic subjects as well as in interest in other areas:

***Spelling Bees*** – The School sponsors this educational learning activity to improve spelling and increase vocabulary for students in grades 1-4.

***Big Brother/Big Sister*** – In this program for 4P-4th grade, students in the upper grades are paired with students in the lower grades for special activities.

***Field Trips*** – All classes in the Lower School participate in various field trips each year. These trips include Wonder Works, 1<sup>st</sup> grade; Gulf World, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade; the state capital, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade; Challenger Learning Center of Tallahassee, 4<sup>th</sup> grade. The 4th grade trip is an overnight trip.

***Field Day*** - Students in grades 1-8 participate in Field Day in the early spring. In first grade students are assigned to the blue team or the white team. The winning team's flag flies on the flagpole in front of the school.

***Musical Productions*** - Musical programs are presented at Christmas and Grandparents Day and feature all Lower School students in grades 3P-4th grade.

***Preschool Walkers*** - Fourth grade students have the opportunity to develop leadership skills by volunteering to help walk the Preschool students to their classrooms each morning.

## **Awards**

In an effort to promote extracurricular involvement and academic excellence for students in grades 1-4, a Student Recognition Day is held the last day of each school year:

Art Awards are presented to students whose artwork is chosen for display in the Wiregrass Museum of Art's Young Artists Exhibits.

Math Awards are presented to students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade who are the top scorers on the Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi Math League contest.

Participation Certificates are presented for participation in the school spelling bee.

National Physical Fitness Awards are presented to students who scored at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on five of the physical activities.

Presidential Physical Fitness Awards are presented to students who scored at or above the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile on the required activities.

Achievement Certificates are given to students in grades 1-4 to recognize consistent effort and successful completion of studies during the academic year.

Academic Excellence Awards are presented to all students with a yearly average of *A* or *S* in each academic subject.

Duke University TIP (Talent Identification Program) Awards are presented to 4<sup>th</sup> grade students who score at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile on a standardized achievement test.

Presidential Awards for Educational Excellence are presented to 4<sup>th</sup> grade students who maintain a 90 average during the Fall of their fourth grade year and scored at or above the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile on a standardized achievement test.

Outstanding Character Awards are presented to one boy and one girl from each class in grades 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> who best exemplify the character traits emphasized during guidance classes.

**Grandparents/Grandfriends Day**

Each year Lower School celebrates Grandparents and Grandfriends with a special day of entertainment and classroom visitation. Please check the school Tandem calendar for the date.

# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **School Hours**

3P-5K	8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
1-4	8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Students are encouraged to be in the classroom by 7:55 a.m. to unpack and get organized for the school day. The school day officially begins at 8:00. Please do not drop students off before 7:40 a.m.

Students will not be dismissed on a regular basis from school earlier than 3:00 p.m. for any non-school related activities.

## **Attendance**

Daily attendance and punctuality are essential to academic achievement. When students are not in class they miss valuable instructional time, daily work, test preparation, quizzes, and tests. Eighteen days absent is considered excessive and could result in failure. Occasionally a student may be absent due to illness, death in the family, or religious holiday. Absences of this nature are understandable, and every effort is made by the School to assist the student with makeup work. A student returning to school following an absence must bring a note or send an email from his parent stating the reason for the absence. When possible the School should be notified in advance of an absence.

Attendance in Preschool is figured on the following schedule:

Present 4 hours	Present all day
Absent 1-2 hours	Absent half day
Absent more than 2 hours	Absent all day

Attendance in grades 1-4 is figured on the following schedule:

Present 7 hours	Present all day
Absent 1-3 hours	Absent half day

Absent more than 3 hours      Absent all day

Parents are encouraged to coordinate family vacations with the school calendar. If a student must be absent for educational travel opportunities, permission must be granted by the classroom teacher and the Head of the Lower School. Students who miss class while traveling with parents are required to meet the same standards as those who remain in class. Also note that while some homework may be assigned prior to departure, a great deal of discussion, explanation and oral classwork cannot be duplicated. Parents are responsible for assisting the child with work missed during this absence. Most of the assignments will be made up when the student returns to school.

### **Late Arrivals**

Students who arrive between 8:00 and 8:07 are considered tardy. If a student arrives after 8:07, the parent should sign the student in at the main office. A school employee will walk the student to the classroom. Persistent tardiness causes students to miss important announcements and class work. Their late entrance into the classroom causes a disruption to the learning environment of the entire class. Parents are encouraged to make every effort to have their child at school by 8:00. Habitual late arrival at school is unacceptable.

### **Early Departure**

If a student must check out prior to the conclusion of the normal academic day, a note or email should be sent to the classroom teacher indicating the time the student will leave. The parent must sign the student out in the main office. The receptionist will then call the student to the office. At no time will students be sent to the office to wait to be picked up.

### **Extended Day**

The HA Extended Day Program is operated for the convenience of working parents of Houston Academy students. The extended day program for 3P-5K students is 12:00-5:30, and extended day for

students in grades 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> is 3:00 to 5:30. Students in grades 1-5 will have an opportunity to get started on their homework at Extended Day. Drop-ins are not accepted. Extended Day follows the same calendar as Houston Academy. Tuition does not include the cost of extended day. Houston Academy Extended Day is licensed by the State Department of Human Resources and must follow their policies.

### **Arrival and Departure Procedures**

Carpool in the morning and afternoon is a very important time. The safety of the children is our first priority. Because of this primary concern, we ask everyone to follow these guidelines:

- (1) Please make sure that your children have their supplies ready when you stop to let them out in the morning. Try to give out kisses and goodbyes before you arrive at the departure point.
- (2) Teach your children to handle car doors on their own; parents should not have to leave their car to open the door for their child. Teachers are outside to assist the children when necessary.
- (3) Students are to unload from the right side of the car.
- (4) When loading or unloading during carpool, please pull your vehicle up as far as possible so others may load and unload at the same time. Do not pass other cars in the line.
- (5) Everyone must go through the carpool line. Do not park in the parking lot.
- (6) Do not leave your car unattended.
- (7) Please do not use cell phones once the carpool line begins to move. Your full attention is needed for the safety of the children in the bumper-to-bumper traffic of carpool.
- (8) Please turn off your car while waiting to pick up your children to reduce pollution from idling cars. This pollution negatively affects a child's healthy lung growth and development and also damages our environment.
- (9) Use the arrival/departure location for the youngest member of your carpool. Please do not go to multiple areas.

Preschool Arrival (back driveway): Use the back driveway which enters off Whatley Drive from the direction of Westgate Parkway only, not from the direction of Flowers Hospital. Don't make a left turn into the back driveway. Cars should pull together as closely as possible, and students in 5K may unload at any point along the covered walkway. 3P and 4P students must unload at #1 or #2 positions only. 3P and 4P students cannot be dropped off at another location.

Preschool Departure: Enter the parking lot from Whatley Drive and form the carpool line through the parking lot. All students will meet their rides at the designated area by the circular drive.

Grades 1 Arrival: Enter Buena Vista from Whatley Drive. Upon entering the front drive, cars should then pull together as closely as possible, in the right lane. Cars should stay in one lane (no passing) and must stop in front of Downs Hall for students to unload. Parking in front of Downs Hall is not allowed. Please use the front driveway exit.

Grade 2-4 Arrival: Use the back driveway which enters off Whatley Drive from the direction of Westgate Parkway only, not from the direction of Flowers Hospital. Don't make a left turn into the back driveway. Cars should pull together as closely as possible, and students in 2-4 may unload at any point along the covered walkway.

Grades 1-4 Departure: Cars should enter Buena Vista from Whatley Drive forming two lines in the front parking lot. The left line leads to the pickup area for grades 3-4; the right line leads to the pickup area for grades 1-2.

Grades 1-2 will be dismissed at the entrance to the preschool building; grades 3-4 will be dismissed from the circular drive.

For every child's protection, the school requires a written note from a parent if a child is to leave school with anyone other than the regularly

designated driver.

### **Visitors**

All visitors to the school should sign in at the main office. No one is allowed to go directly to a classroom or any other area on campus without first signing in at the office and getting approval.

### **Illness**

While regular attendance is important, it is even more important that students who are ill or recovering from an illness remain at home. Students should not come to school with a fever or symptoms of a contagious disease.

Parents will be notified if their child becomes ill during the school day. Students who develop a fever during the school day will not be allowed to return the next day. A student should be free of temperature and any symptoms of a virus (including vomiting and diarrhea) for a full 24-hour period before returning to school following an illness.

Any child sent home with a fever will need a temperature check by school personnel before returning to the classroom.

### **Medication**

At no time should a student have any medication, prescription or over the counter, in his possession. Parents may administer medication to their child during the school day in the school office. If your child needs medication administered by school personnel, please follow these procedures:

- Complete a *Medication Authorization Form* which is available in the school/guidance office or online. Prescription medication must have a Physician's signature on the form.
- Parent or guardian should give the medication and completed form to the office personnel.

- All medication must be in the original container or a labeled pharmacy bottle.

### **Head Lice**

When head lice are found on a student, the parents are notified and asked to take their child home. Parents are responsible for proper treatment of the lice. The student may return to school only when school personnel have determined that the student is nit-free.

### **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, 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 assess students for damaged or lost books and/or media materials.
- (5) Books are checked out on an individual basis. The student who checks out a book is responsible for returning it to the library on time.

### **Conduct and Discipline**

The administration and faculty of Houston Academy expect all students to conduct themselves in a respectful and courteous manner. Students are expected to adhere to the rules and regulations established by the school. Learning takes place in a disciplined environment, and each

teacher is responsible for maintaining proper discipline and a classroom environment conducive to learning. Self-control, proper language, and respect for peers and adults is emphasized and expected. Houston Academy will not tolerate any behavior that is disruptive, destructive, or immoral. Chronic or exceptional disciplinary cases will be reported to the Head of the Lower School for appropriate action.

### **Harassment and Bullying**

As a school community, we want 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 the following: 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, on social networking sites, via email, through text message, or on personal blogs), whether or not it originates on the Houston Academy campus.

### **Uniforms/Dress Code**

A student's dress and appearance should always be neat, clean, and reflective of the high standards of Houston Academy. Parents are responsible for supervising their child's dress.

Preschool: No uniforms for Preschool.

Durable play clothes are required for all preschool children. Daily activities include coloring, cutting, gluing, painting, as well as inside and outside play. Students should be dressed appropriately to participate in these activities. Closed toe shoes with socks, **preferably athletic shoes**, appropriate for play are required. Children may not wear flip flops, sandals, water shoes or Crocs. On cold days children should be properly attired for playing outside.

Please clearly mark all coats and sweaters with the child's name. An extra set of clothing must be kept at school for children in the 3P classes.

Students in grades 1-4 are expected to be dressed in the appropriate school uniform each day. All uniforms must be official Houston Academy items purchased from Sandra Jean Uniforms located in town at 2493 Montgomery Highway or Lands' End online. The link to this site is located on the HA website. Items marked with an asterisk \* may be purchased anywhere. If, in the opinion of the Head of the Lower School, a student's uniform is unacceptable, the student must call home for a change of clothing. Parents are responsible for arranging this change.

#### Dress Code: Boys Grades 1-4

- All shirts will have the block HA logo: white, blue, or French blue short or long sleeve Oxford cloth shirt; white, blue, or cobalt short or long sleeve polo shirt; white long sleeve cotton turtleneck.
- Shorts and pants will be khaki with the block HA logo.
- All items with belt loops require a solid or braided brown or black belt\* or the blue fabric HA belt.
- Athletic shoes\* must be white, black, royal blue, navy blue or grey with any **solid** color trim. Shoes with writing or words, designs, sequins, etc. are not allowed. Light-ups, roller shoes, or any other unusual styles are not allowed.
- Socks\* must be solid (no logo) white, royal blue, navy, or black.
- Sweaters should be navy vest or crew or v- neck with the HA logo.
- Outerwear will have the HA logo: navy fleece vest, navy insulated vest, navy fleece jacket, navy hooded jacket with sweatshirt lining, navy microfiber jacket, cobalt fleece jacket, cobalt squall parka, or puffer jacket.
- Short sleeve, solid white undershirts\* may be worn under uniform shirts.

#### Dress Code: Girls Grades 1-4

- All shirts will have the block HA logo: white, blue, or cobalt short or long sleeve polo shirt; white, blue, or cobalt short,  $\frac{3}{4}$ , or long sleeve Oxford cloth shirt; white long sleeve turtleneck shirt; white broadcloth short sleeve shirt.
- Solid khaki skorts, shorts, and pants will have the block HA logo. Also, the plaid kick skirt or khaki pleated skirt will have the block HA logo.
- HA logo must be on solid khaki kick pleat jumpers. The plaid jumper will not have the logo. Shirts must be worn with jumpers.
- Shorts or bloomers must be worn under skirts and jumpers.
- Belts\* should be solid or braided, brown or black or the HA fabric belt
- Athletic shoes\* must be white, black, royal blue, navy blue or grey with any **solid** color trim. Shoes with writing or words, designs, sequins, etc. are not allowed. Light-ups, roller shoes, or any other unusual styles are not allowed.
- Socks\* must be solid white or navy regular or knee style. Solid white or navy tights are also acceptable. Solid white or navy leggings are allowed as long as they reach the ankle. Lace, ruffles, or other embellishments are not allowed on leggings. No denim, athletic or yoga style leggings are allowed. Leggings can only be worn with skorts, skirts, and jumpers.
- Sweaters should be navy v-neck vest, crew or v neck cardigan with the HA logo.
- Outerwear will have the HA logo: navy fleece vest, navy insulated vest, navy fleece jacket, navy hooded jacket with the sweatshirt lining, navy microfiber jacket, cobalt squall parka, navy fleece pea coat, or cobalt puffer jacket.
- Skorts and shorts can be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee.
- Skirts and jumpers can be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee.
- Solid white, royal blue, columbia blue or navy blue hair bows/ribbons are acceptable.
- Solid white, royal blue, columbia blue, or uniform plaid headbands are acceptable.

### Dress Code: General Guidelines

- Uniforms must be kept neat and clean without holes, rips, or patches.
- No sweatshirt or sweatshirt material may be worn except on Raider Day.
- Shirrtails are to be tucked in at all times.
- Hats, caps, or other headgear are not permitted on campus at any time from arrival until dismissal.
- Extreme distracting haircuts or color (i.e. mohawk haircuts), makeup, or jewelry are not permitted.
- Hair should be no longer than the top of the collar for boys.
- No personal monogramming is allowed on uniform items.
- All student clothing should be labeled.

### **Raider Day**

Every Friday during the school year is designated as a “Raider Day.” On Raider Days students may dress out of uniform and wear an HA T-shirt or sweatshirt purchased through the school, HA football jersey or cheerleader uniform, blue jean shorts (no shorter than 3 inches above the knee), capris, or pants with no holes or fraying. Shoes and outerwear must be regulation dress code. Students who elect not to participate in Raider Day will be expected to follow the uniform code of dress. During the football Homecoming week, students may dress out of uniform each day according to the designated theme. Student attire should be appropriate and in good taste.

### **Field Trip T-Shirt**

All students (3P-4th) will be required to purchase a field trip t-shirt that will be required on special days. This shirt may be purchased at [www.haraiderwear.com](http://www.haraiderwear.com). It is royal blue and is listed as “HA Field Trip Short Sleeve Tee” for \$14.

## **Raider Retail**

Raider Retail is located in Dunning Hall and is staffed by HA PTO volunteers. It is open Monday-Friday, 9:15 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Any deviation from this schedule will be posted on HA PTO Facebook page. Snacks and drinks are sold during Upper School break and all the lunches. There are healthy options available such as yogurt, cheese, fruit, and water in addition to routine snacks and lunch items. For convenience, parents may open accounts for students, cash is also accepted, or you may use the Venmo app. The Raider Retail Venmo name is @Raider~Retail. Checks should be made out to HA PTO, and the responsible parent's name and cell phone number should be provided. Accounts need to be opened by a parent. The responsible parent should provide Raider Retail with a current cell phone number. RR volunteers will text a parent when a balance is running low or negative. A record is kept of what is purchased and can be reviewed. It is difficult for volunteers to follow any special instructions or know if a student has a negative balance; therefore, a volunteer will contact you by text when your child's balance is depleted. All proceeds from the Raider Retail sales are donated to the school for a variety of needs. Working in Raider Retail is a great volunteer opportunity to meet fellow parents as well as become familiar with the students. For more information about Raider Retail, contact Annette Jenne, Kim Burley, or Anissa Moore.

## **Party Invitations**

Party invitations may be distributed at school if all children in the classroom receive one. It is also permissible to distribute invitations to all classmates of the same gender. If only a small percentage of a class is to be invited, please do not distribute the invitations at school or put them in the preschool bags.

## **Birthdays**

Outside treats will not be allowed in the classroom for birthday celebrations. Birthdays for Preschool students will be acknowledged in the classroom by the teacher. Students in grades 1-4 will be recognized on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month during the month of their birthday.

Those who have birthdays in June will be recognized in May, and children who have July birthdays will be recognized in August. Recognition will take place during lunch at which time each birthday student will receive a special treat provided by the school.

### **Class Parties**

Five class parties are planned during the school year: Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and End-of-Year. In addition, different grades have their own special events. Parent volunteers coordinate these events with the classroom teacher. Parents who volunteer to host a party are responsible for the cost of that party. Money is not to be collected from the students. The parties should be held at school or someone's home.

Class parties are special celebrations for students and their classmates only. The classrooms are not large enough to accommodate siblings and extra parents.

### **Forgotten Items**

The faculty strives to instill the value of responsibility in the students. Placing the responsibility on the students for having the required work materials, books, homework, and lunches contributes to this endeavor. If a forgotten item must be delivered to a student during the school day, the parent should take the item to the main office, and someone from the office will deliver it at a time that will not be disruptive to the class.

### **Lost and Found**

All items brought to school should be clearly labeled with the child's name (coats, sweater, lunchboxes, books, book bags, notebooks, etc.). With identifying labels, found items can be returned to the child's classroom. All unlabeled items will be placed in the Lost and Found bins located behind the stage in Dunning Hall. Any items remaining in Lost and Found at the end of the school year will be donated to Goodwill.

## **Immunization Record**

State law requires that all children enrolled in a school have current immunization records on file at the school. Parents must furnish the school registrar with the child's IMM-50 Alabama Certificate of Immunization for his cumulative folder.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are designed to expand the curriculum for our students. Notification of each field trip is sent home with the student prior to the trip. Parent/grandparent volunteers are usually needed to help with driving. Frequently, parents will be asked to help chaperone these trips. As an official School chaperone, parents are asked not to bring siblings, to remain with the group at all times, and to abide by the guidelines of the teacher and School.

## **Physical Education**

PE is an integral part of the instructional program. If your child cannot participate on a particular day, please send a note to your child's teacher. Students in grades 5K -4<sup>th</sup> are required to wear athletic shoes for physical education classes.

## **Snacks and Lunch**

### Preschool

Children should bring a drink and snack from home for their daily snack time. Special days to purchase snacks are scheduled at the teacher's discretion.

### Grades 1-4

Snacks for break may be brought from home or purchased through Raider Retail.

There are three lunch options for Lower School students:

1. Students can bring lunch from home. Microwaves are available in Dunning Hall to heat food.

2. Students can pre-order from the school catering service *We Lunch It*.
3. Students can purchase food using cash or their school account through Raider Retail.

In the interest of student safety and limiting the foot traffic on campus, delivery of food will not be allowed to the school at any time. Delivery of food from a family member, friend, or any restaurant is strictly prohibited.

Students in Grades 1-4 eat lunch at 11:10-11:35 a.m.

The school lunch program is managed and catered by *We Lunch It*. A variety of local restaurants are rotated to cater throughout the year. This is an online system that allows orders to be placed from your phone, tablet or computer. More detailed information is found on the HA website under the Parents tab.

### **Inclement Weather**

In situations of early morning inclement weather, the school will notify radio station WOOF at 99.7 and WTVY TV regarding plans for the day. Please tune in to one of these stations for instructions. The Alert Solutions Notification Service will also be implemented.

### **Mobile Technology Devices**

These are allowed on campus, but they may not be used during school hours. They must be turned off at all times and kept out of sight in a backpack. Mobile Technology Devices include, but not limited to, Smartwatch, bluetooth headset, tablet, computer, cell phone, PDA, etc.

### **Chewing Gum**

Chewing gum is not allowed on campus.

## **Alma Mater**

*We seek to find the truths in life;  
We seek reality  
To share these things we all have found  
At Houston Academy.*

*Oh, let us ever forward go;  
Our thoughts will always be  
Within the halls and memories here  
At Houston Academy.*

*Ever forward, leading onward,  
Ever forward let us be.  
Oh, how we love her, let us serve her  
Oh, Houston Academy.*