



# Student & Parent Handbook

## 2025-2026



# HARMONY PUBLIC SCHOOLS: Inspiring Futures

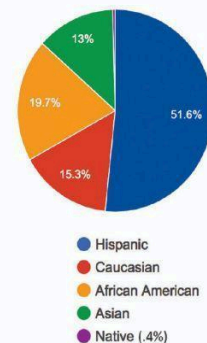
**OUR MISSION:** Prepare each student for higher education by providing a safe, caring, and collaborative atmosphere using a quality, student-centered educational model with a strong emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.



60+ Campuses in Texas

5,000 Faculty & Staff

Over 40,000 Students



**100%** of Harmony graduates are accepted to college

**64%** of Harmony students are economically disadvantaged, with several campuses reaching as high as 80%

**58%** of Harmony graduates choose STEM majors in college, more than doubling both the Texas and U.S. averages

**64%** of Harmony alumni are the first in their family to attend college (Texas Average: 35%, U.S. Average: 30%)



Harmony schools are ranked among the top high schools in the Washington Post, Newsweek, and U.S. News & World Report



The Texas Education Agency awarded all Harmony schools a Superior Financial Rating



Harmony is the first Charter School in Texas to be rated highly ("AAA") by both Moody's and S&P with participation in Texas Permanent School Fund Bond Guarantee Program



All Harmony high school campuses were named in U.S. News & World Report's Best High Schools List



Harmony district earned 5 A ratings and 2 B ratings, and all campuses earned "met standard" rating based on STAAR test results.



"Teachers and staff make sure I get a good education. They care about my life and future which gives me extra support to succeed in college and life."

*-Brenda, HSA - El Paso*

**HARMONY**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
HarmonyTX.org

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## Preface

### Mission

Our Mission is to prepare students for higher learning in a safe, caring, and collaborative atmosphere through a quality learner-centered educational program with a strong emphasis on math, science, engineering, and technology.

### Vision

Harmony's vision is to enable students to succeed in school and in the workplace, and to provide an option for students to enter math, science, and engineering careers. This will lead to students becoming productive and responsible citizens and even Nobel laureates.

### Core

1. **High Expectations:** Every student will learn and grow into a successful and productive citizen.
2. **Dedicated Staff:** We do whatever it takes to help our students reach their goals.
3. **Working Together:** Our students, parents, and staff work in harmony to create a strong community of success.
4. **Character Matters:** We guide our students to value integrity, show respect, and be responsible.
5. **STEM for All:** Every student will graduate with a strong understanding and appreciation of STEM and how it connects to the real world.

### Board of Directors

Board President	: Dr. Oner U. Celepcikay
Member	: Dr. Hakduran Koc
Member	: Ms. Helen Sherwood
Member	: Dr. Mehmet Argin
Member	: Ms. Laura Gonzalez
Member	: Ms. Kimberly House
Member	: Dr. Simon Koch

Fatih Ay, M. Ed.  
Chief Executive Officer  
9321 W. Sam Houston Pkwy. S.  
Houston, TX, 77099

Dear Harmony Family,

It is with great pride and excitement that we welcome you to the 2025-2026 school year. As we look forward to another year of learning, we are recommitting ourselves to the success of every student and hope that you will join us in making Harmony Public Schools the finest system it can be. We all have a role to play in building a successful school year – students, faculty, parents, and staff. This handbook is intended to help us understand how we can contribute.

This handbook lays out our expectations for how we can all work together to give our students the best education possible. However, we can't do it alone. It is our firm belief that when students, faculty, staff, and parents are all working together there is nothing we can't achieve as a school system.

We ask our parents to review the entire handbook with their students and to keep it as a reference during this school year. Parents or students with questions about the material in this handbook should contact their Principal. Most of all, I hope that each of you will find a way to grow more involved with your school and campus community.

This handbook is designed to be a reflection of current Board Policy and is updated yearly. Changes in policy and procedure that occur during the school year and that affect the handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through communications during the school year. In case of conflict between Board Policy and any provision of this handbook, the provision that was most recently adopted by the Board of Directors will be followed.

On behalf of Harmony Public Schools' faculty and staff members, we wish you all the best for a fantastic year.

Sincerely,



Fatih Ay

## Student Rights

The school pledges to allow all students to:

- Feel safe in the school environment.
- Take full advantage of learning opportunities.
- Work in an environment free from disruptions and chaos.
- Express opinions, ideas, thoughts and concerns.
- Have a healthy environment that is smoke, alcohol and drug free.
- Use school resources and facilities for self-improvement.
- Expect courtesy, fairness and respect from all members of the community.
- Be informed of all expectations and responsibilities.
- Take part in a variety of school activities.

## Equal Education Opportunity

Harmony Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in providing educational services, activities, and programs, including vocational and career technology programs. Harmony Public Schools also complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and any other legally-protected classification or status protected by applicable law.

Additionally, as required by Title IX, Harmony Public Schools does not (and is required not to) discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. This non-discrimination requirement also applies to admission and employment with Harmony Public Schools. Questions about issues related to Title IX may be referred to Harmony Public Schools' designated Title IX Coordinator (as identified below, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

Other federal laws prohibiting discrimination include Title VI, the Age Discrimination Act, the Boy Scouts Act, and Title II of the ADA.

Harmony Public Schools has designated the following administrator as the Title IX Coordinator to address inquiries or concerns regarding

discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, or gender-based harassment: Charles Lambert, Director of Internal Investigations, 1255 Enclave Parkway, Houston, Texas 77077, (713) 343-3333, [clambert@harmonytx.org](mailto:clambert@harmonytx.org). Mr. Lambert may also receive inquiries or concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, or any other protected characteristics.

Reports may be made by any person and at any time, including during non-business hours, by mail, phone, or email. During school business hours, reports may also be made in person. Upon receiving notice of an allegations of sex-based harassment, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will promptly investigate and respond in accordance with Harmony Public Schools' policy.

Harmony Public Schools has designated the following administrator as the ADA/Section 504 Coordinator to address inquiries or concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Ipek Torun, Director of 504 and Dyslexia, 1255 Enclave Parkway, Houston, Texas 77077, (713) 343-3333, [itorun@harmonytx.org](mailto:itorun@harmonytx.org).

## Admission Policies and Procedures for Harmony Public Charter Schools

Harmony Public Schools requires applicants to submit a complete application form in order to be considered for admission. Admission applications must be submitted during the open enrollment period designated by Harmony Public Schools. Admission and enrollment shall be open to persons who reside within the geographic boundaries served by Harmony Public Schools, and who are eligible for admission based on lawful criteria identified in the Harmony Public Schools' charter and in state law. And, as allowed by Chapter 12 of the Texas Education Code, Harmony Public Schools may admit a child of a school employee regardless of whether the child resides in the geographic area served by Harmony Public Schools. The total number of students enrolled in Harmony Public Schools shall not exceed the number of students approved in the charter or subsequent amendments. Total enrollment may further be limited by Harmony Public Schools based on occupancy limitations, code compliance, and staffing requirements as deemed necessary. For the first year of operation of a new campus which has the commissioner 'approval on the first day of that

school year, the application period will start on November 1st (beginning date) and end on March 15th (ending date). For the first year of operation for a new

campus that has not yet been approved by TEA on the first day of that school year, the application period will start on January 10th (beginning date) and end on March 15th (ending date). For the following years, the beginning and ending dates of the application period shall be November 1st and February 10th of each year, respectively.

### **Lottery Procedures and Date when a Grade or Class is Oversubscribed**

A “lottery” for purposes of the school’s admissions procedures is a random selection process that determines the order of enrollment of student applicants. An annual lottery is required for each campus if the number of applicants for that campus exceeds the number of available seats. The lottery shall take place within fifteen days after the closing date of the application period. The required lottery will be conducted via lottery selection software. To ensure that the required lottery winner list and the waiting list are selected randomly, the principal or designee of each campus will conduct the computerized lottery, supervised by a representative from the Cluster Office to which the school reports.

### **Admission Process of Returning Students**

Returning students (students who currently attended the school) who remain qualified to attend the school, and who notify the school of their intent to return for the next school year by the fourth Friday of January, are exempt from the lottery and will remain enrolled. Parents shall submit a Proof of Residency with each year re-enrollment.

### **Siblings Policy and Children of the School’s Founders and Employees**

Children of the school’s founders, teachers, and staff (so long as the total number of students allowed does not exceed 3% of the total enrollment) are the initial category exempt from the required lottery requirements, and, space permitting, are automatically enrolled.

Subsequently, space permitting, siblings of returning students currently enrolled at a Harmony Public School campus who have qualified as returning

students constitute a second category of student applicants who are automatically enrolled;

Thereafter, space permitting, siblings of applicants selected through the required lottery who were also registered for that lottery constitute the third automatically enrolled category.

“Sibling” shall mean a biological or legally adopted brother or sister residing in the same household as the applicant. Cousins, nieces, nephews and unrelated children sharing an address with the applicant are not siblings. Sibling enrollment is dependent on available space and does not guarantee enrollment.

Priority of admission in the order of each above-listed category of lottery-exempt students shall also be determined by lottery.

### **Development of a Waiting List**

The required lottery will be paused momentarily after the computerized lottery fills all available seats allowed by the enrollment cap. A lottery drawing will then continue, and the randomly-selected numbers will be used to create an annual waiting list. As space becomes available, applicants will be called from the waiting list, beginning with applicants with the lowest number assignment in the order of each category. Applicants selected by lottery will be “deemed admitted” and may proceed from provisional admission to enrollment.

### **Applications that are Submitted Outside the Designated Application Period**

If a student applies to the school outside of the designated application period, the student will be placed on a waiting list in the order of the category and date in which the application is received.

### **Students with Disqualifying Disciplinary Histories**

As authorized by the Harmony Public Schools’ charter and Texas Education Code § 12.111(a)(5)(A), students with a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or other discipline problems under Texas Education Code Chapter 37, Subchapter A, will be excluded from admission and enrollment in Harmony Public Schools.

## **Documents and Information Applicants are Required to Provide**

Applicants must submit a completed application form in order to be considered for admission. The application form must be signed and dated by the parent(s). The application form must include the following items:

- Applicant's name (first, last, and middle names)
- Applicant's birth date
- Applicant's current grade level and grade applied for
- Applicant's residential address
- Phone numbers
- Applicant's parents' name and signature
- Whether the applicant has a sibling already admitted to attending the school

Applicants are not required to provide discipline records (whether the applicant has a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems under Chapter 37 of the Education Code), transcript, or other academic records until after they are offered admission.

## **Non-Discrimination Statement as Part of the School's Admission Policy**

It is the policy of Harmony Public Schools to comply with all state and federal regulations regarding admission and not to discriminate during the admission on the basis of sex; national origin; ethnicity; religion; disability; academic, artistic, or athletic ability; or the district the child would otherwise attend.

## **Students who are Homeless**

Homeless children and youth are ensured specific educational rights and protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001. "Children and youth who are homeless," as defined by this federal law, means and includes children who:

- Are abandoned in hospitals, or are awaiting foster care placement.
- Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations.
- Are living in emergency or transitional shelters.

- Are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations.
- Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
- Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Children who are homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain policies and procedures, including proof of residency requirements; immunization requirements; educational program placement; award of credit; eligibility requirements for participating in extracurricular activities; continuing enrollment in the "school of origin" or enrollment in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing; graduation requirements; and other related matters.

Questions concerning assistance offered to homeless students can be obtained from Campus Federal Program Coordinators.

## **Student Information**

Any student admitted to Harmony Public Schools must provide records, such as report cards from the previous school attended, to verify his or her academic standing. Verification of residency and current immunization records are also required.

No later than 30 days after enrolling in Harmony Public Schools, the parent and school in which the student was previously enrolled shall furnish records which verify the identity of the student. These records may include the student's birth certificate or a copy of the student's school records from the most recently attended school. Students will not be denied enrollment because they failed to meet this requirement.

Harmony Public Schools will forward a student's records on request to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll without the necessity of the parent's consent.



## Undocumented Students

Enrollment may not be denied to children who are not legally admitted into the United States.

## Residency Verification

The Texas Education Code authorizes schools to obtain evidence that a person is eligible to attend public schools. To be eligible for continued enrollment in Harmony Public Schools, each student's parent must show proof of residency at the time of enrollment.

- Current Driver's license or identification card issued by the State of Texas
- Current property tax bill with parent/guardian's name and property address;
- A recently paid rent receipt.
- A current lease agreement.
- The most recent tax receipt indicating home ownership.
- A utility bill dated within 60 days indicating the address and name of the residence occupiers.
- Mailing address of the residence occupiers.
- Visual inspection of the residence.
- Interviews with persons with relevant information.
- Building permits issued to a parent on or before September 1 of the school year in which admission is sought as evidence of residency for the school year in which admission is sought only.

## Residency for Service Members

A person whose parent is an active-duty member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, may establish residency by providing Harmony a copy of a military order requiring the parent's transfer to a military installation in the school's geographic boundaries. Proof of residence in Harmony's geographic boundaries shall be provided not later than the 90th day after the arrival date specified in the order. "Residence" includes residence in a military temporary lodging facility.

Falsification of residence on an enrollment form is a criminal offense." Falsification of residence on an enrollment form is a criminal offense.

## Pre-Kindergarten Age Requirement

To be eligible for Pre-Kindergarten, your child must reside within the geographic boundaries served by Harmony Public Schools (unless state law provides otherwise). Additionally, your child must be at least three for PK-3 or four years old for PK-4 as of September 1 and meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Be unable to speak and comprehend the English language;
- Be educationally disadvantaged;
- Be homeless, regardless of the residence of the child, of either parent of the child, or of the child's guardian or other person having lawful control of the child;
- Be the child of an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who is ordered to active duty by proper authority;
- Be the child of a member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who was injured or killed while serving on active duty;
- Be or ever have been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services; or
- Be the child of a person eligible for the Star of Texas Award.

## Kindergarten Age Requirement

To qualify for the kindergarten, the child must be five years old on or before September 1st of the school year they are applying for.

## First Grade Age Requirement

To qualify for first grade the child must be six years old on or before September 1st of the school year they are applying for.

**Exception:** Any five-year-old child is eligible for the first grade for the full school term if the student has completed kindergarten at the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC) accredited private school or at a public school in another state or has been enrolled in the first grade in a public school in another state prior to transferring to a Texas public school. [TEC §42.003, (c)] The term "enrolled" means actually receiving instruction by attendance in a public school rather than just being registered prior to receiving instruction.

## **Attendance**

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, students and parents should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Additionally, state law mandates compulsory school attendance for children of a certain age, and Harmony Public Schools' policy deals with attendance for course credit and a student's final grade. These items are discussed below.

### **Compulsory Attendance**

The state compulsory attendance law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 19 must attend school and school- required tutorial sessions unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused. School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent from school without permission from any class, from required special programs, or from required tutorials will be considered "truant" and subject to disciplinary action.

Students enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten and/or Kindergarten are required to attend school and are subject to compulsory attendance requirements as long as they remain enrolled.

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 19th birthday is required to attend each school day. If a student 19 years of age or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the school may revoke the student's enrollment, except that Harmony Public Schools may not revoke the enrollment on a day on which the student is physically present at school. The student's presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. Prior to revoking the student's enrollment, the school shall issue a warning letter to the student after the third unexcused absence stating that the student's enrollment may be revoked for the remainder of the school year if the student has more than five unexcused absences in a semester. As an alternative to revoking enrollment, Harmony Public Schools may impose a behavior improvement plan.

### **Notice to Parents**

Under Texas Education Code § 25.095(a), you are hereby notified that if a student is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month

period in any one school year or is absent for three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period, the student's parent is subject to prosecution under Texas Education Code § 25.093 and the student is subject to referral to a truancy court for truant conduct under Texas Family Code § 65.003(a).

Harmony Public Schools shall notify a student's parent if the student has been absent from school, without excuse, on three days or parts of days within a four-week period. The notice will inform the parent that it is the parent's duty to monitor the student's school attendance and require the student to attend school; the student is subject to truancy prevention measures under Texas Education Code § 25.0915; and that a conference between school officials and the parent is needed to discuss the absences.

Unless your student is specifically exempt from compulsory attendance, your student will be placed in our Truancy Prevention Measure (TPM) program at their campus to address your student's attendance.

### **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade**

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student must attend at least 90% of the days the class is offered. These include both excused and unexcused absences.

A student who attends for at least 75 percent, but fewer than 90% of the days class is offered may be referred to a campus Attendance Review Committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit or earn a final grade.

In determining whether there are extenuating circumstances for an absence, the Attendance Review Committee will use the following guidelines:

- All absences will be reviewed, with consideration given to special circumstances discussed in the Texas Education Code. For a student transferring into Harmony Public Schools after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.
- In reaching a consensus about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that its decision is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or parent could exercise control.

- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documentation expressing reasons for the student's absences.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- The student, parent, or other representative will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to discuss ways to earn or regain credit.

If credit is lost or a final grade is not earned because of excessive absences, the Attendance Review Committee will decide how the student may regain credit or earn a final grade. If the committee determines that there are no extenuating circumstances and that credit may not be regained or a final grade may not be earned, the student and/or parent may appeal the decision by filing a written request with the Campus Principal within 15 days of the last day of the semester. The appeal will then be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Campus Principal or designee shall inform the student or parent of the date, time, and place of the meeting.

## Driver's License Attendance Verification

To obtain or renew a driver's license, a student under 18 years of age must annually provide to the Texas Department of Public Safety a form obtained from the school verifying that the student has met the requirements set forth by state regulation. Eligible students may obtain the required Verification of Enrollment form from the main office.

## Absence and Tardiness

### Absence in General

When a student must be absent from school, parents are asked to call the school each day the student will be absent. Upon returning to school, it is mandatory that the student bring a ***note from a parent explaining the absence. The Principal or designated school administrator will have final approval as to if the absence will be excused. Notes must be received within three days of the absence or the absence will be unexcused.*** A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted.

All assignments missed will be due on the day the student returns to school unless otherwise arranged with

teachers or the Dean of Student Culture. Any absence not approved in advance will be unexcused.

Because excessive absences are considered truancy under state law, the school reserves the right to take extreme absence cases to court.

## Types of Absences

The school recognizes two kinds of absences: excused and unexcused. Students and parents should read this section carefully to understand the school's expectations. Students and parents should also be aware of the school's policy regarding homework, quizzes, and tests following an absence.

### Excused Absences

Students may be excused for temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the Principal. As discussed above, students must provide a written explanation for the absence and the absence must be approved by the Principal to be excused. The excuse will be filed in the attendance office and become part of the student's record.

An absence will be considered excused if the absence is for one or more of the following reasons:

- An absence resulting from a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes the student's attendance infeasible, if the student or the student's parent provides a certification from a physician licensed to practice medicine in Texas specifying the student's illness and the anticipated period of the student's absence relating to the illness or related treatment.
- An absence for a student who is 15 years of age or older to visit a driver's license office to obtain a driver's license or learner license, provided that more than one day of school may not be excused during the period the student is enrolled in high school for the purpose of (i) obtaining a driver's license or (ii) obtaining a learner license, and the school verifies the student's visit to the driver's license office in accordance with procedures adopted by Harmony Public School.
- Personal illnesses that do not exceed three consecutive days. Illnesses that extend beyond three days will require a doctor's note.
- Family emergency or illness. \*\*
- Quarantine of the home. (Medical Note Needed)
- Bereavement of a family member. \*\*
- Observing religious holy days.

- Juvenile court proceeding documented by a probation officer.
- Appearing at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the student's application for United States citizenship.
- Student participation in a United States naturalization oath ceremony.
- Documented health care appointments (including absence for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders) for the student or the student's child, if the student begins classes or returns to school on the same day as the appointment.
- Serving as an election clerk.
- Required screening, diagnosis, and treatment for Medicaid- eligible students.
- Documented college visits by junior or senior students. A student will not be excused for this purpose for more than two days during the student's junior year and two days during the student's senior year.
- Career investigation days by junior or senior students for purposes of determining the student's interest in pursuing a career. A student will not be excused for this purpose for more than two days during the student's junior year and two days during the student's senior year.
- Temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the student's teacher, Principal, or Superintendent.
- For students in the conservatorship (custody) of the state who need to attend (1) an activity required under a court-ordered service plan, or (2) any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

**\*\*Number of days allowed is at the discretion of the Principal or designated school administrator.**

The school will also excuse a student from attending school for travel under the following circumstances:

- Observing religious holy days; For purposes of excusing a student from attending school to observe a religious holy day, Harmony may not require documentation from a clergy member or other religious leader, and shall accept a note from the student's parent verifying the purpose of the student's absence.
- Attending a required court appearance;

- Appearing at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the student's application for United States citizenship;
- Taking part in a U.S. naturalization oath ceremony; or
- Serving as an election clerk.

Any student participating in an activity listed above will be allowed one day's excused absence for traveling to the activity and one day's excused absence for returning from the activity.

### ***Unexcused Absences***

Any absence not listed above will be considered an unexcused absence. Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to bring a written note within three school days following an absence;
- Leaving school without the permission of the Principal/ Dean of Student Culture;
- Walking out of class; and
- Receiving a pass to report to a certain school area and failing to report.

### **Make-Up Work**

A student must submit an "excused absence slip" to be eligible for make-up work. Students who are absent for school-related reasons or for an anticipated or planned absence must make arrangements for make-up assignments prior to the absence.

For any class missed, the teacher may assign make-up work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the student's needs in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

Students are responsible for obtaining and completing make-up work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher.

Students should receive credit for satisfactory makeup work after an absence. They may receive a zero as a placeholder until missed work is completed and turned in.

If a student misses a test due to an excused absence, a make-up test will be scheduled by the teacher. Students are responsible for taking the test at that time. Teachers are not obligated to reschedule a makeup exam.

Students may not make up work following an unexcused absence. An unexcused absence may result in an “F” or grade of 0% for each assignment missed.

## Tardy Policy

The school’s tardy policy has been developed to emphasize the importance of each student arriving on time to school every day and remaining in the classroom for the entire period. Learning personal responsibility by arriving at school and class on time is an integral part of the school’s standard of excellence, which helps prepare students for success.

Tardiness interrupts instructional time. Students should be inside the classroom by the school’s announced start time. If a student is more than 20 minutes late to any class, he/she will be counted absent for the period. A student arriving after this time must first report to the front office and obtain a tardy slip. Tardiness to school will be unexcused, unless the student arrives to campus late for one of the following reasons:

- Attendance at a required court appointment
- Appointment with a doctor, dentist, or other healthcare provider
- Inclement Weather (Principal’s Approval Needed).

During the first few days of school, the school will be working with the students, focusing on getting organized and arriving to class on time. This Tardy Policy will become effective on the 10th day of school.

**The student’s responsibility** is to move quickly and safely through the school’s hallway and report to class before the tardy bell rings. It is the student’s responsibility to BE ON TIME to class!

**The parent’s responsibility** is to discuss the school’s tardy policy with their child, reinforcing the student’s ability to be responsible for arriving to class on time and most importantly, it is the parent’s responsibility to bring the student to school on time.

**Note:** Parents who bring their children to school after the 1st period tardy bell rings, must park their car, enter the building and sign their child in at the front office. This rule does not apply to students who meet the following conditions: students who are 18 years or older, students 16 years or older who drive themselves to school, and approved students who walk to school.

## CONSEQUENCES FOR ARRIVING LATE TO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS WHOSE PARENTS DRIVE TO SCHOOL

Number of Tardies	Consequences
1–3	Verbal warning to parents
4–5	Written warning to parents
6–9	Conference with parents
For every 10	After the 10 tardies, the parent must meet with the school principal or designee and submit a letter explaining the reason(s) for the excessive tardiness. Failure to meet this requirement may result in the school filing a case with Child Protective Services.

## CONSEQUENCES FOR ARRIVING LATE TO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS WHO DRIVE THEMSELVES TO SCHOOL

Number of Tardies	Consequences
1–3	Verbal Warning
4–5	Morning or After-School Detention
6–9	1 Day In-School Suspension
For every 10	Students will be required to perform 1 hour of community service. School will provide the community service options to the parent/student. Parents will be responsible for the student’s fulfillment of community service hours. Failure to attend will result in a 1 Day Out-of-School Suspension.

## CONSEQUENCES FOR TARDINESS TO CLASS

Number of Tardies	Consequences
5–9	Warning notice sent to parent informing of class tardy
10–14	Saturday school or after school detention
15–19	Students will be required to perform <b>1 hour</b> of community service. School will provide the community service options to the parents/guardian/student. Parents will be responsible for the student’s fulfillment of community service hours. Failure to attend will result in further disciplinary action.
20 and Above	In-school suspension

The Principal and/or Dean of Student Culture may substitute alternative disciplinary consequences for habitually tardy students.

## Dismissal Policy

Students should be picked up no later than thirty minutes after dismissal each day. Students should not be in the corridors, at their lockers, or in the school building later than ten minutes following dismissal time unless accompanied by a staff member. Students must follow all school rules during dismissal time.

### Dismissal/Pick Up Information Form

Parents must fill out a form provided by the after-school coordinator to provide dismissal information about their child. The school is not responsible for students who leave campus without written permission from an administrator. Students are not allowed to loiter in front of neighboring businesses and/ or school grounds. Disciplinary action will be taken against students who leave and return to campus without having written permission from an administrator.

### Loitering

Students are not allowed to remain on campus unsupervised after designated dismissal times. The school will not have adult supervision after school hours. A student who remains on campus unsupervised after dismissal time may be subject to state criminal trespass laws.

Disciplinary consequences for remaining on campus unsupervised after designated dismissal times within a school year are as follows:

Number of Times Unsupervised after Dismissal Time	Consequences
2-3	Warning notice sent to parent informing of loitering policy and possible consequences for continued loitering
4	Meeting with parents
5	Student assigned to Saturday detention; school contacts CPS
7-9	Student assigned to one day in-school- suspension
10-14	Student assigned to one day out-of-school suspension
15 and above	Student assigned up to three days out- of-school suspension; school contacts local law enforcement

Additionally, students who have not been picked up after the designated dismissal time may be placed in the school's after school program. Parents of these students will be responsible for all fees incurred as a result of such placement, as allowed by applicable law.

### Early Dismissal from School

In all instances of early dismissal, the following precautions are taken to ensure student safety:

Approval of a parent is required in all instances of early dismissal. The Principal may release a student before the end of a school day only upon presentation of a written or face-to-face request from a parent (no telephone calls), or for reasons of emergency. Students may be released only to a parent whose signature is on file in the school office or to a properly identified person, authorized in writing by the parent to act on his or her behalf.

A student over the age of 18 years of age may be released "on his or her own" only with verified parental permission. No staff member shall permit or cause a student to leave school prior to the regular dismissal time, except with the knowledge and approval of the Principal and parent.

### Withdrawal from School

#### Voluntary Withdrawal

A parent wishing to withdraw a student from school should notify the school at least 24 hours in advance. By providing this information in advance, parents help facilitate the withdrawal process. A withdrawal form may be obtained from the school registrar's office. The Principal or other administrator will verify the information on the withdrawal form when the parent arrives to sign withdrawal papers to complete the process. The parent shall also provide the name of the new school in which the student will be enrolled, and must sign the formal withdrawal request to document that the student will continue to be enrolled in a school as required by compulsory attendance laws. On the student's last day, a copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student and a copy placed in the student's permanent record. The student will also be provided with a copy of the completed withdrawal form showing the student's grades earned to date to provide to his or her new school.

A student who is 18 years of age or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an



emancipated minor may withdraw without a parent's signature.

Withdrawing students and parents are expected to:

- Return all textbooks and checked-out materials and equipment;
- Complete any make-up work assigned;
- Pay any unpaid balance for student fees, if any; and
- Sign a release of student records.

### **Involuntary Withdrawal**

The school may initiate withdrawal of a student under the age of 18 for nonattendance under the following conditions:

- The student has been absent ten consecutive school days; and
- Repeated efforts by the attendance officer and/or Principal to locate the student have been unsuccessful.

Additionally, Harmony Public Schools may revoke the enrollment of a student 19 years of age or older who has more than five unexcused absences in one semester.

### **Dress and Grooming**

As authorized by state law and the school's charter, students are required to wear uniforms to school. The school's uniform policy and grooming standards are established to teach grooming and hygiene, create a safe and orderly environment, instill discipline, and eliminate competition and distractions caused by varied dress styles. Students are expected to arrive in a proper school uniform every day, display modesty and

neatness, and take pride in their uniforms. The school relies on student common sense and the support of parents to help maintain this dress code.

Parents must provide their student(s) with the required uniform, except in the case of educationally disadvantaged students as provided in the Texas Education Code. The school may provide a uniform for economically disadvantaged students. A request for school assistance for purchasing uniforms must be made in writing to the Principal, and include evidence of the inability to pay. Further details are available in the Principal's office.

A parent may choose for his or her student(s) to be exempted from the requirement of wearing a uniform and/or grooming if the parents provide a written statement that, as determined by the district office.

### **Notice to Parents and Students**

If a student arrives at school out of uniform or is groomed inappropriately, the student's parent(s) will be called to bring a change of clothes. The student will not be allowed to attend class until he or she is appropriately dressed. Any class time missed will be counted as an unexcused absence. The school reserves the right to determine and restrict unbecoming styles. Violations of the school's uniform policy and grooming standards will result in incremental disciplinary action. Uniforms with torn pants or shirts with holes are not allowed. All damaged uniform items should be replaced.

Dress Code		
ITEM	ACCEPTABLE DRESS	SPECIAL COMMENTS & INTERPRETATIONS
<b>Uniform Top</b>	All students must wear the Harmony School uniform shirt.  Shirts must be tucked in at all times	This shirt must be purchased from the school, and may not be substituted with a plain red polo shirt or any other type of shirt.
<b>Pants / Belts</b>	Properly fitting navy blue, black or khaki pants/slacks. Black or dark blue fitted belt.  (4-12 grades only)	Pants/Slacks may NOT be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jeans</li> <li>• Cargo-style pants/shorts</li> <li>• Yoga pants, joggers, jeggings, leggings, and/or spandex</li> <li>• Baggy or sag, or tight-fitted</li> <li>• Must be worn properly at waist, no low waistline</li> <li>• Rolled up at the legs</li> </ul> Belts may not have rhinestones, wording, or designs
<b>Shorts</b>	Properly fitting navy blue or khaki shorts or skorts (K-8th grades only)	Shorts and skorts must be to the knee or longer
<b>Dress/Skirts</b>	Dresses and Skirts are NOT allowed	
<b>Footwear</b>	Socks must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White, navy, blue or black</li> <li>• Footies are not allowed</li> </ul> Shoes must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plain/Neutral-colored lace-up shoes or loafers with closed toes/heels, or athletic shoes.</li> <li>• Secure straps on the heel for safety.</li> <li>• Kept clean at all times</li> </ul>	Socks must be worn at all times.  Shoes may not be: Sandals, mules, "Ugs", high heels, boots or Crocs Heelies (shoes with wheels) Illuminated or light up  Shoelaces must be tied at all times.  K-3rd students' shoes may be subject to teacher discretion if there is a safety concern.
<b>Hair</b>	Hair must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-groomed</li> <li>• Non-distracting hair color that is styled in a way that is neither distracting nor conspicuous.</li> </ul>	Facial hair must be clean and well-groomed and styled in a way that is neither distracting nor conspicuous.  Extreme hairstyles (Mohawk/Faux Hawk/Designs Cut and Spiked-up) or extreme unnatural colors are not permitted.  A parent may choose for his or her student(s) to be exempted from the requirement of wearing a uniform and/or grooming if the parent provides a written statement that, as determined by the District Office.

<b>Jewelry</b>	<p>Earrings, hair jewelry, watches, bracelets, rings and necklaces that are not a safety hazard or a material or substantial disruption may be worn.</p> <p>Necklaces must be tucked into the uniform shirt. Bracelets and necklaces are limited to two.</p>	<p>Clip-on jewelry (earrings, nose rings, etc.) is not permitted. Students may wear only 1 pair of stud earrings; no large dangling or hoop earrings.</p> <p>Spike/gaged earrings, necklaces, bracelets are not permitted. No facial or body piercing.</p>
<b>Outwear</b>	<p>V-neck cardigans, V-Neck sweaters, vests, and full-zip up jackets must be the color of navy, red, or black.</p> <p>(A cardigan is defined as a knitted sweater fastening down the front, with long sleeves).</p>	<p>Outwear, such as, "hoodies" (any clothing item with a hood), pullovers, or sweatshirts are not permitted to be worn inside the building. These items must be stored in the student's locker.</p> <p>Hats, caps, bandannas, or other headwear are not permitted indoors except in the interest of religious practices, safety, or with the permission of the principal.</p>
<b>General</b>	<p>Solid colored, long sleeve shirts may be worn under the school uniform shirt.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No tattoos (permanent or temporary)</li> <li>• No accessories such as sunglasses</li> <li>• No extreme make-up or nail color</li> <li>• No wallet with chains.</li> </ul>

## P.E. Uniform Policy

Kindergarten thru 3rd grade: Students are required to wear their school uniforms during P.E. classes.

Some campuses may require the purchase of a school PE uniform. Other campuses may require wearing a gray t-shirt (no sleeveless shirts/tank tops) and gray shorts (must be to the knee level or longer) or gray sweatpants. No spandex or tight-fitting t-shirts, shorts, or sweatpants are allowed. Students are required to change back to their school uniform after their P.E. class.

Some campuses may not require P.E. uniforms for 4th and 5th grades. Parents must check with campus administration for the local school policy.

### ***Additional Uniform Policy and Grooming Requirements and Limitations***

In addition to wearing proper school uniforms, Harmony Public Schools requires that students follow the following dress code guidelines. Harmony Public Schools prohibits any clothing or grooming that, in the administration's judgment, may reasonably be expected to cause disruption of, or interference with, normal school operations.

## Dress Code on Free Dress Days

All general guidelines for dress apply on free dress days, even though school uniforms are not mandatory. Garments must be free of holes, tears, inappropriate wording, logos, messages or advertising. No short, skin tight, or legging dresses, or skirts may be worn. All dresses must have sleeves. Students may not wear low cut, midriff-baring, or backless blouses. Students may wear blue or black jeans, but they cannot be tight pants including jeggings, tights or skinny style pants. Clothing items must not depict images of violence. Parents will be called to bring a change of clothes or pick up a child if he or she violates the dress code.

## Student Fees

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. Students are expected to provide their own consumable items, such pencils, paper, pens, erasers, and notebooks. Students may be required to pay certain fees or deposits, including:

1. A fee for materials for a class project that the student will keep, if the fee does not exceed the cost of materials.

2. Membership dues in voluntary student clubs or organizations and admission fees for extracurricular activities.
3. A security deposit for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment.
4. A fee for personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel, although a student may provide his or her own equipment or apparel if it meets reasonable requirements and standards relating to health and safety.
5. A fee for voluntarily purchased items, such as student publications, class rings, pictures, yearbooks, and graduation announcements.
6. A fee for voluntary student health and accident benefit plan.
7. A reasonable fee, not to exceed the actual annual maintenance cost, for the use of musical instruments and uniforms owned or rented by the school.
8. A fee for items of personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that become the property of the student.
9. A parking fee or a fee for an identification card.
10. A fee for a driver training course, not to exceed the actual cost per student in the program for the current school year.
11. A fee for an optional course offered for credit that requires the use of facilities not available on campus or the employment of an educator who is not part of the school's regular staff.
12. A fee for summer school courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
13. A reasonable fee for transportation of a student who lives within two miles of the campus.
14. A reasonable fee, not to exceed \$50, for costs associated with an educational program offered outside of regular school hours through which a student who was absent from class receives instruction voluntarily for the purpose of making up the missed instruction and meeting the level of attendance required for class credit, so long as the fee would not create a financial hardship or discourage the student from attending the program.
15. A fee for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
16. A fee specifically permitted by any other statute.

The school may waive any fee or deposit if the student and parent are unable to pay. A request for such a waiver must be made in writing to the Principal, and include evidence of the inability to pay. Details for the fee waiver are available in the Principal's office.

Families are responsible for paying all fees associated with extracurricular programs, including clubs, parking, athletics, fine arts, University Interscholastic League academics, etc. prior to participation.

### **Textbooks and Curriculum Materials**

State-approved textbooks and additional curriculum materials are provided free of charge for each subject or class, except for dual credit courses. Materials must be used by the student as directed by the teacher.

A student who is issued damaged materials should report the damage to the teacher.

Students must return all textbooks and supplemental materials to the teacher at the end of the school year or when the student withdraws from school. Any student failing to return issued materials in an acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and educational materials until the damages are paid for by the student and/or parent. However, a student will be provided textbooks for use at school during the school day. The school may reduce or waive the payment requirement if the student is from a low-income family. The release of student records, including official transcripts, will be delayed pending payment for lost or severely damaged textbooks or supplemental materials.

Electronic textbooks shall be returned free of viruses or any other malicious software, and free of any plug-ins or software not specifically approved by the school. All components or applications that are a part of the electronic textbook when issued must be returned.

A parent is entitled to request that Harmony Public Schools allow a student to take home any instructional materials used by the student. The school will honor the request, subject to availability of the instructional materials. A student who takes home instructional materials must return the materials to school at the beginning of the next school day if requested to do so by the student's teacher. Harmony Public Schools must provide the instructional materials to the student in printed format if the student does not have reliable access to technology at the student's home. Harmony Public Schools also are not required to purchase printed copies of instructional materials that the school would otherwise not purchase; the school may provide the student with relevant electronic instructional materials.

## **Student ID Cards**

ID cards may be issued to each student with a reasonable fee. This fee may be waived under appropriate circumstances; details for the fee waiver are available in the Principal's office of each campus. All students must wear a student ID as part of their uniform. Students may be asked to show their ID card in order to order breakfast or lunch. If a student loses an ID card, he or she should go to the main office before or after school to purchase a replacement. Students shall return their student ID cards upon withdrawal from the school.

## **Lost and Found**

Anyone who finds books, clothing or other personal items left unattended should bring these items to the front office. Students who have lost these items should check at the front office. Items will be kept in the lost and found for up to seven days. The hallways are inspected each evening and all unsecured items are placed in the front office. Students should label all books, uniforms and other personal belongings with their name to ensure the prompt return of an item that has been misplaced.

## **Meals**

Harmony Public Schools participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. Guidelines set by the Texas Department of Agriculture ("TDA") and United States Department of Agriculture ("USDA") are followed to meet the nutritional needs of all students. Menus may be viewed online on the school's website. Each student has a meal account in which money may be deposited. Payments may be made online or at the school office.

## **State-Mandated Nutrition Guidelines**

TDA establishes nutrition standards for all food and beverages sold during the school day. The school day is defined as midnight the day before to 30 minutes after the last dismissal bell. These "Smart Snack" standards apply to a la carte items sold by Child Nutrition as well as any sales conducted by other organizations. More detailed information may be obtained at the school office or online at [www.squaremeals.org](http://www.squaremeals.org).

## **Free and Reduced-Cost Meals**

The school distributes a Letter to Household with information regarding free and reduced-price meals to each student's parent/guardian at the beginning of the school year. Eligibility applications are available online, or a paper copy may be obtained from the school office. The information requested includes all members of the household and income for each. A social security number is not required to apply for meal benefits. Should family income change, a new application may be submitted at any time during the school year.

## **Lunch Periods**

All students will remain on-campus during the lunch period. Students may buy lunch at school or bring a packed lunch. During the lunch period, students are expected to display good manners and courtesy. Students may eat only in the lunch area, and must clear their place and dispose of all trash appropriately. The lunch area will be monitored by teachers.

The following guidelines apply to the cafeteria.

- Students must dispose of plates and utensils in garbage bins.
- Students must keep tables, seats, and floors clean.
- Students must talk in a normal voice. No shouting is allowed.
- Students must use appropriate language at all times.
- Students must keep cafeteria lines orderly; no pushing, running, horse playing or cutting in lines.
- Students may not loiter in the cafeteria and hallways during lunch.
- Students must remain seated unless otherwise instructed.
- Students must keep hands, feet, personal belongings and food to themselves.
- No backpacks or books are allowed in the lunch area.
- Students who deface school property will be fined an amount necessary to cover the cost of restoring the damaged property.
- Students may not order food from outside.

Students who do not follow these guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action.

## Public Areas

Hallways, stairways, the cafeteria, and restrooms are used by all students and school employees. The following rules of conduct apply to all students:

- Students may not loiter in hallways, stairways, the cafeteria, or restrooms.
- Students may not eat in these areas except in the cafeteria.
- Students may not run in these areas.
- Students may not use any profane or vulgar language while in these areas.
- Students may not yell, scream, hit lockers or otherwise make excessive noise while in these areas.
- Students may not draw graffiti, post fliers or write on walls, bulletin boards, doors, desks, books or any other school property.
- Students must keep these areas clean and safe.
- Students may not leave belongings on the floor, outside of, or on top of lockers.
- Students must clean up after themselves and properly dispose of all trash.
- Students must immediately report any leaks, spills or other problems in the restroom to a teacher or the office.
- Students may not roughhouse, wrestle with, or trip others in these areas.

Students are not permitted in the halls during class periods or during the lunch hour unless they are accompanied by a teacher or have a hall pass from an authorized staff member. Students who are found in the halls without passes or who violate the guidelines listed above will be subject to disciplinary action.

Additionally, teachers have the authority to submit referrals to

- Use of a classroom without teacher permission.
- Using or removing any item from a teacher's desk.
- Using laboratories when no teacher is present.
- Using the playground without permission.
- Presence in construction areas or any other area deemed "off limits" by the Principal or Dean of Student Cultures.
- Use of the school phone during the day without permission from authorized school personnel.

## Use by Students Before and After School

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place. Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing the activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus. After dismissal from school in the afternoon, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately.

## Closed Campus

The school operates a closed campus. Students are not allowed to leave for any reason during the school day without properly checking out in accordance with campus rules and procedures.

## Library

The library is a resource center used by all students for class assignments and for leisure-time reading of appropriate materials. The resources of the library are available to support and enhance student learning and understanding and to encourage students to become independent, lifelong learners. Students may use the library before and after school and during study hall. Books, magazines and reserve materials may be checked out for varying times. Desks and carrels are available for studying. Students may perform group work for class if they work quietly. School policy does not allow students to bring food or drink into the library. The total number of students who may use the library at any one time will be limited.

## Electronic Devices and Technology Resources

Possession and use of personal telecommunication devices, including cell phones, and other electronic devices:

Harmony Public Schools permits students to possess personal cell phones for safety purposes; however, these devices **must remain turned off and out of sight during the instructional day, including during all testing**, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. Possession and use of cell phones, computers, and other devices capable of electronic communications at school is a privilege and



not a right. Possession and use of such devices at school or school-related events or activities shall be subject to school approval and regulations.

A student must also have approval to possess other telecommunication devices at school, such as notebook computers, laptops, tablet computers, or other portable devices. The school will not be responsible for damage to, loss, or theft of any such device a student brings to school.

If a student uses a telecommunication device without authorization during the school day, the device will be confiscated. If a school employee observes a student using any cell phone or other telecommunication device during the school day or on a school bus to or from the school or a school-related activity, the school employee shall confiscate the device and turn it into the front office. If a student and parent have executed a waiver permitting the student to possess an electronic communication device at school, school officials may power on and search the device if there is reasonable cause to believe that the device has been used in the transmission or reception of communications prohibited by law, policy, or regulation. A confiscated device may be picked up from the Principal's office. Confiscated devices that are not retrieved by the student or parent will be disposed of after the notice required by law.

Harmony Public Schools will not be responsible for damage to or loss or theft of confiscated items. School administrators shall have the discretion to determine the appropriate use of phones for students participating in extracurricular activities or attending school-sponsored or school-related activities on or off school property.

Disciplinary action for violations of this policy will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The use of camera phones for recording is strictly forbidden on the school premises at any time.

#### Possession of other electronic devices:

The school further prohibits students from possessing other electronic devices – including but not limited to radios, tape or CD players, iPods, iPad, smart watches, headphones or air/ear-buds electronic games and any other similar devices with access to internet, photos, games, calls, or camera – on school property during the school day. These devices disrupt classes and distract others from learning. If a school employee observes a student using any electronic device during the school day or on a school bus to or from the school or a school

related activity, the school employee will confiscate the device and turn it into the front office. The school administration will return confiscated items to the parents. The school will not be responsible for damage to or loss or theft of confiscated items.

Any student refusing to give a cell phone or other electronic device to school staff shall be subject to disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

#### Instructional use of personal telecommunications and other electronic devices:

In some cases, students may find it beneficial or might be encouraged to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must obtain prior approval before using personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional use. When students are not using the devices for approved instructional purposes, all devices must be turned off and kept out of sight during the instructional day. Violations may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

The school is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen personal device.

#### Acceptable use of technology resources:

School-owned technology resources for instructional purposes may be issued to individual students. Use of these technological resources, which include the school's network systems and use of school equipment, is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign an Acceptable Use Agreement Acknowledgment Form regarding use of these school resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

#### Unacceptable and inappropriate use of technology resources

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, whether the equipment used to send such messages is district-owned or personally

owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as “sexting,” will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child the [“Before You Text: Sexting & Bullying Prevention, Education & Intervention Course,”](#) a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology.

In addition, any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the school’s computer and/or network security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of expulsion.

## **Phone Messages**

During school hours, parents should not try to reach a student’s cell phone. Parents should call the main office in emergency situations. The school will then notify the student of any emergency.

## **Distribution of Published Materials**

### **School Materials**

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed with prior approval by the Principal and teacher. Such items may include school posters, brochures, murals, etc.

### **Non-School Materials**

Students must obtain express prior approval of the Principal before distributing, posting, selling, or circulating written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials on campus.

Non-school literature shall not be distributed by students on school property if:

- The materials are obscene, vulgar, or otherwise inappropriate for the age and maturity of the audience.
- The materials endorse actions endangering the health or safety of students.
- The materials promote illegal use of drugs, alcohol, or other controlled substances.
- The distribution of such materials would violate the intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or other rights of another person.
- The materials contain defamatory statements about public figures or others.
- The materials advocate imminent lawless or disruptive action and are likely to incite or produce such action.
- The materials are hating literature or similar publications that scurrilously attack ethnic, religious, or racial groups or contain content aimed at creating hostility and violence, and the materials would materially and substantially interfere with school activities or the rights of others.
- There is reasonable cause to believe that distribution of the non-school literature would result in material and substantial interference with school activities or the rights of others.

Any student who posts material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

## **Fundraising**

No person may solicit contributions or collect funds for any purpose from students or school personnel on school property, at school-sponsored events, or on school transportation unless he or she has the written permission of the Principal or Superintendent.

### **Sales**

Advertising may be permitted for approved school-related activities. This may include school newspapers, yearbooks, and other fundraising projects. Advertising material that promotes the use of alcohol and/or tobacco is strictly prohibited. No person may display, solicit, or sell any item or service to students or school personnel while on school property, at school-sponsored events, or on school transportation without the written permission of the Principal.

## **Demonstrations or Meetings on School Premises (Non- School Sponsored)**

Any student who wishes to promote, organize or participate in a non-school sponsored demonstration or meeting on school premises must obtain prior written approval from the Principal at least three days prior to the requested activity. This three-day period does not include the day of the request or the day of the activity. The school may prohibit demonstrations or meetings that materially and substantially interfere with school activities or the rights of other students or teachers; are vulgar or profane; might reasonably be perceived to advocate drug or alcohol use, irresponsible sex, or conduct otherwise inconsistent with the shared values of a civilized order; inappropriate for the maturity level of the audience; associates the school with a non-neutral position on matters of political controversy; and/or the school demonstrates reasonable cause to believe that the expression would create material and substantial interference with its educational program.

## **Bulletin Boards**

Students must obtain permission from teachers to post materials on classroom bulletin boards and from the Principal to post materials on hallway bulletin boards. Materials should not be taped to glass surfaces, and students should not damage any surface by using tacks or pins to post materials.

## **Deliveries**

Flowers, balloons, food items etc. should not be delivered to the school for students. These will not be delivered to the classroom. Students may not receive any form of delivery (balloons, food, flowers etc.) except by any parent in person and as necessary for the school day. Food items, including but not limited to, fast food, pizza, cakes, etc. will not be accepted for delivery to the students. However, parents are welcome to join students for a cafeteria lunch in our school cafeteria.

Parents who want to organize activities in school such as birthday parties, pizza parties etc., must receive prior approval from the Principal or his/her designee. All food items must be store- bought; homemade items will not be allowed.

## **School Activities**

The school offers a wide range of activities to enrich student learning during and after school. Students participating in such activities are subject to the provisions of this Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct whenever the students are under the direct supervision of a school employee.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips offer exciting ways to learn. Students will have the opportunity to go on field trips at various times during the school year. The following rules apply to all field trips:

- Students must return a Field Trip Permission Slip signed by his or her parent(s) by the specified date. Phone calls will not be accepted as permission.
- Students must wear their school uniforms, unless otherwise specified.
- Students will abide by the Student Code of Conduct while on the field trip.
- Students will be responsible to make up any missed assignments.
- The group will leave within five minutes of the scheduled departure time. After a group returns from a field trip, the school is not responsible for students who are not picked up at the designated time.

### **After-School Activities**

There is no better way for students to enrich their education than by taking part in clubs and after-school activities, or working with a teacher. Students who stay for after-school activities are expected to follow these rules:

- Students must be with a teacher or other staff member at all times.
- Students must arrange for their own transportation; the student's ride should arrive promptly at the end of the activity.
- Students must abide by the Student Code of Conduct while participating in the activity.
- Students may not stay after school to wait for another student.

### **Science Fair**

The school organizes a school-wide science fair every year. Due to the school's high expectations in math, science and technology, each student is required to complete an individual or group research project in one of these areas.

The science fair handbook will be provided to each student by the science fair committee. Students are required to follow the guidelines cited in the science fair handbook.

### **Arts and Activity Groups**

Students participating in arts and activity groups will be evaluated on both practice and performance. Students and parents should be aware of possible conflicts with other activities, within and out of the school system. Students participating in performing arts and activity groups are subject to the following guidelines:

- Participating students must adhere to all organizational rules and policies.
- Students are expected to attend rehearsals and performances. Participation will be a determining factor of the student's grade.
- A student may have his or her semester grade lowered one letter grade for any unexcused absences from scheduled rehearsals or performances. Additionally, the student may lose his or her position in the group and become an alternate performer.

The following conditions constitute reason for an excused absence for a required rehearsal or performance:

- Scheduled family trip or vacation, provided the student provides five days' written notice obtains prior approval from the director.
- Family emergencies.
- Illness. The student should notify the activity director of the illness as soon as possible.
- Conflicting school activities that have been cleared with the activity director and the Principal.

The Principal may review a request to miss a required rehearsal or performance if the director denies the request. The Principal will meet with the concerned student and the director. The decision of the Principal is final.

### **Transportation**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips may be required to ride a school vehicle to and from the event. The Principal, however, may make an exception if the parent personally requests that the student be permitted to ride with the parent, or if the parent presents a written request that the student be permitted to ride

with an adult designated by the parent, so long as the written request is presented before the scheduled trip.

Riding a school vehicle is a privilege. School vehicle drivers have the authority to maintain discipline and require seating charts. Students are expected to assist school staff in ensuring that school vehicles remain in good condition. When riding a school vehicle, students are held to behavioral standards established in this Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

1. Follow the driver's directions at all times.
2. Enter and leave the vehicle in an orderly manner.
3. Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
4. Not deface the vehicle or its equipment.
5. Not put head, hands, arms, legs, or any object out of any window, or throw objects within or out of the vehicle.
6. Not possess or use any form of tobacco on school buses.
7. Observe all usual classroom rules.
8. Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
9. Fasten seat belts, if available.
10. Wait for the driver's signal in order to leave or cross in front of the vehicle.

Only designated students are allowed to ride in school vehicles. Students may neither ride the vehicle to a different location nor have friends ride the vehicle to participate in after-school activities. Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and the student's bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

If bus transportation is required as a result of an Individual Education Plan ("IEP"), the Admissions Review and Dismissal ("ARD") Committee will have discretion in determining appropriate disciplinary consequences for improper behavior in a school vehicle.

### **Student Parking**

Students shall acquire administration permission before parking a vehicle on school property. In order to park on campus, students must hold a valid driver's license and have proof of insurance. Unauthorized vehicles will be towed at the owner's expense. Students driving on school property must follow all posted speed limits and comply with traffic laws. Unsafe operation of a vehicle on campus (speeding, improper parking, etc.) may result in disciplinary action and/or removal of parking privileges.

Students are instructed to leave their vehicles immediately after parking. Under no circumstances will students be allowed to sit in their vehicles.

### **Pledges of Allegiance and Moment of Silence**

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the Campus Director to excuse their child from reciting a pledge.

State law requires that one minute of silence follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others. In addition, state law requires that each campus provide for the observance of one minute of silence at the beginning of the first-class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001.

State law does not allow your child to be excused from participating in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows.

### **Recitation of the Declaration of Independence**

State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3–12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during “Celebrate Freedom Week.” A student will be exempted from this requirement if a parent provides a written statement requesting that the student be excused, the school determines that the

### **Prayer and Meditation**

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

## **School Facilities**

### **Damage to School Property**

Students shall not vandalize or otherwise damage or deface any property belonging to or used by the school, including furniture and other equipment, textbooks, and library books. To ensure that school facilities can serve

student has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or the parent is a representative of a State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3–12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during “Celebrate Freedom Week.” A student will be exempted from this requirement if a parent provides a written statement requesting that the student be excused, the school determines that the student has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or the parent is a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity.

## **Student Health and Safety**

Student health and safety is a high priority of Harmony Public Schools. Student cooperation is essential to ensuring health and safety. Students should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this Handbook, including the Student Code of
- Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the Principal, teachers, or other school staff.
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus and threats made by a person toward a student or staff member.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals. Immediately follow instructions from staff members who are overseeing student welfare.

those for whom they are intended both this year and in coming years – littering, defacing, or damaging school property will not be tolerated. In addition to disciplinary sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct, parents of students who are guilty of damaging school property shall be financially responsible for damages in accordance with state law.

## **Tobacco-Free School Notice**

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, giving, or delivering any type of tobacco product, electronic cigarette (e-cigarette) as defined by Section 161.081 of Health and Safety Code, or any form of smokeless tobacco or electronic vaporizing product while on school property or while attending an off-campus school-related activity. Student violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law, as well as the disciplinary terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Alcohol-Free School Notice**

In order to provide a safe and alcohol-free environment for students and employees, all alcoholic beverages are prohibited on school property at all times, and at all school-sanctioned activities occurring on or off school property. Student violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law, as well as the disciplinary terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Drug-Free School Notice**

Harmony Public Schools believes that student use of illicit drugs is both wrong and harmful. Consequently, the school prohibits the use, sale, possession, or distribution of illicit drugs by students on school premises or any school activity, regardless of its location. The school also prevents the use, sale, possession, or distribution of look-alike substances and/or synthetic substances designed to imitate the look and/or effects of illicit drugs. Student violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law, as well as the disciplinary terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Asbestos Management Plan**

All school facilities have been inspected for asbestos by a licensed Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act ("AHERA") All school facilities have been inspected for asbestos by a licensed Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act ("AHERA") inspector. An Asbestos Management Plan has been created for the school in accordance with federal regulations. Parents may view the Asbestos Management Plan by contacting the Principal.

## **Bacterial Meningitis**

State law requires Harmony Public Schools to provide the following information about bacterial meningitis:

### ***What is Meningitis?***

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is most common and

the least serious. Meningitis caused by bacteria is the most likely form of the disease to cause serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease but requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

Bacterial meningitis can be caused by multiple organisms. Two common types are *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, with over 80 serogroups that can cause illness, and *Neisseria meningitidis*, with 5 serogroups that most commonly cause meningitis.

### ***What are the Symptoms?***

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

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

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

### ***How Serious Is Bacterial Meningitis?***

If it is diagnosed early and treated promptly, the majority of people make a complete recovery. If left untreated or treatment is delayed, bacterial meningitis can be fatal, or a person may be left with a permanent disability.

### ***How Is Bacterial Meningitis Spread?***

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing; sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes) or when people cough or sneeze without covering their mouth and nose.

The bacteria do not cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become carriers of the bacteria for days, weeks, or even months. The bacteria rarely overcome the body's immune system and cause meningitis or another serious illness.

### ***How Can Bacterial Meningitis Be Prevented?***

Vaccination: Bacterial meningitis caused by *Streptococcus pneumoniae* and *Neisseria meningitidis* may be prevented through vaccination. The vaccine

which protects against *Streptococcus pneumoniae* is called pneumococcal conjugate vaccine or PCV. This vaccine is recommended by the Advisory Council on Immunization Practices (ACIP) for children in the first year of life. *Neisseria meningitidis* is prevented through two types of vaccines. The first is a meningococcal conjugate vaccine which protects against 4 serogroups A, C, W, and Y and is referred to as MCV4. The second is a vaccine against *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup B and is referred to as MenB.

The ACIP recommends MCV4 for children at age 11-12 years, with a booster dose at 16-18 years. In Texas, one dose of MCV4 given at or after age 11 years is required for children in 7th-12th grades. One dose of MCV4 received in the previous five years is required in Texas for those under the age of 22 years and enrolling in college. Teens and young adults (16-23 years of age) may be vaccinated with MenB. This vaccine is not required for school or college enrollment in Texas.

Vaccines to protect against bacterial meningitis are safe and effective. Common side effects include redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops about 1-2 weeks after the vaccines are given and lasts for 5 years to life depending on the vaccine.

**Healthy Habits:** Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Wash your hands. Limit the number of persons you kiss. Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough. Maintaining healthy habits, like getting plenty of rest and not having close contact with people who are sick, also helps.

### ***Who is At Risk for Bacterial Meningitis?***

Certain groups are at increased risk for bacterial meningitis caused by *Neisseria meningitidis*. These risk factors include HIV infection, travel to places where meningococcal disease is common (such as certain countries in Africa and in Saudi Arabia), and college students living in a dormitory. Other risk factors include having a previous viral infection, living in a crowded household, or having an underlying chronic illness.

Children ages 11-15 years have the second highest rate of death from bacterial meningitis caused by *Neisseria meningitidis*. And children ages 16-23 years also have the second highest rates of disease caused by *Neisseria meningitidis*.

### ***What Should You Do If You Think You Or A Friend Might Have Bacterial Meningitis?***

You should seek prompt medical attention.

### ***For More Information***

Your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all infectious diseases. You may call your family doctor or [local health department](#) office to ask about the meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- <https://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/index.html>

and the Texas Department of State Health Services:

- <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/PreteenVaccines.aspx> or
- <https://dshs.texas.gov/IDCU/disease/meningitis/Meningitis.aspx>.

### **Communicable Diseases**

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. Parents of a student with a communicable or contagious disease should notify the Principal and the school Health Aide so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. School authorities will report those students who are suspected of having a reportable condition. A list of reportable conditions can be found on the [Texas Department of State Health Services website](#).

Any student excluded from school attendance for reason of communicable disease may be readmitted by one or more of the following methods, as determined by the local health authority:

- Certificate from a licensed U.S.-based provider confirming that the child currently shows no signs or symptoms of a communicable disease or affirming the disease's non-infectious nature within a school setting;
- Submitting a permit for readmission issued by a local health authority; or
- Meeting readmission criteria as established by the commissioner of health.

Student's ability to re-enter school or remain cannot be waived by school personnel. Readmission after communicable illness is based solely on clearance by

the attending physician or other re-admission criteria as stated above and must be evaluated by the school health staff prior to student arrival on campus.

In the event of a campus outbreak of communicable illnesses for which vaccines exist, students who are under or un-vaccinated may be dismissed home for their protection. Please contact the school if you have questions or if you are concerned about whether your child should stay home.

In the event of a communicable illness or outbreak for which guidelines are issued by a public health authority including a local health authority or the CDC, or by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), students and families will be expected to follow all recommended health and safety protocol which may include but not be limited to: handwashing, masking, and quarantining if exposed or displaying symptoms of the communicable illness.

## **Immunizations**

The State of Texas requires that every child in the state be immunized against preventable diseases caused by infectious agents, in accordance with an established immunization schedule. To determine the specific number of doses that are required for your student, please read the approved year's Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Students." This document and more information about school vaccine requirements are available at the Texas Department of State Health Services website.

Proof of immunization may be shown through personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation. New enrollees, even if attending the Harmony Virtual Academy, must provide proof of completed immunizations at the time of enrollment unless the student is eligible for provisional enrollment as explained below.

For Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten Students and students in any grade entering a Texas school for the first time (including students from out of state and out of country): Current Immunization record must be provided to the school during the registration process. The students in these grade levels cannot attend school unless all immunization requirements are met."

### ***Immunizations Received Outside the United States***

Vaccinations received outside the United States must be adequately documented and comparable to the schedule

and dosage required by the State of Texas. Foreign immunization records must be legible and officially certified. Foreign immunization records must also be submitted in a language that can be translated by campus staff; if Harmony is unable to translate the record, the parent will be responsible for providing an accurate written translation.

## **Provisional Enrollment**

A student may be provisionally admitted to or enrolled in Harmony Public Schools if the student has an immunization record that indicates the student has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate vaccine required by law. To remain enrolled, the student must continue to receive the necessary immunizations as rapidly as medically feasible, and complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible. The student and/or parent must also provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school.

A health aide or school administrator shall review the immunization status of provisionally enrolled students every 30 days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccination. If, at the end of the 30-day period, a student has not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, the student is not in compliance and Harmony Public Schools shall exclude him or her from school attendance until the required dose is administered.

**Homeless Students:** A student who is homeless, as defined by federal law, shall be admitted temporarily for 30 days if acceptable evidence of vaccination is not available. The school shall promptly refer the student to appropriate public health programs to obtain the required vaccinations.

**Children in Foster Care:** A student who is a "child in foster care" as defined by 45 C.F.R. § 1355.20(a) shall be admitted temporarily for 30 days if acceptable evidence of vaccination is not available. The school shall promptly refer the student to an appropriate health provider to obtain the required vaccinations.

**Transfer Students:** A student can be enrolled provisionally for no more than 30 days if the student transfers from one Texas school to another, and is awaiting the transfer of the immunization record.



**Military Dependents:** A military dependent can be enrolled provisionally for no more than 30 days if the student transfers from one school to another and is awaiting the transfer of the immunization record. The collection and exchange of information pertaining to immunizations with respect to military dependents shall be subject to confidentiality provisions prescribed by federal law.

### **Exclusions from Immunization Requirements**

Exclusions from immunization compliance are allowable on an individual basis for medical reasons, reasons of conscience (including a religious belief), and active duty with the armed forces of the United States.

To claim exclusion for medical reasons, the student must present a statement signed by the child's physician (M.D. or D.O.), duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States who has examined the child, in which it is stated that, in the physician's opinion, the vaccine required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the child or any member of the child's household. Unless it is written in the statement that a lifelong condition exists, the exemption statement is valid for only one year from the date signed by the physician.

To claim an exclusion for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, a signed Texas Department of State Health Services affidavit must be presented by the student's parent, stating that the student's parent declines vaccinations for reasons of conscience, including because of the person's religious beliefs. The affidavit will be valid for a period of two years. The form affidavit may be obtained by writing the Texas Department of State Health Services Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347, or online at [Affidavit Request for Exemption from Immunization, https://corequest.dshs.texas.gov](https://corequest.dshs.texas.gov). The form must be submitted to the school within 90 days from the date it is notarized. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student. Students, who have not received the required immunizations for reasons of conscience, including religious beliefs, may be excluded from school in times of emergency or epidemic declared by the commissioner of public health

To claim an exclusion for military service, the student must prove that he or she is serving on active duty with the armed forces of the United States.

If a parent seeks an exemption for more than one student, a separate form must be provided for each student.

### **Immunization Records Reporting**

The school's record of your student's immunization history, while private in most instances, may be inspected by the Texas Education Agency, local health departments and the Texas Department of State Health Services and transferred to other schools associated with the transfer of your student to those schools.

### **Emergency Medical Treatment**

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity and the parent cannot be reached, school employees will seek emergency medical treatment unless a parent has previously provided a written statement denying this authorization. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form, which includes information about their student's allergies to medications, etc. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date. Please contact the Principal or school Health Aide to update any information.

### **Illness During the School Day**

Students becoming ill or injured during the school day are directed to report to the health office. If the health staff is not available, the student should report to the main office. Parents or other persons designated on the student's enrollment application will be contacted as appropriate.

Except in emergencies, students failing to report to the health staff or main office will be counted absent, unexcused. Students must report to the main office before leaving the building.

If your child has a fever over 100 Degrees Fahrenheit or 37.7 Degrees Celsius, he or she must stay out of school until fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. Students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea free without diarrhea-suppressing medications for at least 24 hours. A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school health staff.

If your child vomits during the school day due to illness, he/she will be sent home and will not be able to return until he/she is vomit free without vomit-suppressing medications for at least 24 hours.

Conjunctivitis (pink eye) can sometimes be confused with allergies, so it can be difficult to determine if they have it. Indications include: crusty eyelids and/or redness and conjunctival swelling in only one eye. If the student presents these symptoms, he/she will be sent home and will be able to return with clearance to return with orders from the treating physician.

## **Sending Students Home from School**

Students will be sent home for:

- Fever more than 100 Degrees or Fahrenheit or 37.7 Degrees Celsius
- Vomiting- students who vomit more than once or those with other symptoms such as fever, will be sent home.
- Clear indication of conjunctivitis (pink eye). This is sometimes confused with allergies, so it can be difficult to determine whether a student needs to go home. Crusty eyelids and/ or redness and conjunctival swelling in only one eye are indications of conjunctivitis, not allergies.
- Untreated or exposed ringworm. If a ringworm is suspected on the body, students may stay at school as long as the ringworm stays covered. If ringworm is being consistently and appropriately treated, student with exposed ringworm may return to campus after 48 hours. Increase in lesions despite statements of treatments will exclude student from school for the duration of the disease so it is important to ensure student is properly using the prescribed medication.
- Scabies, until treatment is completed and doctor approves readmission.
- Unexplained rash or swelling of the skin. Parents will be contacted and student must bring a physician note for readmission.
- Head lice (which are not an illness or disease) are common among children, and may spread easily through contact during play or when students share items such as headphones, brushes, combs, hats, or other items that come in contact with hair. Based on current CDC guidance, students are not required to be removed from school due to live head lice or nits. If it is observed that a student has live lice or nits, the campus health aide will reach out to the parent

to discuss treatment guidelines which include FDA approved products. Per the CDC guidance, home remedies are not acceptable. It is expected that students will begin treatment immediately to prevent the spread of head lice. Students must check-in after the first treatment with the health aide.

Notification will be provided to students informing parents of students in affected classrooms.

Additional guidance regarding head lice may be found at "[DSHS Managing Head Lice](#)".

Students will be picked up as soon as feasibly possible. Parents are responsible for providing accurate and updated emergency contact information and ensuring the health safety of their student by promptly picking them up for health dismissals. Failure to pick up the student within a reasonable time frame may necessitate emergency transport or child protective services involvement.

## **Administration of Medication**

Medication should be administered at home whenever possible. If necessary, medication can be administered at school by the health aide under the following circumstances:

1. Medication authorization forms for prescription and non-prescription medications must be submitted annually by the parent. The healthcare provider's signature is required for all prescription medications. For non-prescription or over the counter medications, only the parent/guardian's signature is required. The medication must also be in the original and properly labeled container.
2. Prescription medications administered during school hours must be prescribed by a physician or advanced nurse practitioner ("ANP") and filled by a pharmacist licensed in the State of Texas. In accordance with the Texas Board of Nursing Practice Act, the school will not administer medications prescribed or fulfilled in Mexico.
3. Prescription medications must be submitted in a labeled container showing the student's name, name of the medication, reason the medication is being given, proper dosage amounts, the time the medication must be taken, and the method used to administer the medication. Medications

sent in plastic baggies or unlabeled containers will NOT be administered.

4. If the substance is herbal or a dietary supplement, it must be provided by the parent and will be administered only if required by the student's IEP or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.
5. Only the amount of medication needed should be delivered to the school, i.e., enough medication to last one day, one week, etc. In cases of prolonged need, send in the amount for a clearly specified period. Extra medication will not be sent home with the student.
6. In certain emergency situations, the school may administer a nonprescription medication to a student, but only in accordance with the guidelines developed by the school's medical advisor and when the parent has previously provided written consent for emergency treatment.
7. No medications are kept in the health office after the end of the school year. A notice will be sent notifying parents/guardians to pick-up medication by the last day of school. Medications cannot be sent home with the student. Any medications that are left on the final day of the school year are destroyed per FDA and DEA guidelines.
8. Students are not allowed to self carry medication unless determined by the student's health care provider, health aide, administration, and the parent.
9. Students are not allowed to self carry diabetic medication such as insulin or syringes with the exception of an insulin pump. Please contact the Principal and school Health Aide to coordinate a specific health plan for your child.

Changes to daily medications require written instruction from the physician or ANP and written permission from the parent. Parents are responsible for advising the school office that a medication has been discontinued.

Except for asthmas and anaphylaxis medication, students are not allowed to self-carry medication including insulin or other similar medications. Please contact the campus administration and the health aide to coordinate a specific health plan for your child.

## **Asthma and Anaphylaxis Medication**

Asthma and anaphylaxis are life-threatening conditions, and students with those conditions are entitled to possess and self-administer prescription medication while on school property or at school-related events with physicians' orders.

Student possession and self-administration of asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school requires the student to demonstrate his or her ability to self-administer the medication to the student's physician or other licensed health care provider and the school health staff, if available. Requirements also include written authorization from the student's parent and physician or other licensed health care provider on file in the school office indicating the student is capable of independently administering his or her own asthma or emergency anaphylaxis medication. Medication in a student's possession must be in an original container with a prescription label. Please note that most pharmacies will place a label on the inhaler device upon request.

## **Opioid Antagonist Medication**

In accordance with Texas Education Code § 38.222, Harmony has adopted a policy regarding the maintenance, administration, and disposal of opioid antagonists for students in grades 6-12 or for students in grades 12 and below. Under this policy, school personnel and volunteers who are authorized and trained may administer an opioid antagonist to a person who is reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose. Harmony will ensure that each campus has one or more personnel authorized and trained to administer an opioid antagonist present during regular school hours.

## **Seizure Management Plan**

The parent of a student with a seizure disorder may seek care for the student's seizures while the student is at school or participating in a school activity by submitting to Harmony a copy of a seizure management and treatment plan developed by the parent and the physician responsible for the student's seizure treatment. The plan must be submitted to and reviewed by Harmony: 1. Before or at the beginning of the school year; 2. On enrollment of the student if the student enrolls after the start of the school year; or 3. As soon as practicable following a diagnosis of a seizure disorder for the student. Requirements for Seizure Management Plans Submitted Before January 1, 2024, a seizure

management and treatment plan must: 1. Identify the health care services the student may receive at school or while participating in a school activity; 2. Evaluate the student's ability to manage and level of understanding of the student's seizures; and 3. Be signed by the student's parent and the physician for the student's seizure treatment. Requirements for Seizure Management Plans Submitted On or After January 1, 2024 A seizure management and treatment plan must be submitted on the form adopted by the Texas Education Agency and provide the following:

1. The student's name and date of birth;
2. The names and contact information of the student's parent and the physician responsible for the student's seizure treatment, and at least one other emergency contact;
3. Any medical history significant to the student's seizure disorder;
4. The type, length, and frequency of the student's seizures;
5. A description of each type of seizure the student has experienced;
6. The student's seizure triggers or warning signs;
7. The student's ability to manage seizures and the student's level of understanding of the seizures;
8. The student's response after a seizure;
9. The basic first aid to be provided to the student during a seizure, including whether the student needs to leave the classroom after a seizure and the process for the student's return to the classroom, if applicable;
10. A description of what constitutes a seizure emergency for the student;
11. A description of seizure emergency protocol for school personnel to follow in the event of a seizure emergency for the student;
12. A treatment protocol for any medications or other procedures to be administered by school personnel to the student during school hours, including: a. Each daily or emergency medication, including (i) the name and dosage of the medication and the time at which the medication is to be given; (ii) common side effects for the medication; and (iii) any special instructions regarding the medication; and b. Whether the student

has a vagus nerve stimulator and, if so, appropriate magnet use for the stimulator;

13. Any special considerations or precautions applicable to the students; and

14. The signature of the student's parent and the physician responsible for the student's seizure treatment.

## **Food Allergy Information**

The parent of each student enrolled in Harmony Public Schools must complete a form provided by the school that discloses

(1) whether the child has a food allergy or a severe food allergy that should be disclosed to the school to enable the school to take any necessary precautions regarding the child's safety and, and

(2) specifies the food(s) to which the child is allergic and the nature of the allergic reaction.

For purposes of this requirement, the term "severe food allergy" means a dangerous or life-threatening reaction of the human body to a food-borne allergen introduced by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact that requires immediate medical attention.

(3) Harmony Public Schools will also require information from a child's physician if the child has food allergies.

(4) If your child suffers from life-threatening food allergies, it is important to contact your school health office to obtain an Anaphylaxis & Food Allergy Action Form as well as a Special Dietary Accommodations form. This form should be filled out annually by your medical professional and given to the school health office along with any necessary medications such as Epi-Pens. If your child already has a 504 plan or you would like to refer him/her for Section 504 due to severe food allergy, please contact the Campus Special Education/504 Coordinator.

Food allergy information forms will be maintained in the child's student records, and shall remain confidential. Information provided on food allergy information forms may be disclosed to teachers, school counselors, school health staff, and other appropriate school personnel only to the extent consistent with Board policy and as permissible under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA").

To request special dietary accommodations in school meals, the parent must have the Special Dietary Accommodations Form completed and signed by a licensed medical authority. Requests for a milk substitute may be signed by the parent. The Special Dietary Accommodation Form is located on the Child Nutrition page of the school website.

## **Fitness Testing**

According to requirements under state law, the school will annually assess the physical fitness of students. The school is not required to assess a student for whom, as a result of disability or other condition identified by rule or law, the assessment exam is inappropriate. Annually, the coaches will conduct a physical fitness assessment mandated by the state of students in grades 3 – 12 and all students in physical education and or athletics in 9 - 12. These evaluations include physical activity tests such as mile and pacer tests as well as gathering data such as student height and weight. At the end of testing, the campus may send the results to all parent/guardian or make results available upon parent request.

## **Dyslexia and Related Disorders**

From time to time, students may be tested and, where appropriate, treated for dyslexia and related disorders in accordance with programs, rules and standards approved by the State of Texas. The program approved by the state must include screening for each student in first grade by January 31st and at the end of the school year for each student in kindergarten. Parents will be notified should the school determine a need to assess their student for dyslexia and related disorders.

## **Students Qualifying for Dyslexia Services**

A student may be eligible to receive dyslexia or related services as defined in the Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders (2024 Update), as adopted by the State Board of Education, and its subsequent amendments, regarding any evaluation of the student. If Harmony suspects or has reason to suspect that a student may have dyslexia, including after evaluation or use of reading diagnosis, Harmony will comply with the requirements of Texas Education Code §§ 29.0031 and 29.0032, as well as all federal and state requirements regarding any evaluation of the student.

## [Dyslexia and Related Disorders- Information for Parents](#)

## **Vision and Hearing Screenings**

All children enrolled in Texas schools must be screened for possible vision and hearing problems in accordance with regulations issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services. Students in certain grade levels identified by state regulations shall be screened for vision and hearing problems annually. A student may be screened using photoscreening or an electronic eye chart as a substitute for a printed eye chart to assess visual acuity. Screening records for individual students may be inspected by the Texas Department of State Health Services or a local health department and may be transferred to another school without parental consent.

### ***Exemption***

A student is exempt from screening requirements if screening conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the individual is an adherent or a member. To qualify for the exemption, the individual or, if the individual is a minor, the minor's parent, managing conservator, or guardian, must submit to the Superintendent or designee on or before the day of admission an affidavit stating the objections to screening.

## **Spinal Screening**

School-based spinal screening helps identify adolescents with abnormal spinal curvature and refer them for appropriate follow-up by their physician. Screening can detect scoliosis at an early stage, when the curve is mild and may go unnoticed. Early detection is key to controlling spinal deformities.

All students who meet Texas Department of State Health Services criteria will be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. Spinal screening is non-invasive and conducted following the most recent, nationally accepted and reviewed standards for spinal screening.

A parent who declined participation in the spinal screening provided by the school must submit to the Principal documentation of a professional examination which includes the results of a forward-bend test. This documentation must be submitted to the school during the year the student is scheduled for screening or, if the professional exam is obtained during the following summer, at the beginning of the following school year.



### ***Exemption***

A student is exempt from screening if the screening conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the individual is an adherent or member. To qualify for the exemption, the student's parent, managing conservator, or guardian must submit to the Superintendent or designee on or before the day of the screening procedure an affidavit stating the objections to screening.

### **Acanthosis Screening for Diabetes**

Children in certain grade levels identified by the state must be screened for warning signs of diabetes.

### ***Exemption***

A student is exempt from screening if the screening conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the individual is an adherent or member. To qualify for the exemption, the student's parent must submit to the Principal or designee on or before the day of the screening procedure an affidavit stating the objections to screening.

### **Preparedness Training**

Harmony will offer instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation ("CPR") and the use of an automated external defibrillator ("AED") to students in grades 7–12. This instruction may be provided as part of any course. Students shall receive the instruction at least once before graduation. Harmony will annually offer students in grades 7–12 instruction on the use of bleeding control stations to respond to traumatic injury. For more information, see Homeland Security's Stop the Bleed and Stop the Bleed Texas.

### **Steroid Notice**

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for medical use only, and only a physician can prescribe use.

Harmony Public Schools does not permit steroid use. A notice shall be posted in a conspicuous location in the school gym or in each other place in a building where physical education classes are conducted.

## **Health-Related Resources, Policies, and Procedures**

Harmony Public Schools has adopted board policies that promote student physical and mental health, including:

- Food and nutrition management,
- Wellness and health services,
- Physical examinations,
- Immunizations,
- Medical treatment,
- Communicable diseases,
- Crisis intervention,
- Trauma-informed care,
- Student safety,
- Child abuse and neglect,
- Freedom from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, and
- Freedom from bullying.

Harmony Public Schools has also developed administrative procedures as necessary to implement these policies. Please contact the school administration for information on these policies and procedures.

### **Counseling Services**

The school or district may provide a counselor to see students regarding problems that they may be experiencing at school or home. Parents, campus staff and even students can submit a Student Assistance Form through the link: [www.harmonysaf.com](http://www.harmonysaf.com). This form alerts campus counselors of students that may have a non-academic need. If it is determined that the student could benefit from counseling, a parent consent will need to be signed before the student can be seen. These services are not meant to take the place of external, personal, counseling services if the student or family should need them but are supportive in helping with short term or acute mental health or social-emotional supports.

### **Mental Health Promotion and Intervention**

Harmony Public Schools has developed protocols for providing a parent with a recommended intervention for a student exhibiting early warning signs and a possible need for early mental health or substance abuse intervention, or who has been identified as at risk of attempting suicide. The Campus Counselor or if no counselor is available, the Dean of Student Culture will notify a parent within a reasonable amount of time after learning that a student has early warning signs and

possible need for intervention. Campus counselors will also provide additional information on available counseling options.

## **Suicide Prevention**

When a student is identified as being at-risk, a risk assessment will be completed by a trained school staff member who will work with the student and help connect the student to appropriate resources.

Notice of a student who is identified as at risk of attempting suicide may be provided to a parent or guardian of the student within a reasonable amount of time as allowed by law after the identification of early warning signs, unless notifying the parent will put the student at increased risk of harm or advised against by a law enforcement officer.

For students returning to school after a mental health crisis (e.g., suicide attempt or psychiatric hospitalization), procedures will take place prior to re-entry to support the student's return and plan for the first day back.

Harmony Public Schools has also developed protocols for staff members to notify the Dean of Student Culture to identify a student who may need intervention.

The Dean of Student Culture can provide additional information about the school's intervention program, as well as materials on identifying risk factors, accessing resources for treatment, and accommodations available at school. Contact information of the Dean of Student Culture can be found in the Skyward Staff Directory.

## **Mental Health Support**

Harmony Public Schools has implemented programs to address the following mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse concerns:

- Mental health promotion and early intervention;
- Building skills to manage emotions, establish and maintain positive relationships, and engage in responsible decision-making;
- Substance abuse prevention and intervention;
- Suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention (interventions after a suicide in a community);
- Grief, trauma, and trauma-informed care;
- Positive behavior interventions and supports;

- Positive youth development; and
- Safe, supportive, and positive school climates.

Some examples of how schools will accomplish this are:

- Schools will participate in drug awareness activities, to help students to understand the dangers of drug/alcohol abuse.
- Anti-bullying awareness programs will also be held on every campus.
- Campuses will focus on aspects of character development to help create a more informed, empathetic student culture.
- Campuses have developed threat assessment teams to help intervene with students in crisis as soon as possible.

## **Notice of Threat Assessment**

Before Harmony's safe and supportive school team conducts a threat assessment of a student, the team must notify the parent of the student regarding the assessment. In conducting the assessment, the team shall provide an opportunity for the parent to:

1. Participate in the assessment, either in person or remotely; and
2. Submit to the team information regarding the student.

After completing a threat assessment of a student, the team shall provide to the parent of the student the team's findings and conclusions regarding the student.

If a student has been hospitalized or placed in residential treatment for a mental health concern or substance abuse, the school has procedures to support the student's return to school.

Teachers and other school employees may discuss a student's behavior or academic progress with the student's parent or another employee; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication and that is intended to alter perception, emotion, or behavior. An employee who is a registered nurse, advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health

professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate.

## **Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**

### **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

Harmony Public Schools believes that all students learn best in an environment free from harassment, and that student welfare is best served when students can work free from discrimination. Students are expected to treat other students and school employees with courtesy and respect, to avoid behaviors known to be offensive, and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop.

School employees are also expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The Board of Directors has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behavior. In accordance with these policies and procedures, Harmony Public Schools prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is also a violation of school policy.

### **Discrimination**

For purposes of this handbook, discrimination against a student is defined as conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law that adversely affects the student.

### **Prohibited Harassment**

Prohibited harassment of a student is defined as physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the student's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

- Affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

Prohibited harassment includes dating violence as defined by this Handbook.

Examples of prohibited harassment may include offensive or derogatory language directed at another person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening or intimidating conduct; offensive jokes; name calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; display of graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

### **Dating Violence**

Dating violence occurs when one partner in a dating relationship, either past or current, intentionally uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other partner. Examples of dating violence against a student may include physical or sexual assaults, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the student or the student's family members or members of the student's household, destroying property belonging to the student, threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship, attempts to isolate the student from friends and family, stalking, or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

Dating violence is considered prohibited harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

- Affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

### **Retaliation**

Harmony Public Schools prohibits retaliation against a student alleged to have experienced discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, or another student who, in good faith, makes a report, serves as a witness, or otherwise participates in an investigation.

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a School investigation regarding discrimination or harassment,



including dating violence, is subject to appropriate discipline.

### **Reporting Procedures**

A student who experiences discrimination or harassment based on race, color, national origin, religion, age, or gender or who believes that another student has experienced such prohibited discrimination or harassment must immediately report the experience to a teacher, a counselor, the Principal or designee, or other school employee. The report may be made by the student's parents. Alternatively, a report may be made directly to the appropriate Compliance Coordinator identified in this handbook.

Reports of sexual harassment should be made in the process outlined in the "Freedom from Sexual Harassment" portion of this Handbook.

Upon receiving a report of potential prohibited conduct, Harmony Public Schools will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited discrimination, harassment, dating violence, or retaliation. If not, the school will determine if the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying. If the alleged prohibited conduct, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct and would also be considered bullying, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

### **Consultation and Assistance**

With regard to the investigation of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, the designated Compliance Coordinator may consult with and/or request assistance from the Campus Dean of Discipline, the Campus Principal, the Area Superintendent, the Assistant Area Superintendent of Programs, the Central Office Director of Student Safety and Conduct, the Central Office Employee Relations Director, or the school's legal counsel.

### **Investigation of Complaints**

To the extent possible, Harmony Public Schools will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law. Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated.

If a law enforcement or other regulatory agency notifies the school that it is investigating the matter and requests that the school delay its investigation, Harmony Public Schools will resume the investigation at the conclusion of the agency's investigation.

During the course of an investigation and when appropriate, the school will take interim action to address the alleged prohibited conduct.

If the school's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary action and, in some cases, corrective action, will be taken to address the conduct. Harmony Public Schools may take disciplinary and corrective action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint was not unlawful.

All involved parties will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within the parameters and limits allowed under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA").

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the process set forth in Board Policy PG-3.30 (Parent and Student Complaints and Grievances), beginning at Level Two.

### **Freedom from Sexual Harassment**

Harmony Public Schools prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, of a student and/or employee by an employee, volunteer, or another student.

Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A school employee conditioning the provision of aid, benefit, or service on a student's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to Harmony's educational programs or activities;
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking (as those offenses are defined in the Clery Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f), and the Violence Against Women Act, 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)).

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to, touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature;

sexually-motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and school employees are prohibited. Any sexual relationship between a student and a school employee is always prohibited, even if consensual.

### ***General Definitions***

A “complainant” means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

A “respondent” means an individual who is reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

A “formal complaint” means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that Harmony investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

“Supportive measures” means non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered appropriately and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to Harmony Public Schools’ educational program or activity without unreasonably burdening either party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or Harmony Public Schools’ educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. Examples of supportive measures include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of class schedules, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, and other similar measures.

### ***Reporting Sexual Harassment***

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by email, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator included in this Handbook, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person’s verbal or written report. Such a report may be made at any time, including during non-business

hours, by using the telephone number or email address, or by mail to the office address, listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

Harmony Public Schools’ response to a report of sexual harassment must treat complainants and respondents equitably by offering supportive measures and by following a grievance process before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures against a respondent.

After a report of sexual harassment has been made, the Title IX Coordinator must promptly contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the complainant’s wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.

### ***Notice of Allegations***

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, Harmony Public Schools must provide the following written notice to the parties who are known:

- Notice of Harmony Public Schools’ grievance process, including any informal resolution process.
- Notice of the allegations of sexual harassment, including, to the extent known, the identity of the parties, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident.
- Notice that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made known at the conclusion of the grievance process.
- Notice that the parties may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney.
- Notice that the parties may inspect and review evidence related to the complaint.
- Notice that Harmony Public Schools prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

If, during an investigation, Harmony Public Schools decides to investigate allegations about the complaint or respondent that are not included in the initial notice of the complaint, Harmony Public Schools must provide

notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

### ***Grievance Process***

At the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of Harmony Public Schools.

The following guidelines apply when Harmony Public Schools receives a formal complaint of sexual harassment. This process is designed to incorporate due process, principles, treat all parties fairly, and to assist Harmony Public Schools reach reliable responsibility determinations.

- Harmony Public Schools will require an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence – including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence – and credibility determinations may not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.
- Any individual designated by Harmony Public Schools as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, or to facilitate an informal resolution process must not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or responsible. Harmony Public Schools will ensure that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and anyone who facilitates an informal resolution process receive appropriate training related to the requirements of Title IX and Harmony Public Schools' sexual harassment policy.
- Harmony Public Schools recognizes a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the complaint process.
- Harmony Public Schools shall attempt to complete an investigation of reported sexual harassment within 45-60 days of receiving a complaint. However, the investigation process may be delayed or extended for a limited time for good cause with written notice to the complainant and the respondent of the delay or extension. Good causes may include considerations such as absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities.

- Students found to have engaged in sexual harassment are subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
- Harmony Public Schools shall employ the preponderance of the evidence standard to determine responsibility when reviewing formal complaints.
- Harmony Public Schools may not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions of evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure, of information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

### ***Consolidation of Formal Complaints***

Harmony Public Schools may consolidate formal complaints as to allegations of sexual harassment against more than one respondent, or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against the other party, where the allegations of sexual harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

### ***Dismissal of Formal Complaints***

Harmony Public Schools must investigate the allegations in a formal complaint. Harmony must dismiss a formal complaint if the conduct alleged in the formal complaint:

- Would not constitute sexual harassment, even if proved;
- Did not occur in Harmony Public Schools' education program or activity; or
- Did not occur against a person in the United States.

Harmony Public Schools may dismiss a formal complaint or any allegations therein if, at any time during the investigation:

- A complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein;
- The respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by Harmony Public Schools; or
- Specific circumstances prevent Harmony Public Schools from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

Upon a dismissal, Harmony Public Schools must promptly send simultaneous written notice to the parties of the dismissal and the reason(s) for the dismissal. Dismissal of a formal complaint does not preclude Harmony Public Schools from taking appropriate action under the Student Code of Conduct or any other school policy that may apply to the alleged conduct.

### ***Investigating Formal Complaints***

The following guidelines apply during the investigation of a formal complaint and throughout the grievance process.

- Harmony Public Schools will ensure the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rests on Harmony Public Schools and not on the parties.
- Harmony Public Schools cannot access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, unless Harmony Public Schools receives that party's voluntary, written consent to do so.
- Harmony Public Schools will provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
- Harmony Public Schools will not restrict the ability of either party to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence.
- Harmony Public Schools will provide the parties with the same opportunities to have others present during any grievance proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisory of their choice, and not limit the choice or presence of an advisor for either the complainant or respondent in any meeting or grievance proceeding. Harmony Public Schools may establish restrictions regarding the extent to which the advisor may participate in the proceedings, as long as the restrictions apply equally to both parties.
- Harmony Public Schools will provide to a party whose participation is invited or expected written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all investigative interviews or other meetings with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate.
- Harmony Public Schools will provide both parties an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in a formal complaint, including the evidence upon which the recipient does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a party or other source, so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to conclusion of the investigation.
- Prior to completing an investigative report, Harmony Public Schools must send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy, and the parties must have at least 10 days to submit a written response, which the investigator will consider prior to completing the investigative report.
- Harmony Public Schools must create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence and, at least 10 days prior to a determination regarding responsibility, send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the investigative report in an electronic format or a hard copy, for review and written response.
- After sending the investigative report to the parties and before reaching a determination of responsibility, the decision-maker(s) must afford each party the opportunity to submit written relevant questions that a party wants asked of any witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party. Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and

are offered to prove consent. The decision-maker(s) must explain to the party proposing the questions any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

### ***Determination Regarding Responsibility***

The decision-maker(s) making a determination regarding responsibility cannot be the same person(s) as the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator(s). The decision-maker(s) must review the investigation report and make a written determination, based on the preponderance of the evidence standard, regarding responsibility. The written determination must include:

- Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
- A description of the procedural steps taken from receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, or methods used to gather other evidence;
- Findings of fact supporting the determination;
- Conclusions regarding application of Harmony Public Schools' Code of Conduct to the facts;
- A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to Harmony Public Schools' education program or activities will be provided to the complainant; and
- Harmony Public Schools' procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal.

Harmony Public Schools must provide the written determination to the parties simultaneously. The determination becomes final either on the date Harmony Public Schools provides the parties with the written determination of the result of the appeal, if an appeal is filed, or if an appeal is not filed, the date on which an appeal would no longer be considered timely.

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for effective implementation of any remedies.

### ***Appeals***

Harmony Public Schools will offer both parties an appeal from a determination regarding responsibility, and from

Harmony Public Schools' dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein, on the following bases:

- Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
- New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; and
- The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

As to appeals, Harmony Public Schools will ensure that the decision-maker(s) for the appeal is not the same person as the decision-maker(s) that reached the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal, or the investigator(s), or the Title IX Coordinator. Harmony Public Schools will provide both parties a reasonable equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome.

The decision-maker(s) for the appeal will issue a written decision, based on the preponderance of the evidence standard, describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result, and provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties.

A party who is dissatisfied with the appeal decision may file an appeal to the Board of Directors through the process outlined in Harmony Public Schools' grievance procedures.

### ***Emergency Removals***

Harmony Public Schools is able to remove a respondent from Harmony Public Schools' education program on an emergency basis, provided that Harmony Public Schools undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis, determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal, and provides the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal. Harmony Public Schools' ability to do so may not be construed to modify any rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504, or the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **Informal Resolution**

At any time prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility, Harmony Public Schools may facilitate an informal resolution process, such as mediation, that does not involve a full investigation and adjudication. However, Harmony Public Schools may not require as a condition of enrollment or continuing enrollment, or employment or continued employment, or enjoyment of any other right, waiver of the right to an investigation and adjudication of formal complaints. Additionally, Harmony Public Schools may not require the parties to participate in an informal process and may not offer an informal resolution process unless a formal complaint is filed.

Prior to facilitating an informal resolution process, Harmony Public Schools must:

- Provide to the parties a written notice disclosing the allegations and the requirements of the informal resolution process including the circumstances under which it precludes the parties from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations. The notice must also inform that, at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint, as well as of any consequence resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared.
- Obtain the parties' voluntary, written consent to the informal resolution process.

Harmony Public Schools may not offer or facilitate an informal resolution process to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student.

### **Retaliation Prohibited**

Neither Harmony Public Schools nor any other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation or proceeding under this policy.

Examples of retaliation may include, but are not limited to, intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination.

Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the grievance procedure described above.

### **Confidentiality**

Harmony Public Schools must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by FERPA or as required by law, or for purposes related to the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising under the Title IX regulations.

### **Freedom from Bullying and Cyberbullying**

Harmony Public Schools prohibits bullying as defined below, as well as retaliation against anyone who reports or provides information as part of an investigation of potential bullying.

Bullying is defined in state law as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or the school; or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Bullying also includes cyberbullying, which is defined by state law as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

Harmony Public Schools will also take steps to prevent and mediate bullying incidents between students that:

Interfere with a student's educational opportunities; or

Substantially disrupt the orderly operations of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school-related activity.

The school's anti-bullying policy applies to:

- Bullying that occurs on or is delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property;
- Bullying that occurs on a publicly or privately-owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of students to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity; and
- Cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity if the cyberbullying interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school-related activity.

Examples of prohibited bullying could include:

- Assault
- Confinement
- Demands for money
- Destruction of property or theft of valued possessions
- Hazing
- Name-calling
- Ostracism
- Rumor-spreading
- Taunting
- Teasing
- Threats

## **Reporting Procedures**

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed bullying of another student, it is important for the student (or parent) to notify a teacher, school counselor, the Principal, or another school employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance. Reports of potential bullying may be submitted anonymously. Online bullying reporting is also available through the campus website.

Once a report of bullying, including cyberbullying, is received, Harmony will track the progress of the report and investigation of the reported incident(s) and shall monitor the reported counts of bullying incidents to assist Harmony with bullying prevention efforts and determination of the school's response to the incident.

## **Investigation of Report**

The Principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited harassment and, if so, proceed under that policy instead. The Principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report, and shall take prompt interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the school will take appropriate disciplinary or corrective action, and may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances. Disciplinary action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to individuals involved in a bullying incident, including any students who have been identified as witnesses to the bullying.

A student who receives special education services will be disciplined for conduct meeting the definition of bullying or cyberbullying within applicable requirements under federal law, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Harmony Public Schools may not impose discipline on a student who, after an investigation, is found to be a victim of bullying, based on that student's use of reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying.

The Principal or designee may make a report to local law enforcement officials if, after an investigation is completed, the Principal or designee has reasonable grounds to believe that a student engaged in conduct that constitutes an offense under Section 22.01 (Assault) or 42.07(a) (7) (Harassment), Texas Penal Code.

## **Confidentiality**

To the greatest extent possible, the school will respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

## **Appeal**

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the Harmony Public Schools' grievance procedure.

## Law Enforcement Agencies

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the Principal or designee will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, including allowing interviews without parental consent if necessary, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation.

In other circumstances,

- The school administration shall verify and record the identity of the official and request an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.
- The school administration shall make reasonable efforts to notify the student's parent, unless the interviewer raises what the administration considers to be a valid objection.
- A campus administrator will generally be present during the questioning or interview, unless the interviewer raises what the administration considers to be a valid objection.

The school shall permit a student to be taken into legal custody: Pursuant to an order of the juvenile court;

- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in conduct that violates a penal law, delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision, or conduct that violates a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs for comparison in an investigation.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs to establish a student's identity, where the child may have engaged in conduct indicating a need for supervision, such as running away.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services ("DFPS"), a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Texas Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- Pursuant to a properly issued directive to apprehend.

- To comply with a properly issued directive from a juvenile court to take a student into custody.
- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.

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

The campus administration will immediately notify the Superintendent or designee and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the administration considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because campus administrators do not have the authority to prevent or delay a student's release to a law enforcement officer, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

## Child Abuse Reporting and Programs

Harmony Public Schools provides child abuse anti-victimization programs and cooperates with official child abuse investigators as required by law. The school provides training to its teachers and students in preventing and addressing incidents of sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, including knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a child may be a victim of sexual abuse or maltreatment. Assistance, interventions and counseling options are also available.

The school's administration shall cooperate with law enforcement investigations of child abuse, including investigations by the Texas Department of Protective and Family Services. School officials may not refuse to permit an investigator to interview at school a student who is alleged to be a victim of abuse or neglect. School officials may not require the investigator to permit school personnel to be present during an interview conducted at school.

Investigations at school may be conducted by authorized law enforcement or state agencies without prior notification or consent of the student's parent(s), if necessary.



## **Plan for Addressing Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children**

Harmony Public Schools has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children. For purposes of this plan, trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking. The plan may be accessed through the school website, and is available in each Principal's office and in the central administrative office.

### **What is Sexual Abuse of a Child?**

Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child.

### **What is Trafficking?**

Child trafficking in any form is prohibited by the Texas Penal Code. Sex trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, into sexual abuse, assault, indecency, prostitution, or pornography. Labor trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, to engage in forced labor or services.

### **What is Other Maltreatment of a Child?**

Other maltreatment of a child under the Texas Family Code includes "abuse" or "neglect" of a child.

### **Reporting and Responding to Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children**

Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused, trafficked, or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services ("DFPS").

A child who has experienced sexual abuse, trafficking, or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that disclosures of sexual abuse and trafficking may be more indirect than disclosures of physical abuse and neglect, and it is important to be calm and comforting if your child, or

another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

Parents, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse, trafficking, or other maltreatment, the school counselor or Principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The DFPS also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County](#).

Reports of abuse, trafficking, or neglect may be made to:

- Texas Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400;
- In non-emergency situations, the [Texas Abuse Hotline Website](#);
- Your local police department; or
- Call 911 for emergency situations.

## **Methods for Increasing Awareness Regarding Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, or Other Maltreatment of Children**

### ***For Teachers***

The school annually trains teachers in all content areas addressed in the plan. Training is provided by campus staff, administrative staff, or outside agencies as determined by the campus administration. The training includes prevention techniques for and recognition of sexual abuse, trafficking, and all other maltreatment of children, including sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children with significant cognitive disabilities.

### ***For Students***

School counseling staff will address issues to increase awareness regarding sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children and anti-victimization programs with age appropriate conversation and materials no less than once per semester. These discussions will occur in classroom group settings for students in grades K–8, and in health or PE classes for students in grades 9–12.

### ***For Parents***

Parents must be aware of warning signs indicating that their child may have been or is being sexually abused, trafficked, or otherwise maltreated.

The fact that the abuser is a parent or other family member does not remove your obligation to protect the

child. Parents who permit their child to remain in a situation where he or she may be injured or abused may also be subject to prosecution for child abuse. And, if you are frightened for your own safety or that of your child, you should call 911 or 1-800-252-5400.

Also, remember that parents are legally responsible for the care of their children and must provide their children with safe and adequate food, clothing, shelter, protection, medical care and supervision, or arrange for someone else to provide these things. Failure to do so may be considered neglect.

These websites are also helpful:

- [Child Sexual Abuse: A Parental Guide from the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault](#)
- [Child Welfare Information Gateway Factsheet](#)
- [Human Trafficking of School-aged Children](#)
- [KidsHealth. For Parents. Child Abuse](#)
- [National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments: Child Labor Trafficking](#)
- [Office of the Texas Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team](#)

### **Likely Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, or Other Maltreatment**

Psychological and behavioral signs of possible sexual abuse and other maltreatment may include:

- Nightmares, sleep problems, extreme fears without an obvious explanation.
- Sudden or unexplained personality changes; becoming withdrawn, angry, moody, clingy, "checking out" or showing significant changes in eating habits.
- Depression or irritability.
- An older child behaves like a young child, for example, bedwetting or thumb sucking.
- Developing fear of certain places or resisting being alone with an adult or young person for unknown reasons.
- Resistance to routine bathing, toileting, or removing clothes, even in appropriate situations.
- Play, writing, drawings, or dreams of sexual or frightening images.
- Refusal to talk about a secret he or she has with an adult or older child.

- Leaving clues that seem likely to provoke a discussion about sexual issues.
- Using new or adult words for body parts.
- Engaging in adult-like sexual activities with toys, objects or other children.
- Developing special relationships with older friends that may include unexplained money, gifts, or privileges.
- Intentionally harming him or herself, for example, drug/ alcohol use, cutting, burning, running away, and sexual promiscuity.
- Thinking of self or body as repulsive, dirty, or bad. Becoming increasingly secretive about Internet or telephone use.

Physical symptoms of possible sexual abuse or other maltreatment include:

- Stomachaches or illness, often with no identifiable reason. Difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Stained or bloody underwear.
- Genital or rectal pain, itching, swelling, redness, or discharge. Bruises or other injuries in the genital or rectal area.
- Unexplained soreness, pain or bruises around the mouth, sexually transmitted disease, or pregnancy.

Possible warning signs of sexual abuse or other maltreatment may include:

- An older child behaving like a young child, for example, bedwetting or thumb-sucking.
- Becoming increasingly secretive about Internet or telephone use.
- Developing special relationships with older friends that may include unexplained money, gifts, or privileges.
- Difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches.
- Engaging in adult-like sexual activities with toys, objects or other children.
- Fear of being alone with adults.
- Play, writing, drawings, or dreams of sexual or frightening images.
- Using new or adult words for body parts.
- Verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior.
- Withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

Possible warnings signs of sex trafficking include:

- Changes in school attendance, habits, friend groups, vocabulary, demeanor, and attitude.
- Frequent runaway incidents.
- Isolation from friends, family, and community.
- Multiple phones or social media accounts.
- Older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Provocative pictures posted online or stored on the phone.
- Refillable gift cards.
- Social interaction and schedule being strictly controlled by someone else.
- Sudden appearance of expensive items (for instance, manicures, designer clothes, purses, technology).
- Tattoos or branding.
- Unexplained injuries.

Possible warning signs of labor trafficking in children include:

- A desire to quit a job but not being allowed to do so.
- Being employed and having a work permit but clearly working outside the permitted hours for students.
- Being employed but not having a school-authorized work permit.
- Being overly concerned with pleasing an employer and/or deferring personal or educational decisions to a boss.
- Being unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips.
- Living with an employer or having an employer listed as a student's caregiver.
- Not being allowed breaks at work or being subjected to excessively long work hours.
- Not being in control of his or her own money.
- Owning a large debt and being unable to pay it off.

Any one sign does not necessarily mean that a child has been sexually abused or maltreated, but the presence of several signs is the time you should begin asking questions and seeking help. Signs often first emerge at other times of stress, such as during a divorce, death of a family member or pet, problems at school or with friends, or other traumatic or anxiety-inducing events.

### **Actions That a Child Who is a Victim of Sexual Abuse or Other Maltreatment Should Take**

During student awareness sessions concerning sexual abuse and other maltreatment issues, students will be

encouraged to tell a trusted adult in a private and confidential conversation if they have been a victim of sexual abuse or have been in situations that make them feel uncomfortable in any way. School employees are trained to take appropriate actions to help the child obtain assistance and to follow proper reporting procedures. Older students will also be provided with local crisis hotline numbers to obtain assistance.

### **Available Counseling Options**

A list of counseling providers can be found through the "[Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in your County](#)" website.

### **Locker and Desk Assignments**

Each student will be assigned a locker and desk for his or her individual use. The use of lockers is strongly encouraged, as backpacks and purses are not allowed in classrooms. Lockers are to be used to store books, coats and personal items. Valuable items should not be stored in lockers or desks. The school is not liable for personal items stored in lockers or desks.

The school will provide a lock for each locker. Students may not put a personal lock on their lockers, and all students must keep their locker combinations private. Students may not trade or share lockers. Students are responsible to make sure that lockers are kept locked at all times. Any damage, vandalism, or other problems with lockers or desks should be reported to the front office. Students will be held responsible for the condition of their lockers if such damage, vandalism, or other problems are not reported.

During the school day, students may go to their lockers during the following designated times only:

- Before class begins in the morning.
- During the five-minute passing periods between classes.
- After classes are over.

Students may not visit their lockers during lunch time.

### **Interrogations and Searches**

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that the school is safe and drug free, school officials may from time to time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

Administrators, teachers and other professional personnel may question a student regarding the

student's own conduct or the conduct of other students. In the context of school discipline, students have no claim to the right not to incriminate themselves.

Students shall be free from unreasonable searches and seizures by school officials. School officials may search a student's outer clothing, pockets, or property by establishing reasonable cause or securing the student's voluntary consent. Express or implied coercion – such as threatening to contact parents or police – invalidates apparent consent.

A search is reasonable if (1) the school official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will uncover evidence of a rule violation or a criminal violation and (2) the scope of the search is reasonable related to the circumstances justifying the search; i.e., the measures adopted are reasonably related to the objectives of the search and are not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

### **Desk and Locker Searches**

Students should have no expectation of privacy in the contents of their lockers, desks or other school property. Lockers and desks assigned to students remain at all times under the control and jurisdiction of the school. The school will make periodic inspections of lockers and desks at any time, with or without notice or student consent. School officials will remove any item that violates school policy or that may potentially be dangerous.

Students have full responsibility for the security of their lockers and desks, and shall be held responsible for any prohibited items found during a search. The student's parent shall be notified if any prohibited articles or materials are found in a student's locker or desk, or on the student's person, as a result of a search conducted in accordance with this policy.

### **Vehicles on Campus**

Vehicles parked on school property and property under school control are under the jurisdiction of the school and may be searched at any time if reasonable suspicion exists to believe that the search will result in evidence that school rules or other laws have been violated. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student shall be asked to unlock the vehicle and consent to a search of the vehicle. If the student refuses to permit

the vehicle to be searched, the school may contact the student's parents and/ or law enforcement officials. A student may be held responsible for and in possession of prohibited items found in his or her vehicle parked on school property or at a school-related event.

### **Trained Dogs**

The school may use or contract for specially trained nonaggressive dogs to sniff out and alert school officials to the current presence of concealed prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. Such visits to the school may be unannounced. The dogs shall be used to sniff vacant classrooms, vacant common areas, the areas around student lockers, and the areas around vehicles parked on school property. The dogs shall not be asked to alert students. If a dog alerts to a locker, a vehicle, or an item in a classroom, it may be searched by school officials. Searches of vehicles shall be conducted as described above.

### **Procedures for Use of Restraint and Time-Outs**

School employees, volunteers or independent contractors are authorized to use restraint in the event of an emergency and subject to the following limitations:

- Only reasonable force, necessary to address the emergency, may be used.
- The restraint must be discontinued at the point at which the emergency no longer exists.
- The restraint must be implemented in such a way as to protect the health and safety of the student and others.
- The student may not be deprived of basic human

At no time, however, may a student be placed in seclusion.

A student with a disability may not be confined in a locked box, locked closet or other specially designated locked space as either a discipline management practice or a behavior management technique.

### **School Visitors**

Visitors for educational purposes are welcome at the school. Visitors must sign in with the front office and present a valid photo ID upon arrival. Parents must also check in at the front office. Guests should not be brought to school without prior approval.

Parents or other visitors may not walk in the cafeteria, hallways or to classrooms unless a visitor's form has been completed at least 24 hours in advance of the school to provide notice of the visit. This form must also be completed when a parent requests to observe a class.

The Principal may take the following actions whenever there is a school visitor: Require the visitor to display his or her driver's license or another form of identification issued by a governmental entity containing the person's photograph:

- Establish an electronic database for the purpose of storing information concerning visitors. Information stored in the electronic database may be used only for the purpose of school security, and may not be sold or otherwise disseminated to a third party for any purpose.
- Verify whether the visitor is a sex offender registered with the computerized central database maintained by the Department of Public Safety or any other database accessible by the school.

Any visitor identified as a sex offender shall be escorted by school personnel at all times during a school visit and shall have access only to common areas of the campus.

### **Disruptive Activity**

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

- Interferes with the movement of people in an exit, entrance, or hallway of a school building without authorization from the Principal;
- Interferes with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building;
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly;
- Uses force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly;
- Interferes with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to school property;
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving school property without authorization from the Principal;
- Disrupts the conduct of classes or other school activities while on school property or on public property that is within 500 feet of school property; or

- Interferes with the transportation of students in school vehicles.

"Disruption" includes making loud noises; enticing, attempting to entice, preventing, or attempting to prevent a student from attending a required class or school activity; entering a classroom without the consent of either the Principal or the teacher; and, through acts of misconduct or the use of loud or profane language, disrupting class activities.

### **Skateboards**

Students and others are not permitted to use their skateboards, scooters and/or roller blades on campus grounds at any time. If a student uses any of these items as a means of transportation to or from school, he or she must walk and carry the item while on school property. These items should be kept in a locker or designated place approved by campus administration until the end of the school day.

### **Fire and Disaster Drills**

Fire, lock-down, evacuation, and severe weather drill instruction will be discussed during the first week of each semester. Students need to understand and follow these procedures. Instructions will be posted in each teacher's room. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

### **Emergency Closings**

Weather conditions may occur which will make it necessary for campuses to be closed. Parents and students are advised to view the campus website and listen to local radio or television for announcements that the school will be closed.

### **Pest Control Information**

Harmony Public Schools periodically applies pesticides inside school buildings and on school grounds. While the school strives to use the safest and most effective methods to manage pests, including a variety of non-chemical control measures, periodic indoor and outdoor pesticide use is sometimes necessary to maintain adequate pest control and ensure a safe, pest-free environment.

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use.. The school will provide appropriate notice of treatments, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application may contact the Superintendent or designee.

### **Videotaping of Students**

For safety purposes, video/audio equipment may be used to monitor student behavior in classrooms and hallways, on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used. The Principal may review the tapes routinely to document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct

## Report Cards and Grading Scales

Harmony issues progress reports to all students at the middle of each nine-week progress period within a semester. Report cards for all students are issued at the end of each nine-week reporting period within a semester.

Report cards are mailed to parents. Please notify the school office immediately if your address or contact information changes.

Parents are encouraged to schedule a conference with their child's teacher if the student is not making adequate progress.

All classes will follow a standard scale for assigning letter grades for nine-week periods and semester work. Individual teachers will follow the HPS grading practices/guidelines for their classes, with grades corresponding to the following scale:

A = 90–100% B = 80–89% C = 70–79%

F = 69% and below

The Pre-K and Kindergarten report card is a standards-based continuum that comes directly from the Texas Education Agency. The report card shows all the skills that will be covered during the year. The skills that are not covered in that quarter will be blank. For the skills that are covered, your child's progress will be evaluated as below:

E: Excellent,

S: Satisfactory,

N: Needs improvement,

X: Not assessed

### Academic Dishonesty

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests and disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. High school students may be kept out of advanced courses such as Pre-AP, AP, Dual credit, or PLTW courses for repeated offenses.

Academic dishonesty includes cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism, and unauthorized communication between students during an examination. The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher or other supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students.

## Examination Procedures

Formal examinations fulfill an important function in the assessment of each student's academic performance. Examinations are also helpful in assisting students to prepare for state-mandated assessment tests by providing exposure to examination conduct, procedures and techniques.

Consequently, the school has enacted a special Academic Code of Conduct pertaining to examinations:

- Students are to remain silent during all examinations, unless otherwise directed by the supervising teacher.
- Under no circumstances are students permitted to distract other students during examinations.
- Students must leave school bags at the front of or outside the examination room.
- Students are not permitted to take any paper, including worksheets and scratch paper into the examination room. Students are also not permitted to remove any paper, including the examination, from the examination room.
- Electronic devices, including cell phones, are not permitted in the examination room, and the use of any electronic device is strictly prohibited. Electronic dictionaries and calculators without internet connection and photographic capabilities may be used during certain examinations, as allowed by the school.
- Students are not to be late for examinations and will NOT be permitted to leave early. Latecomers will not be granted extra time to complete the exam.
- Students are responsible for the collection of their work.
- Students who are absent from an examination are required to present themselves to the subject teacher immediately upon their return to school. All exams must be made up within three days of the return to school; however, the student must present a reasonable excuse to be eligible for a make-up exam or project.
- The school will notify the parents of students who are believed to have been academically dishonest during any examination.

Students violating these rules will, at a minimum, receive a grade of zero. Violations may also result in disciplinary consequences under the Student Code of Conduct.

## Homework Policy

Homework is an essential part of each student's successful education. Homework assignments help to develop many valuable skills, including good study habits, time management, responsibility, and perseverance. Teachers will assign homework that fosters individual learning and growth and that is appropriate for the subject area. Homework is part of all students' regular evaluations. Each student is responsible for completing and turning in homework on time. The teacher's record is final in cases of conflict regarding homework assignments. If a student or parent has questions about homework, contact the teacher who assigned it.

## Promotion and Retention

### *1) Promotion/Retention in grades 1-8*

A student may be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level. To earn credit for a course, a student must demonstrate mastery of grade-level standards and meet the school's requirements for attendance.

For students served with special education services, determinations regarding modified promotion or retention shall be determined by the students' Admission Review and Dismissal (ARD Committee).

Emergent Bilingual determination does not change the promotion criteria, but it requires the involvement of the relevant Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) before making a decision. In some instances, the LPAC may lower a student's NWEA MAP promotion standard depending on English proficiency level.

Promotion standards are as follows.

- **Yearly average:** Students in grades 1-8 must achieve an overall cumulative average of 70 or above for all subject areas. For core subjects including Reading Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science students in grades 1-8 must maintain an end-of-year average of 70 or higher for promotion.
- **NWEA MAP:** Students in grades 1-8 must score in both Reading AND Mathematics NWEA MAP

testing at or above the 10th percentile at least once throughout the current school year. The campus GPC committee may apply for a waiver for the NWEA MAP promotion standard if a student passes STAAR assessments in Reading and Mathematics, that student will be exempt from the NWEA MAP promotion requirement.

A student who has been promoted upon completion of a school year in a school other than a Texas public school may be enrolled in that grade without regard to whether the student has successfully satisfied the school's promotion standards. This does not limit the school's ability to appropriately place such a student.

### ***Grade Level Placement Committee (GPC)***

Whenever the school is required to notify a parent about the requirements related to promotion and retention, the school shall make a good-faith effort to ensure that the notice is provided either in person or by regular mail, is clear and easy to understand, and is written in English or in the parent's native language.

- GPC will invite the parents of students in danger of consideration for retention and will send a written request for a mandatory conference between February and May.
- GPC will be composed of the principal or designee, the student's parent, and the teacher who taught the grade or course that the student is at risk of mastering. LPAC representatives should join if the student is identified as Emergent Bilingual.
- A meeting must be conducted in person unless the parent agrees to alternative means.
- A school may decide in the GPC if the parent does not join the meeting after the school makes a good-faith effort to ensure parental involvement.
- A written recommendation for promotion or retention, including suggestions for assistance for the student in the following year's grade level such as interventions, accelerated instructions, and/or summer school support shall be signed by the student's teacher, parent, and principal according to the GPC paperwork requirements.

A decision to promote a student to the next grade level must be unanimous. If the decision is not unanimous, the student will be retained at his or her current grade level.



## **2) Promotion/Retention in Kindergarten**

For students in kindergarten, promotion to the next grade shall be based on the evidence of satisfactory progress with an emphasis on reading and mathematics. Evidence for promotion may include an assessment of the student's reading/math level, information from the student's daily work, report cards, anecdotal records, and teacher recommendations.

GPC will invite the parents of students who are at risk of consideration for retention and will send a written request for a mandatory conference between February and May.

In kindergarten, retention shall be considered only in unusual circumstances and with the approval of the student's parents in the GPC. A written recommendation for promotion or retention, including suggestions for assistance for the student in the following year's grade level such as interventions, accelerated instructions, and/or summer school support shall be signed by the student's teacher, parent, and principal according to the GPC paperwork requirements.

## **3) High School Student Classification**

In grades 9-12, the school will use the following criteria to classify the students.

- Freshman (9th) – must have been promoted from the 8th grade.
- Sophomore (10th) – must have satisfactorily completed 5 credits, including English-I and Algebra-I
- Junior (11th) – must have satisfactorily completed 11 credits, including English-II
- Senior (12th)\* – must have satisfactorily completed 18 credits by the beginning of the fall semester of the school year in which the student expects to graduate, including English III, US History, and 5 EOC tests required for graduation.

\*Exceptions for Senior classification requirements can be modified by ARD or IGC committees.

## **4) Retention Appeal**

A student who fails to satisfy the school's promotion standards shall be retained at the same grade level for the next school year. The parent may appeal the retention by submitting a request to the district office

within five working days of receipt of the retention notification.

If an appeal is initiated by the parent, the district office may decide in favor of promotion only if the district office concludes, upon review of all facts and circumstances, and in accordance with standards adopted by the Board, that the student is likely to perform on grade level given additional accelerated instruction during the next school year.

## **5) Parental Options for Students to Repeat Grades or Courses**

In certain circumstances, a parent may elect for a student to repeat a grade or retake a high school course. Subject to certain restrictions, a parent may elect for a student to:

- Repeat prekindergarten;
- Enroll in prekindergarten if the child was eligible to enroll in free prekindergarten under Education Code § 29.153(b) and has not yet enrolled in kindergarten;
- Repeat kindergarten;
- Enroll in kindergarten if the child would have enrolled in kindergarten in the previous school year and has not yet enrolled in first grade;
- For grades one through eight, repeat the grade the student was enrolled in the previous school year; and/or
- For courses taken for high school credit, repeat any course in which the student was enrolled during the previous school year.

A parent may not elect for a student to repeat a course identified in item 6 above if Harmony determines the student has met all of the requirements for graduation.

A parent's ability to elect for a student to repeat a grade or retake a high school course is limited to students who repeat courses from the 2020–2021 school year during the 2022–2023 school year and for students who otherwise enroll during the 2022–2023 school year.

An election for a student to repeat a grade or retake a high school course must be made in writing. If Harmony disagrees with a parent election for a student to repeat a grade or retake a high school course, the school must convene a retention committee and meet with the parent to discuss retention. The meeting must be conducted in person, unless the parent agrees to alternative means. A

student may not be retained for a grade or repeat a course if the parent does not meet with the retention committee.

The retention committee (GPC) will be composed of the Principal or designee, the student's parent, the teacher who taught the grade or course for which the parent wants the student retained or repeated, and additional teachers at the discretion of the Principal if the student will potentially repeat multiple courses.

During the retention meeting, Harmony and the parent will discuss the merits of and concerns with advancement and retention, and review and consider the student's grade in each subject or course, the results of any formative or summative assessments administered to the student, and any other available academic information to determine the student's academic readiness for the next grade or a given course.

After the parent has participated in a retention committee meeting, the parent shall decide whether the student should be retained or retake a grade or course. Harmony must abide by the parent's decision.

## **Accelerated Learning and Accelerated Education Plan**

### ***Accelerated Instruction***

Harmony will provide accelerated instruction in applicable subject areas to each student who fails to perform satisfactorily on the STAAR exam in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighth grade or an end-of-course ("EOC") assessment. This accelerated instruction will be provided either during the subsequent summer or school year and consists of instruction meeting the requirements of Education Code § 28.0211(a-1) and 28.0211(a-4), as applicable.

Accelerated instruction provided during the following school year may require the participation of the student before or after normal school hours. Failure of a student to attend accelerated instruction may result in violations of required school attendance.

In providing this accelerated instruction, Harmony may not remove a student, except under circumstances for

which a student enrolled in the same grade level who is not receiving accelerated instruction would be removed, from: (1) instruction in the foundation and enrichment curriculum for the grade level in which the student is enrolled, or (2) recess or other physical activity that is available to other students enrolled in the same grade level.

### ***Accelerated Education Plan (AEP)***

Harmony will develop an accelerated education plan when a student fails to achieve approaches or higher on STAAR for two or more consecutive school years in the same subject area. Harmony will make a good-faith attempt to inform the related parents about the accelerated education plan. The communication will provide the parent with

- Notice that the student is not performing on grade level in the applicable subject area; and
- An explanation of the accelerated instruction to which the student is entitled information on the AEP that is developed for the student and the manner in which the parent may participate in implementing the plan.

A parent of a student who fails to perform satisfactorily on a STAAR or EOC assessment may submit a written request to the Principal for Harmony to consider the student's assignment to a particular classroom teacher in the applicable subject area for the subsequent school year if more than one classroom teacher is available. Harmony retains the discretion to make classroom assignments based on campus needs and classroom capacity.

During the school year, the student's progress will be monitored to ensure that the student is progressing in accordance with the AEP.

### ***Special Education Students***

The ARD Committee of a student who participates in the school's special education program and who does not perform satisfactorily on a STAAR or EOC assessment shall, at the student's next annual ARD review meeting, review the student's participation and progress in, as applicable, accelerated instruction, supplemental, or an AEP.

The student's parent may request, or Harmony, may schedule an additional ARD meeting if a committee

member believes that the student's individualized education program (IEP) needs to be modified. If Harmony refuses to convene an ARD meeting requested by the student's parent, Harmony shall provide the parent with written notice

### ***AEP Grievance Procedure***

A student's parent may contest the content or implementation of an AEP developed by Harmony by submitting a written complaint to the Principal within (1) seven calendar days of the parent's receipt of AEP or (2) within seven calendar days of the parent's concern that the AEP is not being properly implemented. The designated administrator will conduct a conference with the parent within five school days of the Principal's receipt of the written complaint and issue a written decision within five school days of the conference. A parent who is dissatisfied with the designated administrator's decision may appeal through Harmony's student and parent complaint process, beginning at Level Three.

## **State Assessments**

### **State Assessments**

Texas Education Code § 39.023 requires all students to take the STAAR exam—and any End-of-Course assessments—for specified grade levels and courses.

### ***High School Students***

To receive a high school diploma, students must successfully pass state-mandated tests. Test results will be reported to students and parents. Certain students may be eligible for exemptions or accommodations.

High school students are required to perform satisfactorily on the following End-of-Course ("EOC") assessments; these include:

- \* English I, English II;
- \* Algebra I;
- \* Biology;
- \* U.S. History;

A student who has not achieved sufficient scores on the EOC assessments to graduate will have opportunities to retake the assessments. State law and state rules also provide for certain scores on norm-referenced national standardized assessments or on the state-developed assessment used for entrance into Texas public

universities to substitute for the requirement to meet satisfactory performance on an applicable EOC assessment should a student choose this option. See the Principal or designee for more information on the state testing requirements for graduation.

If a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an EOC assessment, the school will provide remediation in the content area for which the performance standard was not met. This may require student participation before or after normal school hours, or at times of the year outside of normal school operations.

In limited circumstances, a student who fails to demonstrate proficiency on two or fewer of the required assessments may be eligible to graduate, if an individual graduation committee, formed in accordance with state law, unanimously determines that the student is eligible to graduate. Please see the Principal or designee for more information on the makeup of an individual graduation committee and all other requirements for graduation.

### ***Students with Disabilities***

Upon the recommendation of the ARD Committee, a student with disabilities who is receiving special education services may be promoted and/ or permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her IEP and in accordance with state rules.

A student who receives special education services and has completed four years of high school, but has not met the requirements of his or her IEP, may participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a certificate of attendance. Even if the student participates in graduation ceremonies to receive the certificate of attendance, he or she may remain enrolled to complete the IEP and earn his or her high school diploma; however, the student will only be allowed to participate in one graduation ceremony.

The ARD Committee for students with disabilities who receive special education services will make instructional and assessment decisions for these students in accordance with state law and rules. To earn an endorsement under the foundation graduation program, a student must perform satisfactorily on the EOC assessments and receive no modified curriculum in the student's chosen endorsement area. A student may still be awarded an endorsement when the student fails to perform satisfactorily on no more than two EOC

assessments but meets the other requirements for graduation under state law.

### **TELPAS**

The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (“TELPAS”) is a system of statewide assessment administered to all Limited English Proficient (“LEP”) students in K-12th grades. The TELPAS measures English ability based on the stage of language development of second language learners. These results will further the understanding of the educational needs of LEP students by providing a state-level measure of both their current academic English levels and their annual progress in English.

### **Special Programs**

#### ***Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English***

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student has difficulty performing regular class work in English. If the student qualifies for these extra services, the LPAC will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

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

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

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

### **Special Education Referrals**

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Contact Person for Special Education Referrals**

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

Contact Person: See the following table for contact information.

Phone Number: See the following table for contact information.

#### **Section 504 Referrals**

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

#### **Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals**

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

Contact Person: See the following table for contact information

Phone Number: See the following table for contact information

#### **Additional Information**

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

- Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process
  - o <http://framework.esc18.net>
- Partners Resource Network
  - o <http://prntexas.org>
- Special Education Information Center
  - o <http://www.spedtex.org>
- Texas Project First
  - o <http://texasprojectfirst.org>

## **Other Programs**

### **Middle School Honors Mathematics Program**

Harmony has adopted an honors mathematics program for middle school students that is designed to enable students to enroll in Algebra I in 8th grade. Under this program, Harmony will automatically enroll each Grade 6 student whose performance was:

- in the 60th percentile or higher on statewide scores for the Grade 5 Mathematics STAAR or
- in the 65th percentile or higher on Grade 5 NWEA MAP Mathematics assessment as demonstrated proficiency in the Grade 5 Math Coursework

Schools shall provide a written notice to the parent or guardian of the student no later than 14 days before the first day of instruction. Parents may opt a student out of automatic in the school's honors mathematics principal by providing written notice to the principal or designee.

### **Texas First Early High School Completion Program**

Upon each student's initial enrollment in high school, Harmony shall provide parents and students notice of eligibility criteria for the Texas First Early High School Completion Program and Texas First Scholarship Program.

### **Outside Service Providers**

Harmony recognizes that parents may choose to independently contract additional services for their children from agencies outside Harmony and outside of their educational program. Outside service providers are not permitted to provide services on campus grounds at any time. It is recognized that these additional services provided for a student are outside of the student's educational program, are paid for by the parent, are not a requirement of FAPE (free and appropriate public education) and are the choice of the parents as an addition to the free and appropriate public education that Harmony provides for students.

## Contact List for Special Education/504 Referrals

### HOUSTON SOUTH AND WEST CAMPUSES

Campus	Contact Person for Special Education/504 Referrals	Address	Telephone Number
Harmony School of Innovation - Houston	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	9421 W. Sam Houston Pkwy S. Houston, TX 77099	713-541-3030
Harmony School of Ingenuity - Houston	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	10555 Stella Link Rd. Houston, TX 77025	713-664-1020
Harmony Science Academy – Houston	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	9431 W Sam Houston Pkwy S. Houston, TX 77099	713-493-0214
Harmony School of Fine Arts and Technology - Houston	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	9115 Kirby Drive, Houston, TX 77054	832-433-7001
Harmony School of Exploration - Houston	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	9305 W. Sam Houston Pkwy S. Houston, TX 77099	832-831-7406
Harmony Science Academy - Sugar Land	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	13415 W. Belfort Ave, Sugar Land, TX	281-265-2525
Harmony Sch. of Innovation - Sugar Land	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	13522 W. Airport Blvd. Sugar Land, TX 77479	281-302-6445
Harmony School of Excellence – Sugar Land	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	1424 Eldridge Rd., Sugar Land, TX, 77478	281-302-6445
Harmony Science Academy – Katy	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	22400 Grand Corner Dr, Katy, TX 77494	832-437-3926
Harmony School of Innovation – Katy	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	22400 Grand Corner Dr Bldg. C, Katy, TX 77494	281-392-9000
Harmony Science Academy -Beaumont	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	4055 Calder Ave Beaumont, TX 77706	409-838-4000



## HOUSTON NORTH CAMPUSES

Campus	Contact Person for Special Education/504 Referrals	Address	Telephone Number
Harmony School of Excellence - Houston	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	7340 N Gessner Drive Houston, TX 77040	713-983-8668
Harmony School of Endeavor - Houston	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	5668 West Little York, Houston, TX 77091	281-999-8400
Harmony Science Academy - Bryan	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	2031 South Texas Ave. Bryan, TX 77802	979-779-2100
Harmony School of Advancement - Houston	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	3100 N. Sam Houston Pkwy W. Houston, TX 77038	281-741-8899
Harmony School of Discovery - Houston	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	6270 Barker Cypress Rd. Houston, TX 77038	281-861-5105
Harmony School of Technology - Houston	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	3203 N Sam Houston Pkwy W, Houston, TX 77038	281-444-1555
Harmony School of Achievement - Houston	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	16209 Kieth Harrow Blvd, Houston, TX 77084	281-855-2500
Harmony School of Enrichment - Houston	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	3207 N Sam Houston Pkwy W Houston, TX 77038	281-999-0606
Harmony Science Academy-Cypress	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	7406 Greenhouse Road Cypress, TX 77433	(713) 258-1641
Harmony School of Excellence-Katy	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	22855 Elyson Falls Drive Katy, TX 77449	832-437-1043
Harmony Science Academy- Bridgeland	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	12800 Creekland Village Dr, Cypress, TX 77433	281-444-1555
Harmony Science Academy - City Place	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	2600 Spring Stuebner Rd. Spring, TX 773892	281-444-1555

## CENTRAL TEXAS CAMPUSES

<b>Campus</b>	<b>Contact Person for Special Education/504 Referrals</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
Harmony Science Academy – Austin	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	930 E Rundberg Ln Austin, TX 78753	512-835-7900
Harmony Science Academy – Pflugerville	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	1421 Wells Branch, Suite 200 Pflugerville, TX 78660	512-251-5000
Harmony School of Excellence – Austin	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	2100 E St Elmo Drive Austin, TX 78744	512-693-0000
Harmony School of Science – Austin	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	11800 Stonehollow Drive, Suite 100 Austin, TX 78758	512-821-1700
Harmony School of Political Science - Austin	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	13415 FM 620 N, Austin, TX 78717	512-284-9880
Harmony School of Innovation – Austin	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	2124 E. St. Elmo, Austin, TX 78744	512-525-7534
Harmony Science Academy – Cedar Park	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	12200 Anderson Mill Road, Austin, TX 78726	512-494-5151
Harmony Science Academy – Leander	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	3250 Hero Way, Leander, TX 78641	512- 386-1903
Harmony Science Academy – Georgetown	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	301 Blue Ridge Drive, Georgetown, TX 78626	512- 386-1903



### WEST TEXAS CAMPUSES

<b>Campus</b>	<b>Contact Person for Special Education/504 Referrals</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
Harmony Science Academy – El Paso	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	9405 Betel Dr, El Paso, TX 79907	915-500-2868
Harmony School of Innovation – El Paso	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	5210 Fairbanks Drive, El Paso, TX 79924	915-757-2929
Harmony School of Excellence - El Paso	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	9435 Betel Drive, El Paso, TX 79907	915-859-4620
Harmony School of Science - El Paso	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	1730 Joe Battle Blvd El Paso, Texas 79928	915-500-4193
Harmony Science Academy – Lubbock	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	1516 53rd Street, Lubbock, TX 79412	806-747-1000
Harmony Science Academy – Odessa	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	2755 N. Grandview Avenue, Odessa, TX 79762	432-363-6000
Harmony School of Innovation – Odessa	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	4261 Mission Blvd. Odessa TX 79765	915- 626-5086
Harmony Science Academy - Midland	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	2501 E Loop 250 N, Midland, TX 79705	915-626-5086

### SOUTH TEXAS CAMPUSES

<b>Campus</b>	<b>Contact Person for Special Education/504 Referrals</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
Harmony Science Academy – San Antonio	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	8505 Lakeside Parkway, San Antonio, TX 78245	210-643-4265
Harmony School of Innovation – San Antonio	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	6630 Glen Mont Dr., San Antonio, TX 78239	210-265-1715
Harmony School of Excellence-San Antonio	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	2015 SW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78227	210-645-7166

Harmony Science Academy – Laredo	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	4401 San Francisco Avenue, Laredo, TX 78041	956-712-1177
Harmony School of Innovation – Laredo	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	4608 Daugherty Avenue Laredo, TX 78041	956-568-9496
Harmony School of Excellence - Laredo	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	4401 San Francisco Avenue, Laredo, TX 78041	956-568-9495
Harmony Science Academy – Brownsville	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	1124 Central Blvd., Brownsville, TX 78520	956-574-9555
Harmony School of Innovation– Brownsville	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	2015 SW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78227	210-643-4265
Harmony School of Science-San Antonio	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	5566 Wiseman Blvd., San Antonio TX 78251	210- 267-9954

#### NORTH TEXAS CAMPUSES

<b>Campus</b>	<b>Contact Person for Special Education/504 Referrals</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
Harmony Science Academy – Waco	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	1900 North Valley Mills Drive, Waco, TX 76710	254-751-7878
Harmony School of Innovation – Waco	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	1100 S. Valley Mills Dr., Beverly Hills, TX 76711	254-235-0321
Harmony Science Academy – Plano	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	550 Talbert Drive, Plano, TX 75075	214-321-0100
Harmony Science Academy – Garland	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	2302 Firewheel Pkwy. Garland, TX 75040	972-212-4777
Harmony School of Innovation – Garland	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	2250 Firewheel Parkway, Garland, TX 75040	469-814-0059
Harmony Science Academy – Dallas	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	11995 Forestgate Dr. Dallas, TX 75243	972-234-9993
Harmony School of Innovation – Dallas	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	8080 W. Pres. George Bush Hwy, Dallas, TX 75252	214-321-0100

Harmony Science Academy – Fort Worth	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	5651 Westcreek Dr., Fort Worth, TX 76133	817-263-0700
Harmony School of Innovation - Fort Worth	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	8100 S Hulen St., Fort Worth, TX 76109	817-386-5505
Harmony Science Academy – Gr. Prairie	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	1102 NW 7th St., Grand Prairie, TX 75050	972-642-9911
Harmony School of Excellence – Dallas	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	8120 W Camp Wisdom Rd., Dallas, TX 75249	972-296-1000
Harmony Science Academy – Euless	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	701 S Industrial Blvd Suite 115, Euless, TX 76040	817-354-3000
Harmony School of Innovation – Euless	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	701 S. Industrial Blvd, Ste 105, Fort Worth, TX 76040	817-354-3008
Harmony Science Academy - Carrollton	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	1024 W Rosemeade Pkwy. Bld 2 Carrollton, TX, 75007	972-394-9560
Harmony School of Innovation - Carrollton	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	1024 W Rosemeade Pkwy. Carrollton, TX 75007	469-892-5556
Harmony School of Innovation – Grand Prairie	Campus Special Education / 504 Coordinator	1441 Fish Creek Rd   Grand Prairie, Texas 75052	972-296-1000

## **Notification to Parents of Intervention Strategies for Learning Difficulties Provided to General Education Students**

Harmony Public Schools will annually notify parents that it provides assistance to students, other than those already enrolled in a special education program, who need assistance for learning difficulties, including intervention strategies.

## **Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected Under Section 504**

A student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law, and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"). Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities. When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be created to determine whether the student needs Section 504 services and support in order to receive an appropriate education as required by federal law.

## **Services for Title I Participants**

Information regarding the school's Title I program may be obtained from the Principal.

## **Tutoring**

Students are encouraged and may be required to see teachers or tutors for tutoring. Tutoring services are also available for students receiving special education services.

Private tutoring is the responsibility of a student's parents. Teachers employed by Harmony Public Schools are not permitted to privately tutor their students for pay.

## **Honor Rolls for K-8**

- Students at Grades K-8 who earn all "A"s will be named to the Distinguished Honor Roll.
- Students who earn "A"s and "B"s in all classes will be named to the Honor Roll.
- Students who have zero Discipline Points, no discipline referrals, and have not received a "N" or "P" in conduct will be named to the Excellent Character Honor Roll.

## **Credit and Acceleration by Exam**

Harmony Public Schools uses examinations and guidelines established by the State Board of Education to offer credit and acceleration by exam.

### ***Credit by Examination Without Prior Instruction***

Harmony Public Schools may approve examinations for acceleration to test a student's essential knowledge and skills for each primary school grade level and for credit for secondary school academic subjects.

### **1) Grades in 1-5**

A student in grades 1–5 will be accelerated one grade level if he or she meets the following requirements:

- The student scores 80% or above on a criterion-referenced test for the grade level to be skipped in each of the following areas: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies;
- Principal or Principal designee recommends acceleration; and
- The student's parents give written approval for acceleration.

### **2) Grades in 6-12**

A student in grades 6–12 will be given credit for an academic subject in which he or she has had no prior instruction if the student scores

- A three or higher on a College Board advanced placement examination that has been approved by the Board for the applicable course;
- A scaled score of 50 or higher on an examination administered through the College-Level Examination Program and approved by the Board for the applicable course or
- 80% or above on a criterion-referenced test for the applicable test. Credits obtained through credit by examination (without instruction) will not be calculated for GPA and class rank. Exam for acceleration (EA) is available for students who want to skip each of the following areas: English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies

### **3) Grades In Kinder**

Harmony Public Schools has adopted guidelines to address Kindergarten acceleration procedures; these standards are outlined in Board Policy PG-2.1.4.

#### **A. Qualifications for Testing:**

To qualify for Kindergarten Acceleration, the student must meet the following qualifications:

The student must be 5 years of age on or before September 1st of the academic year.

The student must be registered for kindergarten for the academic year in Harmony Public Schools.

If the qualifications above are met, then a parent may request that his/her child test for grade acceleration by the end of the first quarter. After the written request is received from the parent, a committee composed of parent(s), principal's designee, and teacher(s) considers the following criteria to determine if testing for acceleration is the best option for the student.

Scores on readiness tests or achievement tests including but not limited to NWEA MAP and mCLASS. (NWEA MAP scores should be above the 90th percentile for both Reading and Mathematics)

Recommendation of the Kindergarten or preschool the student had previously attended.

Chronological age and observed social and emotional development of the student.

Effect of skipping a grade level on the student's

Harmony Public Schools strongly encourages all learners to participate in kindergarten due to the social, developmental, emotional, and academic benefits this grade level provides.

**B. Testing:**

Students in Kindergarten may be accelerated by one grade level, if the student scores 90% or above on the district-approved CBE assessments in English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Mathematics. No retesting will be allowed during the same academic year due to failure.

**C. Acceleration:**

Parents will be notified about the acceleration decision. If a kindergarten student is recommended for acceleration, it will be on a probationary basis. Should the school or teacher feel it is in the best interest of the child to be placed back into kindergarten, the parent will be contacted.

***Credit by Examination with Prior Instruction***

A student in grades 6–12 who has previously taken a course of a subject (but did not receive credit or a final grade for it) may, in the circumstances determined by the principal or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit or a final grade by passing an exam on the essential knowledge and skills defined for the course or subject. Prior instruction may include, for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a nonaccredited school. To

receive credit, the student must score at least 70% or higher on a criterion-referenced test for the applicable course. The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to receive credit for a course by passing an exam.

***Credit by Examination (CBE) Window***

Offerings for credit by examination are currently scheduled as:

August 8 – 24	CBE / EA
November 1 – 16	CBE / EA
March 13 – 29	CBE / EA
May 1 – 17	CBE / EA

Students are required to apply for testing at least one month before the first day of testing. A student may not attempt to earn credit by examination for a specific high school course more than two times. Students may take a specific exam only once during each testing window. A school district is prohibited from charging a fee for credit by examination.

***Appeal***

Parents may appeal the decision to the campus principal.

**Computer Resources**

To prepare students for an increasingly computerized society, the school has made a substantial investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students with access to the school's computers and their parents are required to sign and follow the Student Acceptable Use policy found at the back of the Handbook. Violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of computer privileges and other disciplinary action. Electronic communications, such as e-mails sent from or received on school computers, are not private and may be monitored by school staff.

## Chromebooks

The Chromebook Handbook has been created as a resource for all students, parents, teachers, admin, and community members. Chromebook handbook, policy and documents can be found online at the following web address:

<https://www.itspot.harmonytexas.org/chromebooks>

## Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test

A student in grades 10–12 will be offered an opportunity to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (“ASVAB”) test and consult with a military recruiter. Harmony Public Schools will provide each student in grades 10–12 and their parents with notice of the date, time, and location of the scheduled administration of the ASVAB.

## Career and Technical Education Annual Public Notification of Nondiscrimination

Harmony Public Schools offers career and technical education programs in Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications, Business, Marketing, and Finance, Health Science, Engineering, Information Technology, Law and Public Service. Admission to these programs is based on student course selection and appropriate completion of pre- requisite coursework.

It is the policy of Harmony Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap in its vocational programs, services or activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Harmony Public Schools will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the;

- Title IX Coordinator for Student Matters:  
Charles Lambert, Director of Internal Investigations, 9321 W Sam Houston Pkwy S

Houston, TX 77099, [clambert@harmonytexas.org](mailto:clambert@harmonytexas.org), 713-343-3333;

- Title IX Coordinator for Employee Matters:  
Helen Miller, Director of Employee Relations, 9321 W Sam Houston Pkwy S Houston, TX 77099, [hemiller@harmonytexas.org](mailto:hemiller@harmonytexas.org), 713-343-3333; and/or
- Section 504 Coordinator, Ipek Torun, Director - Section 504 and Dyslexia Programs, 9321 W Sam Houston Pkwy S Houston, TX 77099, [itorun@harmonytexas.org](mailto:itorun@harmonytexas.org), 713-343-3333.

## Continuous Non-discrimination Statement in Career and Technology Education Programs

Harmony Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability in its programs or activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the;

- Title IX Coordinator for Student Matters:  
Charles Lambert, Director of Internal Investigations, 9321 W Sam Houston Pkwy S Houston, TX 77099, [clambert@harmonytexas.org](mailto:clambert@harmonytexas.org), 713-343-3333;
- Title IX Coordinator for Employee Matters:  
Helen Miller, Director of Employee Relations, 9321 W Sam Houston Pkwy S Houston, TX 77099, [hemiller@harmonytexas.org](mailto:hemiller@harmonytexas.org), 713-343-3333; and/or
- Section 504 Coordinator, Ipek Torun, Director - Section 504 and Dyslexia Programs, 9321 W Sam Houston Pkwy S Houston, TX 77099, [itorun@harmonytexas.org](mailto:itorun@harmonytexas.org), 713-343-3333.

## Student Code of Conduct

To function properly, education must provide an equal learning opportunity for all students by recognizing, valuing, and addressing the individual needs of every student. In addition to the regular curriculum, principles and practices of good citizenship must also be taught and modeled by school staff. This includes an appreciation for the rights of others. Harmony Public Schools is committed to helping every student fulfill his or her intellectual, social, physical, and emotional potential. To foster an orderly and distraction-free environment, Harmony Public Schools has established this Student Code of Conduct ("the Code"). The Code outlines prohibited behaviors and consequences for such behavior. Harmony Public Schools has the responsibility and authority to enforce the Code, question students, counsel them, and assign discipline when appropriate.

The Code does not define all types and aspects of student behavior. The Board of Directors and the Superintendent may establish written policies, rules, and regulations of general application governing student conduct in all schools. In addition, each Principal, within his or her own school, may establish certain rules and regulations not inconsistent with those established by the Board and the Superintendent.

Any conduct that causes or creates a reasonable likelihood that it will cause a substantial disruption in or material interference with any school function, activity, or purpose, or that interferes or creates a reasonable likelihood that it will interfere with the health, safety, or well-being or the rights of other students is prohibited.

A teacher may send a student to the Principal's office to maintain effective discipline in the classroom. In addition, a teacher may remove from class a student:

1. Who has been documented by the teacher to repeatedly interfere with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn; or
2. Whose behavior the teacher determines is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn.

The Board of Directors has authorized detention, in-school and out-of-school suspension, and expulsion as methods of disciplining students. The Board of Directors has also given authority to the Superintendent or designee to use any of these disciplinary actions,

which in his or her judgment, is appropriate for the violation.

When students participate in student activities, they will also be expected to follow the guidelines and constitutions that further specify the organization's expectations, student behavior and consequences.

## Jurisdiction

Harmony Public Schools has disciplinary authority over a student:

1. During the regular school day and while the student is going to and from school on school transportation;
2. During lunch periods in which a student is allowed to leave campus;
3. While the student is attending any school-related activity, regardless of time or location;
4. For any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location;
5. For any expulsion offense committed while on Harmony Public Schools' property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of Harmony Public Schools or another school in Texas;
6. For any expulsion offense committed away from Harmony Public Schools property and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event, if the misconduct creates a substantial disruption to the educational environment;
7. While the student is in transit to or from school or to or from school-related activities or events;
8. When retaliation against a school employee or volunteer occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location;
9. When the student commits a felony, including those provided by Texas Education Code §§ 37.006 or 37.0081, regardless of time or location; and
10. When criminal mischief is committed on or off Harmony Public Schools' property or at a school-related event.

## Note

In addition to disciplinary consequences, misdemeanor and felony offenses committed on campus or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

## Standards for Student Conduct

### Classroom Rules

Students shall:

- Be in the assigned seat and ready to work before the tardy bell rings.

- Bring pencils, pens, paper, books and all assigned materials to class.
- Not disrupt classroom activities.
- Follow instructions and directives immediately.
- Not chew gum, bring food, or drink in the building, except in designated food service areas.
- Raise their hand until recognized before speaking. Stand to speak once recognized (excluding normal class discussions). Not leave class without permission. Any student leaving class must have a hall pass.
- Demonstrate courtesy at all times.
- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline and control.
- Attend all classes, regularly and on time.

### **School-Wide Rules**

Students shall:

- Demonstrate courtesy at all times.
- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline and control.
- Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
- Be prepared for each class.
- Follow dress code requirements
- Obey all campus and classroom rules.
- Respect the rights of others, including property and school facilities.
- Cooperate with and assist school personnel, including volunteers, in maintaining safety, order and discipline.
- Adhere to all requirements of the Code of conduct.
- Show high standards of behavior to create a positive and welcoming school atmosphere.

### **Responsibilities of Parents**

Parents are expected to:

- Serve as a model for students by showing respect for themselves, students, teachers, other parents, and school staff.
- Ensure their student's compliance with school attendance requirements, promptly report, and explain absences and tardies to the school;
- Assist their student in being properly attired;
- Take an active interest in the overall school program; Communicate regularly with the school concerning their student's conduct and progress;
- Discuss report cards and work assignments with their student;

- Bring to the attention of school authorities any problem or condition which affects their student;

Maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers at the school;

Cooperate with school administrators and teachers in their efforts to achieve and maintain a quality school system;

Respond promptly when notified by campus to pick up student due to medical or disciplinary problems.

Respond promptly when notified of student disciplinary matters.

### **Reinforcement Points**

Harmony Public Schools has implemented a Reinforcement Point System in which students are given "Reinforcement Points" for small infractions. Reinforcement Points are to be utilized as a warning system by the teachers in the classroom, cafeteria and hallways for small infractions. Parents will be notified when a Reinforcement Point is assigned. Each unwanted behavior is equivalent to 1 Reinforcement Point and will correspond to a certain consequence. The campus administration will assign 15 minutes of after school, lunch, community service or Saturday detention for each three Reinforcement Points. A point will be canceled if a student does not receive any points for 10 consecutive school days. The Reinforcement Point System will be used for Pre-K through 12th grade students.



Reinforcement Points	Points
Lack of Materials	1
Inappropriate behavior towards another student	1
Sleeping in class	1
Lack of Cooperation	1
Antagonistic behavior	1
Excessive talking	1
Eating/drinking in class and/or common areas	1
Not being in assigned location	1
Dress code violation	1
Talking back to teacher	1
Leaving the classroom without permission	1
Leaving paper/trash on the floor	1
Being in the hallway without a pass	1
Disturbing class	1
Disrupting an extra-curricular activity	1
Inappropriate hallway/cafeteria behavior	1
Unprepared for class	1

## Offenses and Consequences

**Corporal punishment is never an acceptable disciplinary measure**

### Level I Offenses

The following behaviors are prohibited at all school and school-related activities:

- Accessing restricted areas.
- Accumulating 5-14 tardies
- Any violations of "Standards for Student Conduct" listed in the Code of Conduct.
- Causing damage to Harmony Public Schools' property in an amount less than \$50.
- Disrespect toward staff members, such as rolling eyes, sucking teeth, etc.
- Dress and grooming code violations (see "Dress and Grooming").
- Engaging in offensive conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, directed toward another student or any other person.
- Failing to comply with directives of Harmony Public Schools' personnel.
- Failing to report known hazing, harassment, or bullying of students.
- Talking back to the teacher.
- Failing to comply with Harmony Public Schools' guidelines for student conduct in the cafeteria
- Failing to comply with Harmony Public Schools' guidelines for student conduct in public areas
- Inappropriate physical contact not defined as a Level II or Level III offense.
- Missing class or tutorial sessions without excuse.
- Offensive language, orally or in writing.
- Parking infractions or violations of campus vehicle operation regulations.
- Possessing a laser pointer on Harmony Public Schools' property or at school-sponsored events.
- Possession of any electronic and/or telecommunication devices without permission during school hours
- Posting published materials or holding demonstrations or meetings on Harmony Public Schools' property without school approval (see "Distribution of Published Materials").
- Profanity and/or obscene gestures toward other students.
- Scuffling.
- Single acts of disruptive behavior, including non-compliance and insubordination.
- Throwing objects is not considered an illegal weapon that can cause bodily injury or property damage.
- Unruly, disruptive, or abusive behavior that interferes with the teacher's ability to effectively communicate with students.
- Possession of a cellular phone/paging device during the school day.
- Use of a skateboard, scooter, bike, hover-board, and/or roller blades while on school property.
- Verbal or written abuse, i.e., name-calling, racial or ethnic slurs, or derogatory statements that may disrupt the school environment.
- Loitering on campus 2-9 times per school year.
- Unauthorized use of school or classroom phones.

***Disciplinary Consequences (may not be followed in order, and progressive disciplinary measures are not required)***

1. Lunch Detention.
2. After School Detention.
3. Saturday Detention (3rd-12th grade)
4. In School Suspension.
5. Assignment of school duties such as scrubbing desks or picking up litter.
6. Behavioral contracts or individually developed behavior management plans.
7. Classroom management techniques.
8. Community service.
9. Cooling-off time or "time-out."
10. Counseling by teachers, counselors, or administrative personnel.
11. Reinforcement Points.
12. Confiscation of electronic devices used during the instructional day.
13. Grade reductions for academic dishonesty.
14. Loss of computer privileges/Internet access.
15. Parent contracts to restrict home privileges.
16. Parent observations in student's classes.
17. Parent conference with teacher or Principal.
18. Peer mediation.
19. Placement in another appropriate classroom.
20. Restitution/restoration, if applicable
21. School-assessed and school-administered probation.
22. Seating changes within the classroom.
23. Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process.
24. Verbal correction.
25. Voluntary peer mediation/family management classes/ community service.
26. Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in extracurricular activities and eligibility for seeking and holding honorary offices, and/or membership in school- sponsored clubs or organizations.
27. Withdrawal of participation in school events such as field trips, assemblies, etc.

**Level II Offenses**

The following behaviors are prohibited at all school and school-related activities:

1. Abusing over-the-counter drugs.
2. Abusing a student's own prescription or non-prescription drug, giving a prescription or non-prescription drug to another student, or

unauthorized possession or being under the influence of another person's prescription or non-prescription drug while on Harmony Public Schools' property or at a school-related event.

3. Academic dishonesty (see "Academic Dishonesty").
4. Accumulating 15 or more tardies to class.
5. Assault of another student or an adult that is not an expellable offense.
6. Being a member of, pledging to become a member of, joining, or soliciting another person to join, or pledge to become a member of a public school fraternity, sorority, or gang, as defined in Texas Education Code § 37.121.
7. Bullying and/or cyberbullying conduct (see "Freedom from Bullying and Cyberbullying").
8. Bypassing Internet blocks on school computers or networks, or otherwise accessing unapproved sites.
9. Causing damage to School property in an amount equal to or greater than \$50.
10. Committing extortion, coercion, or blackmail (obtaining money or another object of value from an unwilling person).
11. Creating or participating in the creation of a "hit list" under Texas Education Code § 37.001(b)(3).
12. Engaging in conduct directed to another that includes threats of violence, or other inappropriate acts that are motivated in whole or in part on racial, ethnic, or culturally insensitive matters.
13. Engaging in conduct endangering the health and/or safety of others.
14. Engaging in conduct related to Dating Violence or Retaliation (see "Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation").
15. Engaging in conduct similar to prohibited discrimination or harassment, even if that conduct does not rise to the level of harassment prohibited by law or school policy (see "Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation"),(Level 1 Consequences for Elementary).
16. Failure to comply with school guidelines regarding in-school suspension and/or missing more than one scheduled in-school suspension assignment without a confirmed excuse (see "In School Suspension").
17. Failure to comply with school medication guidelines and/or policies.
18. Failure to comply with school rules regarding student transportation (see "Transportation" ).
19. False accusation of the commission of a misdemeanor or felony.
20. Falsification and/or forgery of school records.

21. Fighting or arranging a fight. Students involved in fighting will, at a minimum, be suspended for the remainder of the day.
22. Flagrant violations of the Harmony Public Schools' Acceptable Use Policy or other actions that corrupt the educational value of the school's computers or Internet service (see "Student Acceptable Use Policy").
23. Gambling or playing cards, including but not limited to card playing, dice shooting and/or sports pools and involves the transfer of money or other personal belongings or assistance from one person to another. Bringing, trading, or playing with any cards are prohibited. Playing cards will be confiscated (Level 1 Consequences for Elementary).
24. Gang activity.
25. Harassment, meaning threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student or staff member, engaging in sexually intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another student, subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety.
26. Hazing, as defined by Texas Education Code § 37.151(6).
27. Inappropriate or indecent exposure of private body parts.
28. Inappropriate public displays of affection, including kissing, hugging, physical conduct, etc.
29. Intentionally providing incorrect information to school officials.
30. Interference with school activities or discipline.
31. Involvement in a felony offense not listed in Title 5, Texas Penal Code, and Harmony Public Schools is notified by the police.
32. Skipping class or leaving a school campus, classroom, or event without written permission from an administrator.
33. Misdemeanor vandalism and/or criminal mischief.
34. Possessing a razor, box cutter, chain, or any other object used in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury to another person.
35. Possessing a stun gun, mace, or pepper spray.
36. Possessing ammunition.
37. Possessing drug paraphernalia.
38. Possessing, viewing, or distributing pictures, text messages, emails, or other material of a sexual nature in any media format.
39. Refusing to allow a lawful student search.
40. Possession of stolen property.
41. Possession or use of fireworks or other explosive devices.
42. Profanity/obscene gestures toward personnel.
43. Refusal to follow directions from a school employee or administrator.
44. Repetitive Level I Offenses – i.e., two or more Level I offenses within a semester.
45. Secret society activity.
46. Sending or posting abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, defamatory or illegal electronic messages, sexting.
47. Stealing and/or theft.
48. Threats against school personnel and/or other students.
49. Unruly, disruptive, or abusive behavior that interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class.
50. Using the Internet or other electronic communications to threaten students or employees, or cause disruption to the school program.
51. Violating the school's examination procedures (see "Examination Procedures").
52. Loitering on campus 10 times or more per school year.
53. Possessing, distributing, exhibiting, and/or transmitting obscene materials, including pornography.
54. Computer system violations, including violations of the School's Acceptable Use policy (see "Student Acceptable Use Policy").
55. Violating the terms and conditions of a student behavioral contract.
56. Engage in selling, exchanging, or renting items and/or services on campus without the principal's permission including school based student organizations.
57. Refuse to participate in safety drills as instructed

***Disciplinary Consequences (may not necessarily be followed in order and progressive disciplinary measures are not required)***

1. Any applicable Level I Disciplinary Consequence.
2. Out-of-school suspension up to three days (applies to students in 3-12 grades only)\*
3. Expulsion (upon Discipline Committee recommendation).

Disciplinary actions may be used individually or in combination for any offense. \*Students in PreK-2nd grades may be placed in out-of-school suspension if they pose a danger to the school or others' health and safety. Before implementing out-of-school suspension for PreK-2nd grade students, school administrators must obtain approval from the district office.

### Level III Offenses

The following behaviors are prohibited at all school and school-related activities:

1. Aggravated assault.
2. Aggravated kidnapping.
3. Aggravated robbery.
4. Aggravated sexual assault
5. Any discretionary or mandatory expulsion violation under Texas Education Code, Chapter 37.
6. Any offense listed in Sections 37.006(a) or 37.007 (a), (b), and (d) of the Texas Education Code, no matter when or where the offense takes place.
7. Arson
8. Assault
9. Attempts to copy and/or modify another student's work files stored on a computer.
10. Burglary of a motor vehicle on campus.
11. Capital murder.
12. Commission of a felony offense listed under Title 5, Texas Penal Code.
13. Committing or assisting in a robbery or theft, even if it does not constitute a felony under the Texas Penal Code.
14. Committing the following offenses on school property or within 1,000 feet of school property as measured from any point on Harmony Public Schools' real property boundary lines, or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off Harmony Public Schools' property:
  - a. Behaving in a manner that contains the elements of an offense relating to abusable volatile chemicals.
  - b. Behaving in a manner that contains the elements of the offense of public lewdness or indecent exposure.
  - c. Committing an assault under Texas Penal Code § 22.01(a)(1).
  - d. Engaging in conduct punishable as a felony.
  - e. Selling, giving, or delivering to another person an alcoholic beverage; committing a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol; or possessing, using, or being under the influence of alcohol, if the conduct is not punishable as a felony offense.
- f. Selling, giving, or delivering to another person, or possessing, using, or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, or a dangerous drug in an amount not constituting a felony offense.
15. Criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder.
16. Criminal mischief.
17. Criminally negligent homicide.
18. Deliberate destruction or tampering with school computer data or networks.
19. Engaging in bullying that encourages a student to commit or attempt to commit suicide.
20. Engaging in conduct punishable as a felony.
21. Engaging in conduct punishable as a felony listed under Title 5, Texas Penal Code, when the conduct occurs off Harmony Public Schools' property and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event and:
  - a. The student receives deferred adjudication;
  - b. A court or jury finds the student has engaged in delinquent conduct; or
  - c. The Principal or designee has reasonable belief that the student engaged in the conduct.
22. Engaging in conduct punishable as a Level III expulsion offense when the conduct occurs away from Harmony Public Schools' property and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event, and the conduct creates a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
23. Engaging in conduct relating to a false alarm or report (including a bomb threat) or a terroristic threat involving a public school.
24. Engaging in conduct related to harassment of a Harmony Public Schools' employee, including but not limited to:
  - a. Initiating communication and in the course of the communication making a comment, request, suggestion, or proposal that is obscene;
  - b. Threatening, in a manner reasonably likely to alarm the person receiving the threat, to inflict bodily injury on the person or to commit a felony against the employee, a member of the employee's family or household, or the employee's property;
  - c. Conveying, in a manner reasonably likely to alarm the employee receiving the report, a false report, which is known by the student to be

- false, that another person has suffered death or serious bodily injury; or
- d. Sending repeated electronic communications in a manner reasonably likely to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, embarrass, or offend another.
25. Engaging in conduct that constitutes discrimination or harassment, including conduct motivated by race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or age, and directed toward another student or school employee.
  26. Engaging in conduct that constitutes sexual harassment or sexual abuse, whether by word, gesture, or any other conduct directed toward another person, including a student or school employee or volunteer.
  27. Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of retaliation against any school employee or volunteer, whether on or off of school property.
  28. Engaging in the electronic transmission of sexually explicit visual material that:
    - a. Depicts any person engaging in sexual conduct; or
    - b. Depicts a person's intimate parts exposed; or
    - c. Depicts the covered genitals of a male person that are in a discernibly turgid state; and
    - d. Is not sent at the request of or with the express consent of the recipient.
  29. Engaging in online impersonation.
  30. Felony criminal mischief against school property, another student, or school staff.
  31. Gang activity.
  32. Inappropriate sexual conduct.
  33. Inciting violence against a student through group bullying.
  34. Indecency with a child.
  35. Issuing a false fire alarm or a false 911 call.
  36. Manslaughter.
  37. Murder.
  38. Persistent Level I offenses – i.e., four Level I offenses within a semester.
  39. Persistent Level II offenses – i.e., two or more Level II offenses within a semester.
  40. Possessing any prohibited items, including but not limited to:
    - a. A "look-alike" weapon (includes but is not limited to BB guns, CO2 guns, air pistols or rifles, pellet guns, or any other device designed to appear to be a firearm or other weapon);
    - b. A laser pointer for other than an approved use;
    - c. A pocket knife or any other small knife with a blade less than 1.5" in length;
    - d. A razor, box cutter, chain, or any other object used in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury to another person;
    - e. A stun gun;
    - f. Ammunition;
    - g. An air gun or BB gun;
    - h. Fireworks of any kind, smoke or stink bombs, or any other pyrotechnic or explosive device;
    - i. Mace or pepper spray;
    - j. Matches or a lighter;
    - k. Tobacco products, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and any component, part, or accessory for an e-cigarette device or accessory to a vapor product; or
    - l. Any articles not generally considered to be weapons, including school supplies, when the Principal or the Principal's designee or designee determines that a danger exists.
  41. Possessing and/or selling "look-alike" drugs or items attempted to be passed off as drugs or contraband.
  42. Possessing or selling seeds or pieces of marijuana in less than a usable amount.
  43. Possessing, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of inhalants.
  44. Possessing, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of a simulated controlled substance.
  45. Possessing, using, giving, or selling paraphernalia related to any prohibited substance, including illegal, prescription, and over-the-counter drugs.
  46. Possession or use of alcohol on Harmony Public Schools' property or at school-related events.
  47. Possession or use of tobacco or related products such as E-cigarettes, vapor pens, vapor products, or lighters on school property or at school-related events.
  48. Possession, use, transfer, or exhibition of any firearm, handgun, improvised explosive device, location-restricted knife, or any other prohibited weapon or harmful object (as determined by Harmony Public Schools).
  49. Public lewdness.
  50. Releasing or threatening to release intimate visual material of a minor or a student who is 18 years of age or older without the student's consent. "Intimate visual material" means visual material that depicts a person (a) with the person's intimate parts exposed; or (b) engaged in sexual conduct.
  51. Required registration as a sex offender.

52. Retaliation against any school employee or volunteer at any time or place.
53. Selling, giving, or delivering to another person or possessing, using, or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, a cannabidiol (CBD) substance, a dangerous drug, or an alcoholic beverage.
54. Sending or distributing sexually suggestive, nude, or partially nude photographs and/or sexually explicit messages via text message, social media applications, or other methods of electronic delivery while at school, or while away from school if the conduct creates a substantial disruption to the school environment.
55. Sending or posting electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal, including conduct occurring off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
56. Setting or attempting to set fire on school property (not arson).
57. Sexual abuse of a young child or children.
58. Sexual assault.
59. Suspicious drug/alcohol involvement.
60. Targeting another individual for bodily harm.
61. Use of the school's Internet access to engage in conduct that constitutes felony criminal mischief and/or deliberate attempts to bypass installed computer security software.
62. Use, exhibition, or possession of a hand instrument designed to cut or stab another by being thrown, including but not limited to a dagger; dirk; stiletto; poniard; bowie knife; sword; spear; switchblade; assisted-open knife (regardless of length); or as otherwise defined by Board policy.
63. Use, exhibition, or possession of a knife with a blade more than 1.5" in length, including but not limited to switchblade knives or any other knife not defined as a location-restricted knife.
64. Violating Harmony Public School's computer use policies, rules, or agreements, such as the Student Acceptable Use Agreement, and including conduct involving but not limited to:
  - a. Attempting to access or circumvent passwords or other security-related information of Harmony Public Schools or its students or employees, and uploading or creating computer viruses, including such conduct off school property if the

conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

- b. Attempting to alter, destroy, or disable Harmony Public Schools' computer equipment, school data, the data of others, or other networks connected to the school's network system, including conduct occurring off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption of the educational environment.
- c. Using the Internet or other electronic communications to threaten Harmony Public Schools' students, employees, or volunteers, including conduct occurring off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- d. Sending or posting electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal, including conduct occurring off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- e. Using e-mail or web sites at school to encourage illegal behavior or threaten school safety.

***Disciplinary Consequences (may not necessarily be followed in order, and progressive disciplinary measures are not required)***

1. Any applicable Level I or Level II Disciplinary Consequence
2. Out of school suspension for 4-5 days.
3. Expulsion.

## **Consequences**

### **Community Service**

As part of disciplinary action, the principal or principal's designee may, at his/her discretion, require a student to perform school community service on school grounds. Such service may include, but is not limited to, school outdoor beautification, campus betterment, and school library organization. School-based community service as a disciplinary option is not available to students who have been suspended pending expulsion.

### **Detention**

Detention may be held on each day during school for up to eight hours. Students who serve detention must make arrangements to be picked up from school. Parents may request in person a delay of the detention; no phone calls or notes will be accepted. There are two types of detention: school and Saturday.

### **School Detention.**

1. Students will bring materials to work on- homework or books to read from the library; only school acceptable materials are permitted. Classroom materials may be sent by a teacher.
2. Students will not be permitted to go to their lockers during detention; all materials must be brought to the detention room when reporting.
3. Sleeping is not permitted.
4. Do not address staff, teachers, or other students.
5. Students should use the restroom before detention starts and be prepared to stay in the detention room for the entire length of time, except during an emergency.
6. Students will follow all rules concerning classroom behavior. Failure to comply will mean suspension from school.
7. Any student assigned to the detention room must stay the entire time. Students refusing to sit their time will be suspended from school.
8. Detention time will be assigned within forty-eight hours of the Dean of Student Culture meeting with the student. This allows the parent time to make transportation arrangements.
9. Students placed on after school detention will not be permitted to participate in any extracurricular activities that day.
10. If a student arrives at the detention room five minutes after designated time without a confirmed excuse, the student will not be allowed into the detention room, and the miss will be considered unexcused. This will result in one day out of school suspension, and the student will be required to make up the detention.
11. If a student does not turn in a Parent Notification Form on the due date without a confirmed excuse, he or she will have another after school detention.

### **Saturday Detention**

Saturday detention serves as an alternative to in-school suspension for violation of school rules, and prevents students from losing instruction time. During the hours of detention, students work to increase academic skills, engage in activities to improve self-concept, and address discipline issues.

Students who attend Saturday detention may receive academic assistance and may be given the opportunity to do homework, make-up or remedial work, under the supervision of a teacher. Each student may be given a

behavior modification packet which may help students to understand their misbehavior through introspection. This counseling will guide students toward acceptable behavior alternatives through goal setting exercises. Students may also do some physical exercises during detention.

Written notification of a Saturday detention is sent home with the student. This notification lists the cause for and date of the detention. The only acceptable excuse for not attending a Saturday detention is a verified (doctor's note) illness of the student.

### **Rules**

1. Saturday Detention will be held at the campus designated time and on school grounds. Parents are expected to provide transportation to and from detention, and students are required to wear their school uniforms. Should a student arrive late for a Saturday Detention without a note for an "emergency excuse," he or she will be assigned the next scheduled Saturday Detention. A second late arrival to an assigned Saturday Detention will result in out-of-school suspension beginning on the following Monday, plus attendance at the next Saturday Detention.
2. If an emergency arises and the student cannot attend, the parent must contact the Dean of Student Culture. If the reasons are acceptable, the detention will be rescheduled. If a student does not participate in scheduled Saturday detention without any confirmed excuse, the student will receive one day out of school suspension plus attendance at the next scheduled Saturday detention.
3. Students left at the school after 12:30 p.m. will be unsupervised. The school is not responsible for students who are left after 12:30 p.m.
4. Students may be asked to bring appropriate materials with which to work.
5. No radios, food, beverage, candy, comic books, etc. allowed during Saturday detention.
6. Students will be expected to work the entire time while at Saturday detention. Any student not working will be removed from the detention and referred to the Dean of Student Culture. Any student acting disruptively will be removed from Saturday Detention and be referred to the Dean of Student Culture for further disciplinary action. Parents will be notified regarding the infraction immediately.

7. No student is permitted to sleep during Saturday Detention.
8. If a student does not turn in Parent Notification form on the due date without any confirmed excuse, he or she will have another Saturday Detention.

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in one day of out of school suspension, plus attendance at the next scheduled Saturday Detention or any other Level I offense.

## **Suspension**

The school utilizes two kinds of suspension: in school suspension and out of school suspension.

### **In School Suspension**

The following rules and regulations apply to all students assigned to in school suspension.

1. Students must report to the detention room at the start time of the school day. Students arriving 5 minutes after the start time will be counted as absent. In school suspension will be run from the first bell until dismissal time.
2. Students must report to the detention room by the time specified by the campus. Students arriving 5 minutes after the specified time will be counted as absent. In school suspension will run from the specified time until dismissal time.
3. Students will bring materials to work on, including an in-school suspension assignment with their teachers' names, subjects, and assignments. Students are responsible for obtaining assignments from each teacher.
4. Students must sign in when reporting to the detention room, and sign out when the suspension period is over. Students may not leave the detention room without permission from the Dean of Student Culture. Without Dean of Student Culture permission, a student cannot go out of the detention room. Students are to keep the detention room clean.
5. No talking or conversations. Students must be seated at all times. No physical contact of any kind between students is allowed.
6. Students will not be permitted to go to their lockers. All materials must be brought to the room when reporting.
7. Students will not be permitted to go to lunch. They will have their lunch in the detention room. Students

may not bring food or drink into the detention room other than lunch time.

8. No disruptive behavior will be allowed.
9. Unexcused absences from suspension will be referred to the Dean of Student Culture.
10. No visits by parents, relatives or other students are allowed.
11. Sleeping is prohibited.
12. Transportation to the in-school suspension site is the responsibility of the student and his or her parent(s). Transportation arrangements must be made prior to arrival at the site. Telephones are not available for student use.
13. Students must abide by the provisions of this Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct during their suspension period.
14. A student who misses a scheduled in school suspension without a confirmed excuse will be assigned one day out of school suspension. The missed in school suspension period will be rescheduled. If a student misses more than one scheduled in school suspension without a confirmed excuse, he or she may be subject to expulsion.

Failure to follow these guidelines will be reported to the Dean of Student Culture for further action, which may include up to three days of out of school suspension or any other level offense.

### **Out of School Suspension**

Notice of suspension and the reasons for the suspension will be given to the student by the Dean of Student Culture after a discipline committee meeting. The student shall receive credit for work missed during the period of suspension if the student makes up work missed during the period of suspension within the same number of school days the student was absent on suspension.

In addition to the above list of Code of Conduct violations, the Discipline Committee and/or Principal have the authority to suspend a student for a period of up to four school days for any of the following additional reasons:

1. The need to further investigate an incident, A
2. recommendation to expel the student, or
3. An emergency constitutes endangerment to health or safety.



## **Special Rules for Suspensions Involving Homeless Students**

Harmony Public Schools may not place a student who is homeless in out-of-school suspension unless the student engages in the following conduct while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property:

1. Unlawful possession of a firearm or other weapon;
2. Assault, sexual assault, aggravated assault, or aggravated sexual assault; or
3. Selling, giving, or delivering to another person or possessing, using, or being under the influence of any amount of marijuana or a controlled substance, a dangerous drug, or an alcoholic beverage.

## **Emergency Placement**

If the Principal or designee reasonably believes a student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with a teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students in a class, with the ability of a student's classmates to learn, or with the operation of the school or a school-sponsored activity, the Principal or designee may order immediate removal of the student. Immediate suspension may be imposed by a Principal or designee if they reasonably believe such action is necessary to protect persons or property from imminent harm. At the time of such an emergency removal, the student will be given verbal notice of the reason for the action and appropriate hearings will be scheduled within a reasonable time after the emergency removal.

## **Removal from School Transportation**

A student being transported by Harmony Public Schools' transportation to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity may be removed from a school vehicle for conduct violating the school's established standards for conduct in a school vehicle.

## **Disciplinary Process**

The Principal will designate one staff member as the campus Dean of Student Culture. The Dean of Student Culture will form a Discipline Committee to review decisions regarding student discipline at the request of the Principal. The Discipline Committee may review all offenses under the Code of Conduct and identify positive behavior interventions and supports that can be used to redirect the misbehavior. The Principal will review the

Discipline Committee's recommendation and issue an appropriate consequence. Special rules apply when the Discipline Committee recommends out of school suspension lasting five or more days or expulsion.

## **Conferences, Hearings and Appeals**

All students are entitled to conferences, hearings, and/or appeals of disciplinary matters as provided by state and federal law and school policy.

## **Process for Suspensions Lasting Under Five Days**

Prior to suspending a student for fewer than five days, the Principal or designee must attempt to hold an informal conference with the student to:

1. Notify the student of the accusations against him/her,
2. Allow the student to relate his or her version of the incident, and
3. Determine whether the student's conduct warrants suspension.

If the Principal or designee determines the student's conduct warrants suspension during the school day for fewer than five days, the Principal or designee will make reasonable effort to notify the student's parent(s) that the student has been suspended before the student is sent home. The Principal or designee will notify a suspended student's parent(s) of the period of suspension, the grounds for the suspension, and the time and place for an opportunity to confer with the Principal.

A student shall receive credit for work missed during the period of suspension if the student makes up work missed during the period of suspension within the same number of school days the student was absent on suspension.

## **Process for Out-of-School Suspensions Five Days and Over and Expulsion**

When the Discipline Committee and/or the Principal determine that a student's conduct warrants suspension for five days or more or expulsion, but prior to taking such action, the Principal or designee will provide the student's parent(s) with written notice of:

1. The reasons for the proposed disciplinary action; and
2. The date and location for a hearing before the Principal, within five school days from the date of the recommended disciplinary action.

The notice shall further state that, at the hearing, the student:

1. May be present;
2. Shall have an opportunity to present evidence;
3. Shall be apprised and informed of the school's evidence;
4. May be accompanied by his or her parent(s); and
5. May be represented by an attorney.

The school shall make a good faith effort to inform the student and the student's parent(s) of the time and place for the hearing, and the school shall hold the hearing regardless of whether the student, the student's parent(s) or another adult representing the student attends. The Principal may audio record the hearing.

Within 48 hours or two school days, whichever is later, following the hearing, the Principal will notify the student and the student's parent(s) in writing of his or her decision. The decision shall specify:

1. The length of the suspension or expulsion, if any;
2. The right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Area Superintendent.

The notice shall also state that failure to timely request such a hearing constitutes a waiver of further rights in the matter, and that disciplinary consequences will not be deferred pending the outcome of an appeal of an extended suspension or expulsion decision.

### **Appeal to the Area Superintendent**

The student or his or her parent(s) may appeal an extended suspension or expulsion decision to the Area Superintendent by notifying the Principal in writing within seven calendar days of the date of receipt of the Principal's decision. The Area Superintendent will review the audio or transcribed record from the hearing before the Principal and notify the student and his or her parent(s) of the appeal decision, in writing, within ten calendar days of the date of the appeal.

### **Appeal to the Superintendent of Schools**

The student or his or her parent(s) may appeal the extended suspension or expulsion decision to the Superintendent of Schools by notifying the Area Superintendent in writing within seven calendar days of the date of receipt of the Area Superintendent's decision. The Superintendent of Schools will review the audio or transcribed record from the hearing before the hearing

officer, review the complete file including the Area Superintendent's decision, and notify the student and his or her parent(s) of the appeal decision, in writing, within 10 calendar days of the appeal.

### **Appeal to the Board of Directors**

The student or his or her parent(s) may appeal the extended suspension or expulsion decision to the Board of Directors by notifying the Superintendent in writing within seven calendar days of the date of receipt of the Superintendent's Appeal Decision.

The student or parent will be notified in writing of the date of the meeting at which the Board of Directors will consider the disciplinary consequence.

The Board will review the disciplinary administrative record and any audio recording or transcribed record from the hearing before the Principal and the appeal decisions of the Area Superintendent and the Superintendent of Schools. The matter will be considered during a regular or special called meeting in closed session as permitted by the Texas Open Meetings Act. The student and/or parent and the administration may also present written comments for consideration by the Board of Directors. If the student and/or parent or the administration choose to submit written comments, such comments must be presented no later than seven calendar days before the Board meeting at which the expulsion appeal will be considered.

If, after considering the appeal and the appeal decisions given at the previous levels, and the records from the hearing and written comments submitted for the Board of Directors' consideration, if any, the Board of Directors desires to hear oral presentations the Board of Directors may, at its discretion, require the appearance of the student or parent and administration in a future board meeting. The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall inform the student or parent of the date, time, and location of the meeting and the Board may set a reasonable time limit for oral presentations.

The Board of Directors shall communicate its decision, if any, orally or in writing, at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting after considering the expulsion appeal, provided that if the Board of Directors decides to hear oral presentations the Board of Directors shall communicate its decision, if any, orally or in writing, at any time up to and including the next Board meeting after hearing the oral presentations.

The failure of the Board to act on the expulsion appeal has the effect of upholding the last decision below. The Board may not delegate its authority to issue a decision, and any decision by the Board of Directors is final and may not be appealed. The Board or designee shall inform the student or parent appealing of the Board's decision in writing.

Discipline consequences will not be deferred pending the outcome of an appeal of an expulsion to the Board of Directors.

Except when required by law, students will not earn academic credit during a period of expulsion.

## **Placement of Students with Disabilities**

All disciplinary actions regarding students with disabilities shall be conducted in accordance with the most current federal and state laws.

A student with a disability shall not be excluded from his or her current placement for disciplinary reasons for more than ten days without ARD Committee action to determine appropriate services in the interim and otherwise in accordance with applicable law. If a special education due process appeal to a TEA special education hearing officer is made, the student with a disability shall remain in the then current education setting in place at the time such appeal is noticed to Harmony Public Schools, unless the school and the student's parent(s) agree otherwise.

## **Gun-Free Schools Act**

In accordance with the Gun-Free Schools Act, the school shall expel, from the student's regular program for a period of one year, any student who is determined to have brought a firearm, as defined by federal law, to school. The Principal may modify the term of expulsion for a student or assess another comparable penalty that results in the student's expulsion from the regular school program on a case-by-case basis.

For the purposes of this law, "firearm" means:

- Any weapon – including a starter gun – which will, or is designed to, or which may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive from the frame or receiver of any such weapon;
- Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer;
- 3. Any destructive device.; "Destructive device" means any explosive, incendiary or poison gas

bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than 1/4-ounce, device similar to any of the preceding described devices. It also means any type of weapon – other than a shotgun shell or a shotgun that is generally recognized as particularly suitable for sporting purposes – by whatever name known which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than 1/2 inch in diameter; and any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into a destructive device as described, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

## **Parent Code of Conduct Policy**

At Harmony Public Schools, we strive to maintain a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment for all students, staff, and parents. To ensure a positive school culture and uphold the values of our community, we have established the following Parent Code of Conduct:

### **1. Use of Profanity, Aggression, and Inappropriate Behavior:**

Parents are expected to communicate with school staff, students, and other parents in a respectful and courteous manner. The use of profanity, aggressive behavior, or any other form of inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated.

### **2. Phone/Electronic Devices Policy:**

Parents are requested to refrain from using their phones or electronic devices in a manner that disrupts school activities or interactions. This includes using phones during meetings, events, or interactions with school staff or other parents.

### **3. Yelling and Hostility in Front of Students:**

Parents are expected to model positive behavior for students at all times. Yelling or displaying hostility toward school staff, students, or other parents in front of students is unacceptable and undermines our school's values of respect and civility.

### **4. Appropriate Dress on Campus:**

Parents are encouraged to dress in a manner that is appropriate for a school setting when visiting the campus or attending school events. Clothing that is excessively

revealing, offensive, or disruptive to the learning environment is not permitted.

#### 5. Dismissal Cutoff Time:

Parents are required to adhere to the designated dismissal cutoff time for pick-up/drop-off procedures. Failure to arrive on time may disrupt the dismissal process and cause inconvenience to other parents and students.

#### 6. Reading Emails:

Parents are expected to regularly check and read school-related emails to stay informed about important updates, events, and announcements. Ignorance of communication sent via email is not an excuse for non-compliance with school policies and expectations.

#### 7. Vape Policy:

Vaping or the use of any tobacco or nicotine products is strictly prohibited on school grounds, including by parents. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or legal consequences.

### Consequences of Non-Compliance:

Violation of the Parent Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to verbal warnings, written warnings, and restrictions on access to school premises. Severe or repeated violations may result in further disciplinary measures, including the involvement of law enforcement authorities if necessary.

Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to maintaining a positive and respectful school community at Harmony Public Schools. If you have any questions or concerns about the Parent Code of Conduct, please contact the school administration for assistance.

### Glossary

The glossary provides legal definitions and locally established definitions and is intended to assist in understanding terms related to the Student Code of Conduct.

**Abuse** is improper or excessive use.

**Abusable Volatile Chemical Offense**, as defined by Health and Safety Code § 485.001 and 485.031. No student shall inhale, ingest, apply, use, or possess an abusable volatile chemical with intent to inhale, ingest, apply or use any of these in a manner:

1. Contrary to the directions for use, cautions, or warnings appearing on a label of a container of the chemical; and
2. Designed to affect the central nervous system, create or induce a condition of intoxication, hallucination, or elation, or change, distort, or disturb the person's eyesight, thinking process, balance, or coordination.

No student shall knowingly deliver to a person younger than 18 an abusable volatile chemical. Health and Safety Code § 485.032

No student shall knowingly use or possess with intent to use inhalant paraphernalia to inhale, ingest, or otherwise introduce into the human body an abusable volatile chemical. No student shall knowingly deliver, sell, or possess with intent to deliver or sell inhalant paraphernalia knowing that that person who receives it intends to use it to inhale, ingest, apply, use, or otherwise introduce into the human body an abusable volatile chemical. Health and Safety Code § 485.033

**Armor-piercing ammunition** is handgun ammunition used principally in pistols and revolvers and that is designed primarily for the purpose of penetrating metal or body armor.

**Arson** is defined by Texas Penal Code § 28.02 and occurs when a person starts a fire, regardless of whether the fire continues after ignition, or causes an explosion with intent to destroy or damage:

- Any vegetation, fence, or structure on open-space land; or
- Any building, habitation, or vehicle:
  - o Knowing that it is within the limits of an incorporated city or town,
  - o Knowing that it is insured against damage or destruction,
  - o Knowing that it is subject to a mortgage or other security interest,
  - o Knowing that it is located on property belonging to another,
  - o Knowing that it has located within it property belonging to another, or
  - o When the person starting the fire is reckless about whether the burning or explosion will endanger the life of some individual or the safety of the property of another.

Arson also occurs when a person:

- Recklessly starts a fire or causes an explosion while manufacturing or attempting to manufacture a controlled substance and the fire or explosion damages any building, habitation, or vehicle; or
- Intentionally starts a fire or causes an explosion and in so doing recklessly damages or destroys a building belonging to another, or recklessly causes another person to suffer bodily injury or death.

**Assault** is defined in part by Texas Penal Code § 22.01 as intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury to another.

**Bullying** is defined as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that (1) has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student; (3) materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or the school; or (4) infringes on the rights of the victim at school. Bullying also includes "cyberbullying," which means bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device including a cellular telephone or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool. Bullying conduct includes conduct (1) that occurs on or is delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property; (2) that occurs on a publicly or privately owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of students to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity; and (3) cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity if the cyberbullying (i) interferes with a student's educational opportunities or (ii) substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, Harmony Public Schools, or a school-sponsored or school-related activity.

**Breach of computer security** includes knowingly accessing a computer, computer network, or computer system without the effective consent of the owner as defined in Texas Penal Code 33.02, if the conduct involves accessing a computer, computer network, or computer system owned by or operated on behalf of a public school; and the student knowingly alters, damages, or deletes school property or information; or commits a breach of any other computer, computer network, or computer system.

**Chemical dispensing device** is a device designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of dispensing a substance capable of causing an adverse psychological or physiological effect on a human being.

**Club** is an instrument specially designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death, including but not limited to a blackjack, nightstick, mace, and tomahawk.

**Controlled substances or dangerous drugs** include but are not limited to marijuana; any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, barbiturate; anabolic steroid; or prescription medicine provided to any person other than the person for whom the prescription was written. The term also includes all controlled substances listed in Chapters 481 and 483 of the Texas Health and Safety Code.

**Criminal street gang** means three or more persons having a common identifying sign or symbol or an identifiable leadership who continuously or regularly associate in the commission of criminal activities.

**Dating violence** is the intentional use of physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse by a person to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person with whom the student has or has had a dating relationship, as defined by Texas Family Code § 71.0021.

**Deadly conduct** occurs when a person recklessly engages in conduct that places another in imminent danger of serious bodily injury, and includes, but is not limited to, knowingly discharging a firearm in the direction of an individual, habitation, building, or vehicle.

**Deferred adjudication** is an alternative to seeking a conviction in court that may be offered to a juvenile for delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision.

**Deferred prosecution** may be offered to a juvenile as an alternative to seeking a conviction in court for

delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision.

**Delinquent conduct** is conduct that:

- Violates either state or federal law, other than a traffic offense, and is punishable by imprisonment or confinement in jail;
- Violates a lawful order of a court under circumstances that would constitute contempt of that court in a justice or municipal court, or a county court for conduct punishable only by a fine;
- Constitutes an intoxication and alcoholic beverage offense under Chapter 49 of the Texas Penal Code; or
- Violates Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code § 106.041 relating to driving under the influence of alcohol by a minor (third or subsequent offense).

**Discretionary** means that something is left to or regulated by a local decision maker.

**E-Cigarette or electronic cigarette means** an electronic cigarette or any other device that simulates smoking by using a mechanical heating element, battery, or electronic circuit to deliver nicotine or other substances to the individual inhaling from the device. The term also includes any device that is manufactured, distributed, or sold as an e-cigarette, e-cigar, or e-pipe; a dab pen; a vapor product; or any other similar device under another product name or description. Also included is any component, part, or accessory for the device, regardless of whether the component, part, or accessory is sold separately from the device. The term does not include a prescription medical device unrelated to the cessation of smoking.

**Explosive weapon** is any explosive or incendiary bomb, grenade, rocket, or mine that is designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury, death, or substantial property damage, or for the principal purpose of causing such a loud report as to cause undue public alarm or terror, and includes a device designed, made, or adapted for delivery or shooting an explosive weapon.

**False alarm or report** occurs when a person knowingly initiates, communicates, or circulates a report of a present, past, or future bombing, fire, offense, or other emergency that he or she knows is false or baseless and that would ordinarily:

- Cause action by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
- Place a person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury; or
- Prevent or interrupt the occupation of a building, room, or place of assembly.

**Firearm** is defined by federal law (18 U.S.C. § 921(a)) as:

- Any weapon (including a starter gun) that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
- The frame or receiver of any such weapon;
- Any firearm muffler or firearm weapon; or
- Any destructive device, such as any explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, or grenade.

Such a term does not include an antique firearm.

**Firearm silencer** means any device designed, made, or adapted to muffle the report of a firearm.

**Graffiti** means making marks with paint, an indelible pen or marker, or an etching or engraving device on tangible property without the effective consent of the owner. The markings may include inscriptions, slogans, drawings, or paintings.

**Handgun** is defined by Texas Penal Code § 46.01 as any firearm that is designed, made, or adapted to be fired with one hand.

**Harassment** is:

- Conduct that meets the definition established in Board of Directors policy and/or the Handbook; or
- Conduct that threatens to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, is sexually intimidating or obscene, causes physical damage to the property of another student, subjects another student to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously and substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety.

**Hazing** is an intentional, knowing, or reckless act, occurring on or off campus, by one person alone or acting with others, that is directed against a student for the purpose of pledging, initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization, if the act involves situations outlined in Texas Education Code § 37.151.

**Hit list** is a list of people targeted to be harmed, using a firearm, a knife, or any other object to be used with intent to cause bodily harm.

**Improvised explosive device** is defined by Texas Penal Code § 46.01 as a completed and operational bomb designed to cause serious bodily injury, death, or substantial property damage that is fabricated in an improvised manner using nonmilitary components.

**Indecent Exposure** means exposing one's anus or genitals with intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person while being reckless about whether another is present who will be offended or alarmed by the act.

**Intimate visual material** means visual material that depicts a person (a) with the person's intimate parts exposed; or (b) engaged in sexual conduct.

**Knuckles** means any instrument consisting of finger rings or guards made of a hard substance and designed or adapted for inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with a fist enclosed in the knuckles.

**Location-restricted knife** means a knife with a blade over five and one-half inches.

**Look-alike weapon** means an item that resembles a weapon but is not intended to be used to cause serious bodily injury.

**Machine gun** is any firearm that is capable of shooting more than two shots automatically, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger.

**Mandatory** means that something is obligatory or required because of an authority.

**Online impersonation** occurs when a person, without obtaining the consent of another person and with the intent to harm, defraud, intimidate, or threaten any persons, uses the name or persona of another person to:

- Create a web page on a commercial social networking site or other Internet website; or
- Post or send one or more messages on or through a commercial social networking site or other Internet website, other than on or through an electronic mail program or message board program.

**Online impersonation** also occurs when a person sends an electronic mail, instant message, text message, or similar communication that reference a

name, domain address, phone number, or other item of identifying information belonging to any person:

- Without obtaining the other person's consent;
- With the intent to cause a recipient of the communication to reasonably believe that the other person authorized or transmitted the communication; and
- With the intent to harm or defraud any person.

**Paraphernalia** are devices that can be used for inhaling, ingesting, injecting, or otherwise introducing a controlled substance into a human body. It also includes equipment, products, or materials used or intended for use in planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, converting, producing, processing, preparing, testing, analyzing, packaging, repackaging, storing, containing, or concealing a controlled substance.

**Possession** means to have an item on one's person or in one's personal property, including but not limited to clothing, purse, or backpack; a private vehicle used for transportation to or from school or school-related activities, including, but not limited, to an automobile, truck, motorcycle, or bicycle; or any other school property used by the student, including, but not limited to, a locker or desk.

**Prohibited Weapon** means an explosive weapon; a machine gun; a short-barrel firearm; a firearm silencer; knuckles; armor-piercing ammunition; a chemical dispensing device; a zip gun; an improvised device; a tire deflation device; or a firearm silencer.

**Public school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang** means an organization composed wholly or in part of students that seeks to perpetuate itself by taking additional members from the students enrolled in school based on a decision of its membership rather than on the free choice of a qualified student.

**Public lewdness** occurs when a person knowingly engages in an act of sexual intercourse, deviate sexual intercourse, or sexual contact in a public place or, if not in a public place, is reckless about whether another is present who will be offended or alarmed by the act.

**Reasonable belief** is a determination made by the superintendent or designee using all available information, including the information furnished under Article 15.27 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

**Self-defense** is the use of force against another to the degree a person reasonably believes the force is immediately necessary to protect himself or herself.

**Short-barrel firearm** is a rifle with a barrel length of less than 16 inches or a shotgun with a barrel length of less than 18 inches, or any weapon made from a rifle or shotgun that, as altered, has an overall length of less than 26 inches.

**Switchblade knife** is any knife with a blade that folds, closes, or retracts into the handle or sheath and that opens automatically by pressing a button or by the force of gravity or by the application of centrifugal force. The term does not include a knife that has a spring, detent, or other mechanism designed to create a bias toward closure and that requires exertion applied to the blade by hand, wrist, or arm to overcome the bias toward closure and open the knife.

**Terroristic threat** is a threat of violence to any person or property with intent to:

- Cause a reaction of any type by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
- Place any person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury;
- Prevent or interrupt the occupation or use of a building; room, place of assembly, or place to which the public has access; place of employment or occupation; aircraft, automobile, or other form of conveyance; or other public place;
- Cause impairment or interruption of public communications, public transportation, public water, gas, or power supply or other public service;
- Place the public or a substantial group of the public in fear of serious bodily injury; or
- Influence the conduct or activities of a branch or agency of the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision of the state, or a public charter school (including Harmony Public Schools).

**Tire deflation means** a device, including a caltrop or spike strip, that, when driven over, impedes or stops the movement of a wheeled vehicle by puncturing one or more of the vehicle's tires.

**Title 5 offenses** are those that involve injury to a person and include murder; manslaughter; criminally negligent homicide; trafficking in persons; unlawful transport; kidnapping; assault (on a public servant); aggravated assault; sexual assault; aggravated sexual assault;

unlawful restraint; indecency with a child; injury to a child, an elderly person, or a disabled person; abandoning or endangering a child; deadly conduct; terroristic threat; aiding a person to commit suicide; harassment of a public servant; improper photography; smuggling persons; and tampering with a consumer product.

**Trespassing** means entering or remaining on the property of another (including <<School Name>>) without effective consent of the owner, and the person (1) had notice that the entry was forbidden; or (2) received notice to depart but failed to do so. Trespassing may also include presence on <<School Name>> campus if expelled or suspended.

**Under the influence** means lacking the normal use of mental or physical faculties. Impairment of a person's physical or mental faculties may be evidenced by a pattern of abnormal or erratic behavior, the presence of physical symptoms of drug or alcohol use, or by admission. A student "under the influence" need not be legally intoxicated to trigger disciplinary action.

**Use** means voluntarily introducing into one's body, by any means, a prohibited substance.

**Vapor product** means electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) or any other device that uses a mechanical heating element, battery, or electronic circuit to deliver vapor that may include nicotine to the individual inhaling from the device, or any substance used to fill or refill the device.

**Zip gun** is a device or combination of devices, not originally a firearm, but adapted to expel a projectile through a smooth-bore or rifled-bore barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance.

## **Positive Behavior Reinforcement System**

Harmony Public Schools has adopted a system to recognize and celebrate behavior that is tied to Character Education. Each school will determine 5-character traits/core values of their own. Teachers and administrators may recognize each positive. The recognition and incentives will be adopted by the School Principal.

## **Multi-tiered Systems of Support of Behavior**

Harmony Public Schools strives to give all students a quality education. Our staff will foster a positive student-centered learning environment where each



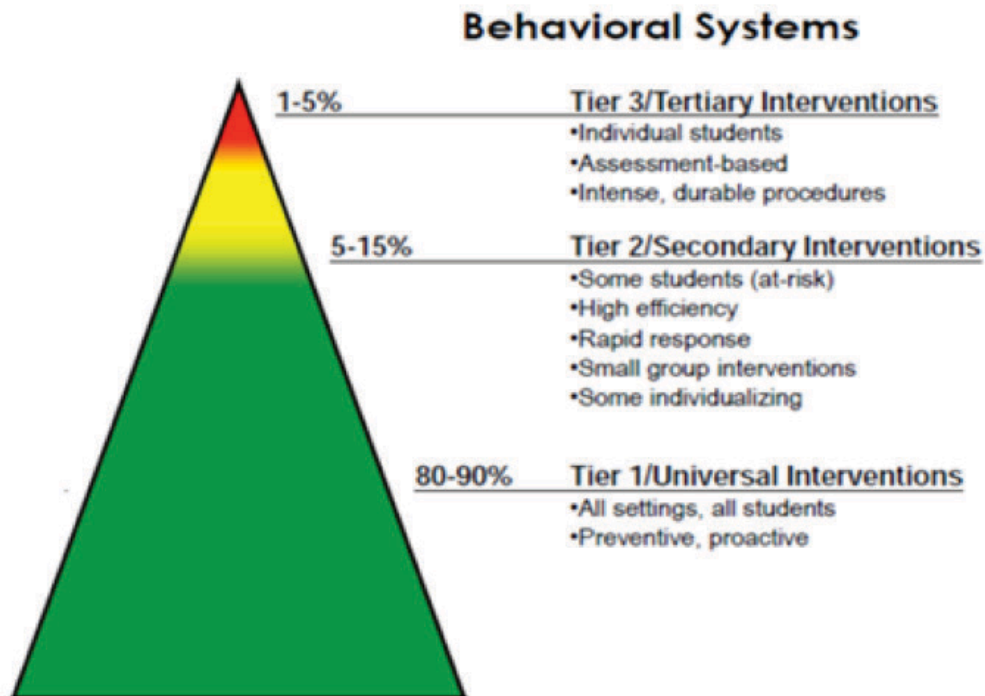
student receives the behavior support needed to be successful. Once the student enrolls, he or she is automatically considered a tier 1 student, which means he or she will receive quality, research-based classroom management.

During the first marking period, the teacher will identify students who show behavior difficulty. The teacher will provide differentiated classroom techniques for struggling students and monitor students' progress. Specifically, the teacher may color code the learners based on data such as but not limited to: written warning, student discipline referrals, parent requests, medical information, attendance/ tardy record, informal/formal observations, et cetera and so forth. Behavioral disabilities can manifest at any age and the Behavior Response to Intervention (BRTI) process

should not be withheld due to the student being young in age. Students may also be placed in a tier by the request of the parent, teacher, or administrator.

In the BRTI process all student behavior will be supported at a specified level. Furthermore, a student is more than the identified tier or level. At no point in the process would we encourage an adult or staff member to merely refer to the student solely by his or her label. This is a support process to help the student to become successful. We do not want the student to internalize any negative messages.

The Administration will lead the school-wide BRTI and observe the classroom to ensure proper school-wide behavior expectations are taking place in alignment with the RTI process.



## Student Engagement & Support

### 1. Extracurricular Activities, Student Clubs & Organizations

Extracurricular Activities: Participation in school activities and student engagement programs provides an opportunity for youth and peers to form a positive connection with the school, its faculty, and values that may be otherwise unavailable. Involving students in extracurricular activities may enhance their connectedness with school, which may lead to positive academic and psychosocial outcomes. School engagement also takes time away from risky opportunities, provides learning in constructive activities, and increases the possibility to establish positive social networks.

Extracurricular activities are school sponsored or non-school sponsored such as UIL and 4H. These activities may or may not be an extension of the classroom curriculum but must meet the stated criteria developed to meet the HPS Philosophy and Mission Statement.

All extracurricular activities are centered on the goals of developing the character for each student involved. Each sponsor/coach orients students and parents about their particular activity. The sponsor/coach provides each participant with a permission slip and a participation agreement to be signed by both student and parent.

Student Clubs: Below you will find a comprehensive list of all major rules and regulations that clubs and club leaders are expected to abide by. For more information please refer to the HPS Student Clubs & Organizations Handbook.

- Students may not independently submit a student club proposal. If a student wishes to form a new club that does not already exist on campus, the student must find a faculty member willing and able to serve as the club advisor.
- Students who have failing grades are not eligible to participate in student clubs & organizations without Campus Engagement and Support Coordinator's written permission.
- Students should submit a membership application to join an existing student club.
- Students should return a signed Parent/Guardian Club Consent Form to the club advisor before participating in any club or activity.
- Students may not participate in more than two clubs unless the Campus Engagement and Support Coordinator gives written permission.

- Students must abide by the Student Code of Conduct while participating in any student club or activity.
- Students must abide by Harmony and campus rules.
- Students who have lost privileges to participate in extra-curricular activities effective immediately upon disciplinary action without refund.
- Students must maintain the attendance rate stipulated in the club's syllabus.
- Students must notify the club advisor in advance of any absence or tardy and include the reason.
- Club attendance is subject to a need for academic tutorials, or academic concerns. Students must provide a teacher note to be excused for academic needs.
- All club students must attend all competitions in order to maintain participation in the club if the club is competition based.
- School attendance on club meetings, activity, or competition days is required in order to participate in those events.

### 2. Student Mentoring Programs

Mentoring, in the center, ensures the young generation that they are not alone, gives them the confidence to deal with the obstacles, and to empower them in that matter. It is proven that this help creates a connection that has beneficial outcomes for young people.

#### • The College Readiness & Leadership Program (CRLP)

CRLP is a mentorship program designed to model academic and social skills that will prepare HPS students for success in higher education. Skills modeled for and expected of CRLP participants include:

Personal and Academic Development

- Voluntary Public Service
- Expedition and Exploration, and
- Physical Fitness

These skills, which are also highlighted in the United States Congress' Congressional Award program, are recognized by Harmony's CRLP as vital to the real-world experiences Harmony students will encounter once they leave high school.

The mentoring program goals include:

- Improved academic performance (usually defined through grades or standard test scores)
- Improved relations with peers, teachers, and other school personnel
- Increased exploration of, or acceptance to, secondary education opportunities
- Improved job placement or career exploration

A student selection procedure should apply based on the College Readiness & Leadership Program (CRLP) handbook.

Not all Harmony campus principals will choose to offer a CRLP. However, CRLP membership is open to all middle and high school students at campuses where the program is offered where the program may be offered to one or a combination of grade levels, according to local needs, conditions, or traditions.

Any student attending a Harmony school for at least one full academic year may apply to the CRLP if the program is being offered at his or her campus. A student who has successfully completed the CRLP the previous school year will be, upon reapplication, admitted for the following year. The CRLP Advisory Committee oversees the admission process according to procedure highlighted in CRLP handbook criteria and will select new applicants.

Students admitted to the CRLP program are required to attend regular weekly, monthly, yearly meetings and activities with their mentor(s). For more information about the College Readiness & Leadership Program (CRLP), please refer to the HPS CRLP Handbook.

#### **4. Summer Leadership STEM Camps**

Harmony Public Schools offers summer learning opportunities for students to try and learn new things, and build social skills that last forever.

For middle schools, HPS provides various enrichment activities such as aquatic study, archery, canoeing, geocaching, geology, trail of painted ponies, owl science, wilderness survival, writing in nature, reading time, art classes, and character-building opportunities. Guest speakers are invited to introduce different academic and social contents.

For high schools, HPS provides academic, leadership and social based activities such as 3D Animations using Alice, Java and C++ Programming, Cyber Security, Mobile Apps using MIT App Inventor, Drawings using JavaScript, SAT/PSAT Prep, Hands-on with Robots, basketball, soccer, leadership talk series etc... For more information, please see your campus' Engagement and Support Coordinator.

#### **5. Educational Trips and Study Abroad Programs**

With Harmony Public Schools' Study Abroad programs, high school students have the incredible opportunity to see the world and increase their global awareness.

Traveling abroad can have beneficial outcomes to students who get the privilege. It gives them a different perspective and a better understanding of history. It shows diversity, differences in languages and gives people insight to the rest of the world around them.

Harmony Public Schools facilitates study abroad programs operated by third party organizations, however supervised by HPS teachers. The following rules apply to educational trips and study abroad programs:

- All school rules are in effect during educational trips and study abroad programs. Misconduct will be handled through the school's regular disciplinary process.
- The school administration will determine the number of sponsors necessary.
- A student must have written permission from the parent to participate.
- Clothing worn is at the discretion of the school administration. Students must wear modest swimwear on all trips that involve water activities. For example, boys are expected to wear knee-length, properly fitting swim trunks, and girls are expected to wear one-piece bathing suits.
- It is the student's responsibility to obtain and complete all assignments before the trip commences.
- Students with excessive absences, academic, or behavioral problems may be required to remain on campus.
- For transportation, please refer to the "General Information" section of the handbook.
- For field trips, please refer to the "General Information" section of the handbook.

#### **6. Educational Trips and Study Abroad Cancellation Policy**

This trip policy applies to all trips, trips for athletics and artistic competitions, leadership trips, etc. Once parents have signed up their children to the educational trip or study abroad program, the parents assume full responsibility for all payments due on the trip including timely payment of deposit and installments. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the trip sponsor and/or the campus in writing if the student is being removed from the trip or is unable to attend the trip for any reason. Because the school will have already secured group travel arrangements based on the parents' commitment, the parents will forfeit all funds paid to date

for the trip. Further, all unpaid funds will be due from the parent unless another student is able to be substituted. In the event of an entire trip cancellation, HPS Board policy will be followed.

## **7. Performing Arts**

The performing arts program helps to enrich students' performing arts skills, their understanding and celebration of diversity and the community they are a part of. Harmony Public Schools offers folk dance, singing and glee clubs for students. Students can engage in their chosen field. These activities or clubs are very important for students' long-term social, emotional and cognitive development.

Students enrolled in the dance and music clubs have the opportunities to join the stage performances and competitions in HPS campuses, national and international festivals.

## **Parent Engagement & Support**

Education is at its best when all stakeholders involved share a common vision and passion to see students thrive in and out of the classroom. Families, teachers and school staff all play vital roles to ensure excellence in education within the Harmony Public Schools system. HPS believes creating partnerships between school, home and community to increase student success is essential to the whole child education approach. Parental involvement helps;

- to motivate students to more positive behavior, better academic performance
- to decrease in discipline problems, decrease in parenting stress,
- to increase in social support, self-efficacy, child oral health practices, and healthy feeding practices in preschool and elementary level.
- to increase in student attendance
- parents to become a part of the school environment.
- parents become more involved and informed.

Leung, Tsang, & Heung, 2015; Stetson, Stetson, Sinclair, & Nix, 2012

### **1. Parent Teacher Home Visit Project**

To ensure our students received the wrap-around support needed for their success, Harmony Public Schools launched its Home Visit Program nearly a decade ago. The program is designed to build unity and trust between families and Harmony staff, giving teachers and parents the insight into student

development needed to provide students educational support.

Building a relationship is the main purpose of the home visit in our engagement & support system. Our staff focus on a student's interests, needs and his/her hopes and dreams as well as their academic and social progress and needs during a first visit.

Also, we visit to inform parents and give them a big picture of their children that shows where the children are and where they should be academically and socially.

According to research on teachers' perspective on home visits;

- 84% said home visits positively affected their relationship with parents
- 84% said home visits positively affected their relationship with student
- 75% reported improvement in student's classroom behavior after home visits
- 76% reported improved student work habits as a result of home visits
- 78% reported improved student academic achievement as a result of home visits\*

\* Survey by Ranae Stetson, Elton Stetson, Becky Sinclair, & Karen Nix

### **2. HPS Parent Volunteer Program**

Harmony Public Schools is committed to building community by engaging and equipping families and stakeholders to be our students' strongest supporters. Volunteering in a school is an experience and a privilege for both the school and the volunteer. It is designed to promote and maintain a supportive relationship with the students, teachers, and school staff.

By providing a quick, easy way for people to find volunteer opportunities, HPS will increase the strength of not only your child's school but the community surrounding it. Harmony Partners in Education which helps parents and schools to easily identify and register for volunteer hours. There are many volunteer opportunities available at your campus, some of the ways you can help: monitor playground/cafeteria, chaperone field trips, tutor students, read aloud to students, assist with dismissal, be a judge for school/district science fair, and many more.

Parents and community member may become a volunteer at HPS with four easy steps:

1. Create account at the school website
2. Fill out background check application form
3. Complete online orientation
4. Sign up for an opportunity and come on board!

### 3. Parent Activities

Parent engagement in schools is defined as parents and school staff working together to support and improve the learning, development, and health of children and adolescents. We believe parents play a significant role in supporting their children's education, guiding their children successfully through school processes, and advocating for their children and for the effectiveness of schools.

Harmony Public Schools organizes events to make a positive connection with parents and provides a variety of activities and frequent opportunities to fully engage parents including school picnics, back to school BBQs, parenting workshops, academic nights, family science fairs, in and out-of-state trips, coffee with the principal, muffins with moms, donuts with dads, cookies with grandparents, family board game nights, HPS Parent Academy, monthly learning night, career days, talent shows and many more.

### 4. HPS Parent Academy

HPS Parent Academy is an important initiative designed to strengthen school, home, and community partnerships that equip families with the necessary tools to be strong advocates at home and in their communities. Families have the opportunity to learn about various tools and skills they need in order to support their family and students on the road to college and beyond.

Through a series of workshops and videos designated to refine specific student support skill sets, HPS Parent Academy participants will acquire knowledge to enhance their role as a student advocate within the learning community. For more information, please contact your campus engagement coordinator.

## College and Career Success (CCS) Programs

CCS program mission is to build a strong and sustainable college and career bound atmosphere throughout our schools by connecting HPS seniors with HPS alumni and increasing their career, leadership, social and emotional readiness for their college and career. Program vision is to raise responsible, caring,

and productive citizens who are college, career, and life ready.

### College and Career Success Program Goals Are:

- To build a sustainable college bound school culture that promotes the importance of higher education by linking seniors with successful alumni college goers.
- To create a smooth transition from high school to college for seniors by providing engagement and networking opportunities with campus alumni.
- To help and support alumni to increase campus college enrollment and completion rates.
- To foster a network of successful alumni whom future alumni and students will be able to access and depend on.

### Major Program Areas

- College Transition
- Curriculum
- Mentoring
- Scholarships

#### A. College Transition Programs

The College Transition Program is designed to link graduating Harmony seniors to current college attendees, bridging the educational achievement gap among underserved communities statewide. Major programs and their yearly timeline are as follows:

##### 1. Seniors-Alumni College Networking Event (Dec-Jan)

Senior-Alumni college networking events are great opportunities for seniors to receive information about the college experience and build lifelong relationships with current alumni college students.

##### 2. Senior College Transition Events (Jan-May)

These events are offered to all seniors during the month of April and May in their senior year to help finalize their college decisions and meet with other Harmony seniors who are most likely going to be their college classmates as an additional support.

- Individual college transition advising
- Pre-college orientation by Harmony Alumni Student Organizations (HASO)
- Senior-Alumni college networking event College transition events, workshops and seminars for seniors
- College panel
-

### **3. Summer Melt Prevention (Jun-Aug)**

Summer Melt refers to the difference between the number of college-intending high school graduates and the number of students who enroll in any post-secondary educational program the fall following graduation. Harmony implements following strategies suggested by Harvard University.

- Continuing college advising to seniors over the summer
- Sending reminders through social media and text messaging
- Connecting seniors with alumni opportunities
- Organizing summer bridge programs
- Following a college enrollment checklist with seniors

### **4. Fall College Check-Ins (Sep-Oct right after Harmony graduation)**

Purpose of college check-ins is to visit recent high school graduates on college campuses to check how they are transitioning and adjusting to their colleges.

- Visit incoming freshmen in college to ensure enrollment
- Connect incoming freshmen with Harmony alumni in their college
- Frequent involvement with Harmony alumni college student organizations to increase their self-efficacy and motivation.

As our students said: “We leave Harmony, but Harmony never leaves you.”

### **B. College and Career Success (CCS) curriculum**

All students deserve academic and social support to help prepare them for the challenges they must face after high school graduation. The College and Career Success course is designed to help students focus on developing the habits and skills that are expected in college study and the workforce and continue to develop social/emotional, personal/interpersonal and cognitive skills that are essential to productivity in both the collegiate and business worlds.

### **C. College and Career Success (CCS) Mentoring program**

Harmony mentoring program aims to pair HPS seniors with HPS alumni mentors from similar backgrounds who

will help them navigate the college application, admission, transition and teach real life skills on how to succeed in college.

### **D. Scholarships**

Harmony Public School believes that our role in a student’s life doesn’t end upon high school graduation. It is our hope that we can continue assisting them through college and life through appropriate resources and support. There are two scholarship available

- Harmony Education Foundation Scholarships
- College Leaders Scholarship by Harmony Public Schools

For more information, students and parents can visit [www.alumni.harmonytexas.org](http://www.alumni.harmonytexas.org).

## **Especially for Parent**

### **Surveys and Activities**

Students will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation – funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education – that concerns:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent(s).
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
3. Sexual behavior or attitudes.
4. Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior.
5. Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship.
6. Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians and ministers.
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents.
8. Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student's eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

Parents will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis or evaluation.

### **“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities**

Parents have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for their child's participation in:

1. Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
2. School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing or selling that information.
3. Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law.

### **Notification of Teacher Qualification**

Harmony Public Schools will provide parents with the qualifications of each teacher employed by the school. Parents may also request, and Harmony will provide in a timely manner information regarding the professional qualifications of their student's classroom teachers, to include:

1. Whether the student's teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. Whether the student's teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
3. Whether the student's teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher; and
4. Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

### **Communication**

Communication between parents and school staff is a key component of student success. Parents are responsible for notifying the school of any change of address, telephone number, or e-mail address. Parents may contact school staff by using several methods, including:

Calling a teacher's extension during school hours (8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.). Teacher phone extensions are available at the front desk. If the teacher is conducting class, please leave a voice message. The teacher will respond as soon as possible.

Sending an email to teachers. Teacher email addresses are available at the front desk.

Checking a student's progress and conduct on-line by viewing the school website and logging into your child's database account.

Checking the weekly mail envelope, and signing and returning included documents and having your student timely return them to their homeroom teacher.

Checking the “Letters and Messages to Parents” board in the front office.

Checking the school marquee in front of the school, if available.

### **Classroom Visit or Observation**

To meet with school personnel, please make an appointment ahead of time by contacting the staff member directly. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher, and such visits are not permitted if the duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment. Observers in classrooms are limited to no more than one hour unless the principal approves an extended classroom observation. All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted. Trespassing on school premises is strictly prohibited in

accordance with Section 37.107 of the Texas Education Code.

## **Accommodations for Children of Military Families**

Children of military families will be provided flexibility regarding certain school requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements;
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement;
- Eligibility requirements for participating in extracurricular activities; and
- Graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parents, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment of at least four months will be excused by Harmony Public Schools. The school will permit no more than five excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment.

## **Parent and Student Complaints and Concerns**

### **Informal Conferences**

Parents and students are encouraged to discuss their concerns through informal conferences with the appropriate teacher, principal, or other appropriate campus administrator. If the parent or student is not satisfied with the results of the informal conference, he or she may submit a written grievance form pursuant to applicable Board policy. Parents and students should make their concerns known as soon as possible, and attempt to reach an informal resolution within five school days from the time the parent or student knew or should have known of the event(s) giving rise to the complaint.

### **Formal Process**

The formal complaint process provides parents and students an opportunity to be heard up to the Board of Directors if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response.

Complaints must be submitted in writing on a form provided by the school. Copies of documents that support the complaint shall be attached to the complaint

form or presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted unless their existence was unknown to the complainant before the Level One conference. A complaint that is incomplete may be dismissed.

A parent or student should not submit separate or serial complaints regarding the same event or action; multiple complaints may be consolidated at the school's discretion. All time limits shall be strictly complied with; however, if an administrator determines that additional time is needed to complete a thorough investigation of the complaint and/or to issue a response, the administrator shall inform the parent or student in writing of the need to extend the response time and provide a specific date by which the response will be issued. Costs of any complaint to a parent or student shall be paid by the parent or student.

For purposes of the formal complaint process, "days" shall mean school business days, and announcement of a decision in the student or parent's presence shall constitute communication of the decision.

### **Level One**

The student or parent shall request, in writing, a conference with the Principal or designee within the later of (1) five days from the time the event(s) causing the complaint were or should have been known, or (2) within five days following an informal conference with the Principal or designee. Harmony Public Schools reserves the right to require the complaint to begin at Level Two or Level Three, depending on the nature of the complaint or the requested relief.

The Principal or designee will schedule a Level One conference with the complaining parent or student within ten days after receiving the Level One complaint. Following this conference, the Principal shall have ten days to issue a written Level One decision.

**Note:** A complaint against an Area Superintendent shall begin at Level Three, and a complaint against the Superintendent shall begin at Level Four.

### **Level Two**

If the student or parents are not satisfied with the Level One decision, or if no decision is provided within the appropriate timeline, the student or parent may request in writing a conference with the Area Superintendent or designee. The request must include a signed statement of the complaint, any evidence supporting the complaint,



and the date and results of the conference with the Principal. The request must be filed within ten school days of the Level One decision or the response deadline if no decision is made.

The Area Superintendent or designee shall hold a conference within ten school days of the request. The Area Superintendent or designee shall have ten school days following the conference to issue a Level Two decision and to provide a written Level Two decision.

### **Level Three**

If the student or parent is not satisfied with the Level Two decision, or if no decision is provided within the appropriate timeline, the student or parent may request in writing a conference with the Superintendent of Schools or designee. The request must include the documentation submitted to Area Superintendent or designee, and the date and results of the Level Two conference. The request must be filed within ten days of the Level Two decision or the response deadline if no decision is made.

The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall hold a conference within ten days of the request. The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall have ten days following the conference to issue a written Level Three decision.

### **Level Four**

If the student or parent is not satisfied with the Level Three decision, or if no timely decision is provided, the student or parent may submit to the Superintendent of Schools or designee in writing an appeal to the Board of Directors. The request must be filed within ten days of the Level Three decision or the response deadline if no decision is made.

The appeal will be placed on the agenda of a future Board meeting. The student or parent will be notified in writing of the date, time, and location of the meeting at which the Board of Directors will consider the student or parent complaint.

The Board of Directors shall consider the student or parent complaint based on the written documentation previously submitted by the student or parent and administration. Additionally, the student, parent, and/or the administration may present written comments for consideration by the Board of Directors. If the student, parent, and/or the administration choose to submit written comments such comments must be presented no

later than seven calendar days before the Board meeting at which the complaint will be considered by the Board of Directors.

If, after considering the complaint and the written documentation previously submitted and written comments submitted for the Board of Directors' consideration, if any, the Board of Directors desires to hear an oral presentation the Board of Directors may, at its discretion, require the appearance of the student or parent and administration in a future board meeting. The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall inform the student or parent of the date, time, and location of the meeting and the Board may set a reasonable time limit for oral presentations.

The Board of Directors shall communicate its decision, if any, orally or in writing, at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting after considering the complaint, provided that if the Board of Directors decides to hear oral presentations the Board of Directors shall communicate its decision, if any, orally or in writing, at any time up to and including the next Board meeting after hearing the oral presentations. If no decision is made by the end of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, the last decision below shall be upheld. The Board of Directors may not delegate its authority to issue a decision, and any decision by the Board of Directors is final and may not be appealed. The Board of Directors or designee shall inform the student or parent complaining of the Board's decision in writing.

If the complaint involves concerns or charges regarding a student or Harmony employee, it shall be heard by the Board of Directors in closed meeting unless the employee to whom the complaint pertains requests that it be heard in public.

## **Additional Complaint Procedures**

This Parent and Student Complaints and Concerns Process does not apply to all complaints:

1. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, gender, national origin, disability, or religion shall be submitted in accordance with Board Policy PG-3.41 (discussing procedures for reporting prohibited conduct).
2. Complaints concerning retaliation related to discrimination and harassment shall be submitted in accordance with Board Policy PG-3.41 (discussing procedures for reporting prohibited conduct).

3. Complaints concerning bullying or retaliation related to bullying shall be submitted in accordance with “Freedom from Bullying and Cyberbullying,” see page 39.
4. For complaints concerning loss of credit on the basis of attendance, see page 14.
5. For complaints concerning disciplinary expulsions, see page 67.
6. Complaints concerning identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability within the scope of Section 504, shall be submitted in accordance with Board Policy PG-3.30 (Parent and Student Complaints and Grievances), subject to the time limitations referenced in Board Policy PG-3.11 (Equal Educational Opportunity) and the procedural safeguards handbook. In accordance with PG-3.11 (Equal Educational Opportunity), Level One complaints concerning identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability within the scope of Section 504 shall be filed within fifteen (15) school days of the time the event(s) causing the complaint were or should have been known.
7. Complaints concerning identification, evaluation, educational placement, or discipline of a student with a disability within the scope of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act shall be submitted in accordance with Board Policy 3.26 (Student Discipline: Students with Disabilities) and the procedural safeguards provided to parents of all students referred to special education.
8. For complaints regarding the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program, see Board Policy 3.30.

### **Annual Notice of Parent and Student Rights (Annual FERPA Confidentiality Notice)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s educational records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education record within 45 days after the day Harmony Public Schools receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child’s or their education records should submit to the Principal a written request that identifies the records they

wish to inspect. The Principal or designee will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask Harmony Public Schools to amend their child’s or their education record should write to the Principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If Harmony Public Schools decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, Harmony Public Schools will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before Harmony Public Schools discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A “school official” is:

- A person employed by Harmony Public Schools as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel);
- A person serving on the Board of Directors;
- A volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by Harmony Public Schools, performs an institutional service or function for which Harmony Public Schools would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of Harmony Public Schools with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or providers of video conferencing or other virtual learning software apps to hold classes or conduct

instructional activities virtually;

- A parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or
- A parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, Harmony Public Schools discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Harmony Public Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Student Privacy Policy Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20202

#### **Disclosure of PII without Consent**

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires Harmony Public Schools to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures.

Harmony Public Schools may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom Harmony Public Schools has determined

to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom Harmony Public Schools has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided applicable requirements are met.

- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, provided applicable requirements are met.
- To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the Texas Education Agency. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of the FERPA regulations, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met.
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, provided applicable requirements are met.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop,

validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, under certain conditions.

- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, under certain conditions.
- Information Harmony Public Schools has designated as “directory information” if applicable requirements are met.
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student’s case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement.
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions.

## Notice of Directory Information

FERPA, a federal law, requires that Harmony Public Schools, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child’s education records. However, Harmony Public Schools may disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without written consent, unless you have advised Harmony Public Schools to the contrary in accordance with school procedures.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of

privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organization’s prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks, or other organizations with which Harmony Public Schools has a contractual relationship to perform services related to the school’s educational mission. Additionally, certain federal laws require Harmony Public Schools to provide basic student contact information for secondary students to military and college recruiters, upon request, unless parents or eligible students have advised Harmony Public Schools that they do not want the student’s information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want Harmony Public Schools to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you must notify Harmony Public Schools in writing by completing and returning the “FERPA Directory Information Opt-Out Form” that follows this notice.

Harmony Public Schools has designated four categories of student information as directory information; these categories are:

*Category One:* Directory Information for School-Related Purposes

Harmony Public Schools has designated the following information as directory information for school-related purposes:

- Student name, address, and telephone listing
- Student email address
- Student date and place of birth
- Student photograph (including video images)
- Honors and awards received
- Dates of attendance in Harmony Public Schools
- Most recent educational institution attended in the Harmony Public Schools system
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams

School-related purposes are those events/activities that Harmony Public Schools conducts and/or sponsors to support the school’s mission. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Publication related to extracurricular programs or events (e.g., playbills or programs for events like school plays, concerts, athletic events, graduation ceremonies, etc.).
- Publication related to school activities (e.g., printing student names and pictures in newsletters and yearbooks, etc.), including sharing directory information with companies who have a contractual relationship with Harmony Public Schools such as class ring manufacturers, class picture photographers, and yearbook publishers.
- Publication of honor rolls and other student recognition lists.
- Marketing materials of Harmony Public Schools, for example, using directory information for print media, websites operated by Harmony Public Schools or its teachers, social media accounts operated by Harmony Public Schools or its teachers for class social media accounts, video marketing materials, newspaper articles, etc.

**Category Two:** Directory Information Supplied to Military and College Recruiters (Secondary Students Only)

Two federal laws require Harmony Public Schools to provide military recruiters or an institution of higher education, upon request, with access to the name, address, and telephone listing of each secondary student served by Harmony Public Schools, unless parents have advised Harmony Public Schools that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

Harmony Public Schools will also provide military or college recruiters with a student's email address, upon request.

**Category Three:** Directory Information Supplied to Other School Systems

Harmony Public Schools may release the following information to another Texas public school that has adopted a student directory information policy authorizing Harmony Public Schools to access student directories:

- Student name and address
- Honors and awards received
- Grade level

**Category Four:** Directory Information for Online / Distance Learning Partners

Harmony Public Schools may release the following information to providers of online education services used for classroom instruction and/or for distance learning as needed to set up student accounts:

- Student name
- Student email address issued by Harmony Public Schools

IF YOU DO NOT WANT HARMONY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO DISCLOSE ANY OR ALL OF THE TYPES OF INFORMATION DESIGNATED ABOVE AS DIRECTORY INFORMATION FROM YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION RECORDS WITHOUT YOUR PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT, YOU MUST NOTIFY HARMONY PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN WRITING WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER RECEIVING THIS "NOTICE OF PARENT AND STUDENT RIGHTS (ANNUAL FERPA CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE)."

## **Student Acceptable Use Policy**

Harmony Public Schools is committed to utilizing the maximum potential of technology to enhance student learning and increase teacher effectiveness by providing students with technology-related experiences. Recognizing the ever-changing influences of technology on all aspects of our lives, the school is dedicated to providing an integrated technological curriculum for all students and staff members. Students will have access to the technology necessary to produce, manage, communicate and retrieve information in an efficient manner for educational use. In the attainment of both present and future goals, the school will provide a continually evolving staff development program oriented toward the integration of technology in areas of curriculum.

This Student Acceptable Use Policy ("Policy") sets forth the guidelines governing the use of all Harmony Public Schools' technology resources by students while on or near school property, in school vehicles and at school-sponsored activities on- or off-campus, as well as the use of all Harmony Public Schools' technology resources via off-campus remote access.

Harmony Public Schools reserves the right to modify the terms and conditions of this Policy at any time.

## ***Introduction***

Harmony Public Schools is pleased to offer students access to school computers, communications systems, the Internet and a wide array of other technology resources to promote educational excellence and enhance the classroom experience. Technology can expand a student's access to educational materials, prepare students by providing workforce skills and college readiness, and lead to personal growth. Harmony Public Schools recognizes, however, that access to technology must be given with clear guidelines, expectations, and supervision to protect students. This policy is designed to make parents, teachers and administrators partners to teach students how to be responsible users of technology.

Harmony Public Schools will educate all students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

Harmony Public Schools will hold ALL students responsible for their use of technology, whether school-provided or personal, and they are expected to act in an appropriate manner in accordance with campus procedures, school policy and procedures, and legal requirements. This applies to the use of all Harmony Public Schools' technology resources by students while on or near school property, in school vehicles and at school-sponsored activities on-or off-campus, as well as the use of all Harmony Public Schools' technology resources via off-campus remote access.

This Policy shall be used in conjunction with the Student Code of Conduct.

## ***Using the Internet and Communications Systems***

Harmony Public Schools provides technology resources to students for the express purposes of conducting research, completing assignments, and communicating to the faculty, staff, and others to complement their educational experience. Just as students must demonstrate proper behavior in a classroom or school hallway, they must also behave appropriately when using the school's computer networks, personal electronic devices, personal device data plans, software or websites sanctioned or used by Harmony Public Schools, and any personal technology used in an educational setting. Access to Harmony Public Schools' technology is a privilege, not a right. Students must comply with all standards set forth in this Policy at all

times in order to maintain the privilege of using its technology resources.

Students and their parents are advised that any information stored on and/or sent through the school's technology resources is the property of Harmony Public Schools. Accordingly, in connection with ensuring student safety, the school's network administrators and/or other appropriate personnel will engage in periodic reviews and searches of stored files and communications stored on the school's technology resources to maintain system integrity and ensure that students are complying with this Policy and using technology in a responsible and appropriate manner. Such reviews will include students' use of school-approved educational websites or software to ensure that they are using it in an appropriate manner consistent with Harmony Public Schools' expectations for such use. Students do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy over any information stored on school technology.

Harmony Public Schools may allow students to bring personal technology devices (i.e., tablets, e-readers, smartphones) for use during the school day for authorized curricular purposes. Students that use personal technology devices will be required to comply with all aspects of the Policy and/or Student Code of Conduct in the use of such devices at school. A student's personal technology device may be subject to search by campus administrators in connection with determining if a student has committed a violation of this Policy and/or the Student Code of Conduct.

Harmony Public Schools remains committed to integrating technology to enhance its curriculum for students, which it believes increases students' educational experience for them and allows for better preparation for job skills and college success. Access to the Internet enables students to use extensive online libraries, databases and websites selected by the school for use in instruction.

Although Harmony Public Schools strives to ensure that any Internet access avoids any inappropriate material, students and their families should be aware that some material accessible on the Internet may contain information that is inaccurate, profane, sexually oriented, defamatory and potentially offensive to some. Harmony Public Schools does not condone any student accessing, or attempting to access, such material, and it remains deeply committed to safe Internet use. Harmony

Public Schools takes steps to minimize students' opportunities to do so, including the implementation of extensive content-filtering software. This software is not fail-safe, however, and while at school, Harmony Public Schools strives to ensure that students' Internet use is supervised, it is possible that the software may miss some content, or students may find a way around the software to access inappropriate material. For this reason, this Policy is strictly enforced, and students who misuse any school technology outside its intended purpose, including the use of school-recommended websites for purposes outside the educational intent, will be in violation of this Policy, which may lead to disciplinary consequences for the student.

With this in mind, Harmony Public Schools still believes that the benefits of allowing student access to the Internet to enhance the educational experience outweighs any potential harm to students.

### ***Proper and Acceptable Use of All Technology Resources***

Harmony Public Schools requires students to use all technology resources, including any websites or software used in the classroom, in a manner consistent with the following rules. Harmony Public Schools will hold students responsible for any intentional misuse of its technology resources, or any other failure to comply with the rules in this Policy. When using the school's technology system(s) outside the school, parents should strive to ensure that students do so in compliance with the rules set forth in this Policy, as Harmony Public Schools is unable to supervise students' technology use at home. The school's content-filtering software will not work in a student's home, so parents are encouraged to place content-filtering software on their home computers or take any other steps necessary to monitor students' Internet usage at home.

Students, who unintentionally access inappropriate material in connection with their use of any school technology, including websites and software used in the classroom, shall immediately stop accessing the material and report it to a supervising adult. Harmony Public Schools shall take immediate steps to ensure such material is blocked from further view at school by its content-filtering software.

All school technology resources, including but not limited to school computers, communications systems and the Internet, including any websites or software used in the

classroom, must be used in support of education and academic research and in accordance with the rules set forth in this Policy.

Activities that are permitted and encouraged include the following:

- School work and assignments;
- Original creation and presentation of academic work;
- Research on topics being discussed in classes at school;
- Research for opportunities outside of school related to community service, employment or further education;
- Reporting inappropriate content or harassing conduct to an adult.

Activities that are barred and subject to potential disciplinary action and loss of privileges, whether on a school-provided or personal electronic device, include the following:

- Attempting unauthorized access, or "hacking," of the school's computers or networks, or any attempts to bypass Internet content-filtering software used by Harmony Public Schools.
- Effecting security breaches or disruptions of network communication. Security breaches include, but are not limited to, accessing data of which the student is not an intended recipient or logging into a server or account that the student is not expressly authorized to access. For purposes of the section, "disruption" includes, but is not limited to, network sniffing, pinged floods, packet spoofing, denial of service, forged routing information for malicious purpose, and any other form of network monitoring designed to intercept data not intended for the student's host.
- Engaging in abusive, harassing, insulting, ostracizing, intimidating, or any other online conduct which could be considered bullying and/or damaging to another's reputation while using any school technology resource, to include the use of any website or software used by the school.
- Engaging in any conduct that damages or modifies, or is intended to damage or modify, any Harmony Public Schools' equipment, network, stored computer file, or software, to include any conduct that results in a person's time to take any corrective action.
- Exporting software, technical information, encryption software or technology, in violation of international or regional export control logs.

- Intentional or neglectful transmission or direct placement of computer viruses or other unauthorized programs onto school equipment, networks, stored computer files, or software.
- Interfering with or denying service to any other use or than the student's host (for example, denial of service attack).
- Participating in online chat rooms or using instant and/or text messaging without prior approval by a classroom teacher, coach or administrator.
- Port scanning or security scanning.
- Presenting any copyrighted, registered, or trademarked work as that of the student.
- Refusing to submit to a search of a personal electronic device in accordance with the Student Acceptable Use Policy and Student Code of Conduct.
- Searching, viewing, communicating, publishing, downloading, storing, or retrieving any inappropriate or offensive material, including but not limited to obscene, profane, vulgar, or pornographic materials, or any material that is not related to the permitted activities set forth above.
- Sharing online any personal information of another student or staff member, including name, home address, or phone number.
- Taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as "sexting."
- Tampering with, removing components from, or otherwise deliberately interfering with the operation of the school's computers, networks, printers, user files, or other associated peripherals.
- Unauthorized copying of copyrighted material including, but not limited to, digitization and distribution of photographs from magazines, books, or other copyrighted sources, copyrighted music, and the installation of any copyrighted software for which Harmony Public Schools or the end user does not have an active license.
- Using a website or software program implemented by Harmony Public Schools in a manner outside the scope of the use specified by the classroom teacher, coach or administrator.
- Using any programs/script/command, or sending messages of any kind, with the intent to interfere with, or disable, a user's terminal session, by any means, locally or via the Internet/Intranet.
- Using any Harmony Public Schools' technology for games, role-playing multi-user environments, gambling, junk mail, chain mail, jokes or fundraising activities without prior approval by a classroom teacher or administrator.
- Using any Harmony Public Schools' technology resource to engage in any activity that violates any Board policy, the Student Code of Conduct, campus rule, local, state, and/or federal law.
- Using any Harmony Public Schools' technology resource to take, disseminate, transfer, or share obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content.
- Using any Harmony Public Schools' technology resources for any commercial and/or for-profit purpose, to include personal financial gain or fraud.
- Using obscene or profane language on any school technology resource, to include posting such language on any website or software used by Harmony Public Schools.
- Using school or personal technology during the administration of state standardized testing, End of Course, and or final examinations unless expressly allowed to do so by a teacher.
- Using technology for plagiarism or otherwise representing the work of others as the student's own.
- Using USB, bootable CD's, or other devices to alter the function of any school technology equipment, network or software.
- Violating the rights of any person or company protected by copyright, trade secret, patent or other intellectual property or similar laws or regulations, including, but not limited to, any downloading, installation, or distribution of "pirated" or other software products.

Students shall immediately report any violations of this Policy to a classroom teacher or administrator. If any student or parent has any question about whether any activity may be a violation of this Policy, they should ask a classroom teacher or the Principal or designee.

### ***Personal Electronic Devices***

Personal wireless and mobile devices may be provided filtered access to the Internet as well as access to any web-based student applications (e.g., Discovery Education Streaming, Moodle) that would normally be accessible to students from home. Harmony Public Schools is not responsible for the loss or theft of any



personal electronic devices, or for damage, or unauthorized access to the device nor the data that resides therein. Students and parents assume any and all risks associated with bringing a personal electronic device to a campus or school-related event. In addition:

- All students with personal electronic devices being used for instructional or other school business must use the school's wireless network, which is filtered according to federal guidelines for Internet access in public schools.
- If a student uses a personal electronic device in an inappropriate manner, he or she will lose their privilege of bringing a personal device to school. Additional consequences may be imposed based on the Policy and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any campus-based consequences for violating the usage rules for personal electronic devices.
- Personal electronic communications such as e-mail, instant messaging, chat, blogs, etc., are prohibited at school unless the teacher and/or administrator has approved the use of an application for educational purposes.
- Personal electronic devices are never to be plugged into the wired network (i.e., computers, wall jacks, other school equipment, etc.).
- School officials may power on and search a student device if there is a reasonable cause to believe that the device has been used in the transmission or reception of communications prohibited by law, policy, or regulation and if a student and parent have signed a form authorizing the student to possess the device at school.
- Sound on personal wireless and mobile devices must be turned off when it is being used as part of a class.
- Student selection of appropriate, tasteful screensavers and wallpaper is expected.
- Teachers will establish standards for personal electronic devices used in their respective classrooms; however, it is school policy that students are not allowed to access the Internet unless supervised by a teacher or staff member.
- The student must take full responsibility for configuring and maintaining their personal electronic devices. Harmony Public Schools will not provide technical support for these devices.
- When personal electronic devices are not in the student's possession, the student must secure them. Harmony Public Schools will not store, nor will it

accept responsibility for storing, any student's personal electronic device on school grounds. Personal electronic devices must go home with students daily.

### ***Privacy and Security***

Students are expected to use the school's technology resources responsibly and in a safe and secure manner, regardless of whether such technology is accessed using a school-issued or personal electronic device. Students shall not share their individual logins, passwords, or access to Harmony Public Schools' technology with others without the prior approval of a classroom teacher or administrator. Students shall sign off or log off all Harmony Public Schools' equipment, software, or Internet sites once they are done with their session in order to protect the integrity of their logins, passwords, or access.

### ***Consequences***

Violation of Harmony Public Schools' policies and procedures concerning use of the computer on the network will result in the same disciplinary actions that would result from similar violations in other areas of school policy, including the Student Code of Conduct. Any or all of the following consequences may be enforced if a student violates the terms of this policy:

1. Loss of computer privileges/Internet access, with length of time to be determined by campus administration.
2. Any campus-based disciplinary consequence, including suspension, as deemed appropriate by the administration.
3. Suspension may be considered for flagrant violations or violations that corrupt the educational value of the computers or the Internet.
4. Expulsion may be considered in instances where students have used Harmony Public Schools' Internet access to engage in conduct that constitutes felony criminal mischief, and/or have deliberately attempted to bypass installed security software or copy/modify another student's work files.

Violations of law may also result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by Harmony Public Schools.

### ***Limitations of Liability***

Harmony Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the technology

resources it provides to students through school-provided equipment and/or a student's personal electronic device. Harmony Public Schools is not responsible for any damages that a student may sustain, including those arising from non-delivery of information, erroneous delivery of information, service interruptions, unauthorized use by a student, loss of data, and any potential exposure to inappropriate material from the Internet. Use of any information obtained through the Internet is at the student's own risk, as Harmony Public Schools makes no representations, and denies responsibility for the accuracy or quality of the information. In exchange for being allowed to use the school's technology resources, students and their parents hereby release Harmony Public Schools, its directors, employees, and representatives from any and all claims for damages that arise from the intentional or neglectful misuse of Harmony Public Schools' technology resources by the student.

