



Student and Parent Handbook 2025-2026

**McNamara Elementary School
8714 McAvoy Dr.
Houston, Texas, 77074
(713) 778-3460**

Welcome to a new school year at McNamara Elementary School. This year promises to be exciting and filled with opportunities for our boys and girls to be involved in excellent learning experiences. The McNamara School Handbook contains information students and parents are likely to need, to ensure a successful school year. The handbook is organized alphabetically by topic. Throughout the handbook, the term “the student’s parent” means parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Students and parents also should be familiar with the HISD Code of Student Conduct, which sets out the consequences for inappropriate behavior. The Code of Student Conduct is required by state law and is intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. This document is available online via the HISD portal and can be sent home upon request, to every family each year, and parents are required to sign and return a form acknowledging receipt of the booklet. Additional copies of the HISD Code of Student Conduct are available in the school office.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Houston Independent School District (HISD) Board policy and the Code of Student Conduct adopted by the Board. Please be aware that this document is updated annually as needed, while policy adoption and revision is an ongoing process. Changes in policy during the year that affect the student handbook provisions will be communicated by newsletters and other communications. These changes will generally supersede the provisions found in this handbook and will be made obsolete by newly adopted policy. Please take the time to read this handbook, discuss it with your child, and keep it in a safe place for easy referral. Please sign and return to school with your child the McNamara Elementary Student Handbook Acknowledgment Form, found in the middle of this handbook.

Principal: Toufic Elachkar
Assistant Principal: Tabatha Virgil
Assistant Principal: Zuleima Sinson
Secretary: Bessie Carroll
School Nurse: Rosalind Boyd-Spragg
Attendance/Data Clerk: Karla Briseno
Records/Meals Program Clerk: Kenya Alexander

McNamara Mission Statement

McNamara Elementary equips multicultural learners, through high-quality instruction, to perform at the highest academic levels.

McNamara Mascot:
The Mustang

McNamara School Colors:
Green and Gold

McNamara Motto:
“Work hard, be kind”

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his/her education--to benefit from teacher-led activities, to build each day’s learning on that of the previous day, and to grow as an individual.

It is also the law in Texas:

- A student enrolled in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten is required by law to attend school.
- A student between the ages of 6 and 18 must attend school and District-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 without permission from school, from any class, or from required tutorials, will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action. Truancy may also result in assessment of penalty by a court of law against the student and his/her parents.

- To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends fewer than 90% of the days the class is offered cannot receive passing credit for the class unless the attendance review committee finds that the absences are the result of extenuating circumstances.

Please Note:

- Attendance is taken at 9:15 a.m. daily. A child must be present at that time to be counted in attendance.
- In those rare circumstances when a student must be absent from school, the student, upon returning to school, must bring a note within 3 days, signed by the parent, that describes the reason for the absence.
- A student who is absent for any reason should promptly make up assignments. A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of 50 for the assignment.
- **School starts promptly at 7:15 am daily for Pre- Kindergarten and 7:30 am daily for Kindergarten – 5th grades.**
- A student who is tardy to class by more than five minutes must be escorted to the office by the parent (if dropped off). The parent must sign the child in indicating the arrival time **and** obtain a tardy slip from the office before proceeding to the classroom. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in further action.
- Class time is important. Medical appointments should be scheduled, whenever possible, at times when students will not miss instructional time.

CAFETERIA SERVICES

HISD and McNamara Elementary School participate in the National School Meals Program and offer nutritionally balanced meals to students daily. Free and reduced-price lunches are available based on financial need. Information on this program can be obtained by checking in the school office. Students who do not participate in the free/reduced lunch program may purchase a lunch or bring a lunch from home. Canned or glass bottled drinks are not permitted due to safety hazards. Paper cartons and thermos containers are allowed. Please remind your child that he should not buy, sell, or swap lunches or other items with other students. Students are not permitted to buy sodas from the vending machines or have access to microwave ovens. Breakfast is served daily at 7:30 in the classroom.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES/CONDITIONS

To protect children 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 school nurse or principal so that other students who have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. These diseases include:

Amebiasis	Hepatitis, Viral (A,B,C)	Rubella (German Measles)
Campylobacteriosis	Impetigo	including congenital
Chickenpox	Infectious mononucleosis	Salmonellosis, including
Common cold with fever		typhoid fever
COVID 19	Influenza	Scabies
Fifth disease	Measles (Rubeola)	Shigellosis
(Erythema Infectiosum)	Meningitis, Bacterial	Streptococcal disease, invasive
Gastroenteritis, Viral	Mumps	Tuberculosis, Pulmonary
Giardiasis	Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis)	Whooping Cough (Pertussis)
Head Lice (Pediculosis)	Ringworm of the scalp	CMV
Meningococcal infection	Cryptosporidiosis	Fever
Diarrhea	Pertussis	
Shingles	E coli infection	

COMPLAINTS BY STUDENTS/PARENTS

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed simply, by a phone call or a conference with the teacher. For complaints that cannot be handled so easily, HISD has adopted a standard complaint

policy. In general, a parent or student should first discuss the complaint with the campus administrators. If unresolved, the school office West area can be contacted. Additional information about the complaint process can also be found in the designated HISD Board policy, available in the principal's and Superintendent's offices.

COMPUTER RESOURCES

District and school resources have been invested in computer and iPad technology to broaden instruction and to prepare students for an increasingly computerized society. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement regarding the appropriate use of these resources. Violations of this agreement may prompt termination of privileges and other disciplinary action, as spelled out in the Code of Student Conduct.

CONDUCT

Students are expected to:

- Behave responsibly demonstrating courtesy and respect for the rights of other students and HISD staff. Student cooperation and respect for the property of others, including HISD property, is essential to maintaining safety, order, and discipline.
- Attend all classes regularly and on time; be prepared for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
- Be well-groomed and appropriately dressed each day. As required by law, HISD has developed and adopted a Code of Student Conduct that prohibits certain behaviors and establishes standards of acceptable behavior--both on and off campus--and consequences for violation of the standards. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the HISD Code of Student Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules, to avoid violations and the subsequent consequences.

McNamara School Rules:

- Be respectful of yourself and others.
- Treat others in the manner you wish to be treated.
- Keep our campus and neighborhood clean.
- Look, listen, focus, and learn.
- At all times follow school and classroom rules.

Bullying/Intimidation

Bullying or other acts of intimidation are not tolerated and will be addressed according to the penalties specified in the Code of Student Conduct.

Laser Pointers

Students are not permitted to possess or use laser pointers while on school property, while using HISD transportation, or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities, whether on or off school property. Laser pointers will be confiscated, and students will be disciplined according to the HISD Code of Student Conduct.

Cell Phones

Students may bring cell phones. However, cell phones must remain off during class, and the school is not responsible for lost or damaged cell phones. The unauthorized use or operation of devices will result in confiscation. The principal or another administrator will notify the parent. Devices not claimed will be sent to Property Management for disposal.

Sexual Harassment/Sexual Abuse

Unwanted and unwelcomed conduct of a sexual nature--words, gestures, or any other sexual conduct, including requests for sexual favors--directed toward another student or a District employee is unacceptable. (See page 9 for further information.)

Violations of Law:

- Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco and Weapons--Under state and federal law, a student is not allowed to possess, sell, give away, or use alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco products, guns, or other weapons on school property or at a school-related or school-sanctioned activity, on or off school property.
- Disruptive Activities--State law prohibits a student from participating in disruptive activities. That includes acting alone or with others to interfere with an authorized activity; using force, violence, or threats to prevent participation in an authorized assembly; disrupting classes; or interfering with the transportation of students in HISD vehicles.
- Gangs and Other Prohibited Organizations--Under state law, a student is prohibited from membership or involvement in a public-school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang.
- Hazing Activities--State law also prohibits a student from participating in any hazing activities. A student is guilty of hazing when he/she takes direct hazing action; encourages or assists someone else to take action; recklessly permits such action; has knowledge of planned action that has occurred without reporting that knowledge to a school official.

COUNSELING

The school Counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, emotional, or substance abuse issues. Also, she may make available information about community resources to address these concerns. Students who need to meet with the counselor should notify the classroom teacher or a member of the office staff. The counselor also facilitates scheduling & counseling services (on-site) by licensed counseling for students in need of counseling sessions.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIAL

Non-school written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials may not be posted, sold, circulated, or distributed on any school campus by a student or a non-student without the prior approval of the principal. Any student who posts material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action. Materials displayed without this approval will be removed.

DRESS AND GROOMING

McNamara Elementary School has adopted a standard mode of dress for our school. All students are expected to wear a clean and neat school **uniform each day**.

- **The standard mode of dress for McNamara students consists of white, yellow, gold, or dark green tops (shirts with collars, blouses) and khaki/tan, navy blue or blue denim bottoms (pants, walking shorts, jumpers, skirts, shorts). A McNamara school shirt may also be worn.**
- All students must wear shoes for health and safety reasons. Footwear should be suitable for physical education. No wooden soles, open backed shoes, flip-flops, cleats, or roller skate shoes may be worn. Socks are highly recommended.
- Caps and hats may not be worn in the building.
- Boys should wear shirts tucked inside pants and belts are highly recommended.
- Students are allowed to wear knee-length shorts. Extremely short shorts or skirts may not be worn.
- Students may not wear clothing that inappropriately exposes themselves, including midriff-length, tank style or spaghetti strap tops or short shorts or mini skirts.
- Clothing with logos or writing, other than the McNamara school shirt, is not allowed.

Parents of students who violate the dress code will be contacted by school personnel to determine a satisfactory solution to the dress code violation. Repeated violation of the dress code will result in disciplinary action, as outlined in the HISD Code of Student Conduct. Limited assistance in obtaining uniforms is available to parents who can show proof of financial need. Please contact the school office for further information.

Violation for not following the Dress Code

- **1st Offense: Warning to student.**
- **2nd Offense: A written warning will be sent home by the teacher.**

- **3rd Offense:** Student will be sent to the office and the parent will be contacted by an administrator. Parent must bring uniform to school.
- **4th Offense:** In school suspension or after-school detention to be determined by administrator.

DRILLS-FIRE, TORNADO, AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

From time to time, students, teachers, and other HISD employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students and visitors should follow the direction of teachers and others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION/PROCEDURES

Occasionally emergencies arise at school that requires the school staff to contact parents. It is essential that all information on each child's enrollment card be complete and kept current. If phone numbers (home, work, emergency, doctor) change, please notify the school office immediately. Be sure the person you list as your emergency contact is reliable and knows you have listed him/her as the person to be contacted in case of emergency the parent cannot be reached.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

Parents complete a Rainy Day/Emergency form at registration or during the first week of school stating the arrangements that have been made in case school must close due to bad weather or other emergencies. Teachers and school personnel use the information provided by the parent on this form to know how a child is to leave school in case of an emergency school closing. Students will not be released to leave with anyone other than the parent or walk home unless those instructions have been stated on the form. Please be sure you have completed a form and that your child is familiar with what you have put on the form and knows how to follow it. For example, if he/she is to be picked up by someone other than the parent, be sure the child knows who the person is. These arrangements need to be made in advance--please do not call the school with instructions and messages; at this time, phone lines need to be available for school personnel. If it is necessary to close school for the day because of weather conditions or other information, this information will be carried by local radio and television stations.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

Participation in school and school-related activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships with other students. Participation is a privilege. While many of the activities are governed by the University Interscholastic League (UIL), a statewide association of participating districts, eligibility for participation in many of these activities is governed by state law as well as UIL rules. Students participating in UIL or HISD sanctioned activities are governed by the following:

- A student who receives, at the end of any grade evaluation period, a grade below 70 in any academic class may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three weeks. An ineligible student may practice or rehearse. However, the student regains eligibility when the administrator and teachers determine that he/she has: 1) earned a passing grade (70 or above) in all academic classes, and 2) completed the three weeks of ineligibility.
- Any restrictions on participation related to discipline are set out in the Code of Student Conduct.
- **Please Note:** Student clubs and performing groups may establish standards of behavior, including consequences for misbehavior that are stricter than those for students in general. Guidelines and requirements will be included in the permission slips parents will be asked to sign granting permission for their child to participate in the activity.

FEES

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds and are at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his/her own pencils, papers, erasers, and notebooks, and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, such as costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep, voluntarily purchased pictures, and fees for lost, damaged or overdue library books. In extreme and dire situations, any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the building administrators.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an enriching part of the school experience and are carefully planned by school staff to correlate with required curriculum objectives. Parent permission is required for a child to participate in any field trip. Field trip permission slips are sent home by the teacher/sponsor and must be signed by the parent and returned. No student will be permitted to go on a trip without written permission on the appropriate form. Hand-written notes are not acceptable.

FUND-RAISING

Student clubs or classes, outside organizations, occasionally may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be submitted to the principal at least ten school days before the event. Any event except as approved by the principal, fund-raising is not permitted on school property.

GRADING GUIDELINES

Students will receive report cards every nine weeks. Academic grades on the cards will reflect the class work, homework, and test grades for that period. All grades are given in numerical averages. Conduct is marked with one of the following letters:

E-Excellent quality of behavior, totally self-disciplined

S-Satisfactory quality of behavior; cooperates readily

P-Poor quality of behavior; improvement necessary

U-Unsatisfactory quality of behavior: drastic improvement required.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an extension of what has been taught in class. Homework guidelines are determined by grade levels and communicated by the teachers to parents. Work with your child to schedule time each day to complete homework assignments and check to see that homework is completed. Help your child organize his/her materials so that he/she gets to school each day with the things needed for a successful day, including completed homework.

Please note that 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students who do not return and complete their homework assignments will be assigned either: Lunch Detention or Ancillary Detention to complete their homework assignments. We use Lunch and Ancillary Detention and In School Suspension to promote student achievement and as a consequence for Code of Conduct violations. Assignment to either of the detentions or In School Suspension is dependent upon the severity of the infraction.

IMMUNIZATIONS

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical or religious reasons, the student will not be immunized. Immunization requirements change periodically. The school nurse can provide information on the current requirements, on age-appropriate doses, or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the Texas Department of Health. Proof of immunization may be personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student's religious beliefs conflict with the requirement that the student be immunized, the parent must present a statement signed by the parent stating that immunization conflicts with the beliefs and practices of

a recognized church or religious denomination of which the student is an adherent or member. This statement must be renewed annually.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required would be harmful to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

A student who must take prescription medicine during the school day must provide the school nurse with an authorization form signed by the parent and licensed doctor on file with the medicine, in its original, properly labeled container. The school nurse will either give the medicine at the prescribed times or give the student permission to take the medication as directed.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT, RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

Education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership between home and school, a partnership that thrives on communication and interaction, and includes parents, teachers, administrators, and the HISD Board of Trustees. Every parent is urged to:

- Encourage his/her child to put a high priority on education and commit to making the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Review the information in the student handbook and the HISD Code of Student Conduct with his/her child and sign and return the acknowledgment forms.
- Become familiar with all the child's school activities and with the academic programs offered in the District. Discuss with the counselor or building administrators any questions, such as concerns about placement or assignment, and the options available to the child. Monitor the child's academic progress and contact teachers as needed.
- Attend scheduled conferences and request additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or administrator, please call the school office at (713) 778-3460 for an appointment. A teacher will usually arrange to return the call or meet with the parent during his/her conference period or at a mutually convenient time before or after school.
- Exercise the right to review teacher materials, textbooks, and other aids, and to examine tests that have been administered to his/her child.
- Review their child's student records when needed. A parent may review attendance records, test scores, grades, disciplinary records, counseling records, psychological records, applications for admission, health and immunization information, teacher and counselor evaluations, reports of behavior patterns, and state assessment instruments that have been administered to his/her child.
- Grant or deny any written request from the District to make a videotape or voice recording of the child unless the videotape or voice recording is to be used for school safety, relates to classroom instruction or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity, or relates to media coverage of the school as permitted by law.
- Become a school volunteer. For further information, contact the school office or go to the district website.
- Participate in campus parent organizations. Parents have the opportunity to support and be involved in various school activities, either as leaders or in supporting roles. Parent organizations include the McNamara PTO and the Title I Parent Advisory Committee.

PRAYER

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

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

The HISD Board of Education has established promotion standards that students in first through eighth grades must meet in order to be promoted to the next grade level. Those standards for promotion are:

- A 70 percent average of course grades, including a 70 percent or better grade in reading, language arts AND mathematics, and either science or social studies at grades 1-5.
- A student will be retained if he/she has more than 10% unexcused absences.

Students who do not meet these standards are subject to mandatory attendance at summer school, retention in the current grade, and/or intensive remediation in the area(s) of concern. Information regarding the standards and their impact on students is communicated to parents by HISD.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

A student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day except with permission from the building administrators or their designee and according to the campus sign-out procedures (see section on Student Sign Out Procedures). Unless the administrator has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

A student who will need to leave school during the day must bring a note from his/her parent that morning. A student who becomes ill during the school day will, with the teacher's permission, be sent to the school nurse. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent. Children will not be allowed to leave the campus before regular dismissal time for any reason unless accompanied by a responsible adult.

REPORT CARDS, PROGRESS REPORTS, AND CONFERENCES

Written reports of absences and student grades or performance in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every nine weeks.

At the end of the first four weeks of a grading period, parents are notified if the student's grade average is near or below 70, or below the expected level of performance. If a student receives a grade of less than 70 in any class or subject during a grading period, the parents will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher. The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade below 70 in a class or subject. Report cards and progress reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school within three days.

Parent/teacher conferences are a valuable tool to be used in helping students become happy and successful at school. Parents are urged to take advantage of this tool, following these guidelines to be sure that the conference is as productive as possible:

- Make an appointment--call the office or write a note to the teacher to schedule a conference.
- Watch for test papers, progress reports, etc. that signal trouble areas and schedule a conference then. Do not wait until a serious problem develops.
- Please do not "drop in" at the beginning or end of the day asking to see a teacher. These are especially crucial times when the class needs and deserves the teacher's full attention.
- Instructional time belongs to the students--teachers will normally not be called out of class for a conference.

SAFETY/ACCIDENT PREVENTION

Student safety on campus and at school related events is the top priority of HISD. Although HISD has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Code of Student Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the administrators, teachers, or bus drivers.

- Remain alert and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of school and HISD employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

The taxpayers of the community have made a sustained financial commitment for the construction and upkeep of school facilities. To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended, both this year and in the coming years, littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and shall be subject to disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct.

Pest Control Information

The District periodically applies pesticides inside buildings. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application, and done when students are not in the building.

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

The following is the schedule for McNamara Elementary. Please note that building administrators and staff are not responsible for the supervision of students who arrive at school before breakfast begins in the morning (before 7:00 a.m.) or remain after the designated time in the afternoon (3:10 p.m.) unless the child is involved in a school sponsored activity for which the parent has given written consent. The proper authorities will be notified when students are left at school after hours.

HOURS:

7:30-8:00 a.m.	Breakfast Served in the classroom
7:15- 2:45 p.m.	Prekindergarten
7:30- 3:00 p.m.	K- 5 th
7:10 a.m.	First Bell-Students Enter Building
7:50 a.m.	Tardy Bell
2:45 p.m.	Pre-K dismissal Monday - Friday
3:00 p.m.	K – 5 th Dismissal Monday – Friday

SEXUAL HARASSMENT/SEXUAL ABUSE

HISD encourages parental and student support in its efforts to address and prevent sexual harassment and sexual abuse in the public schools. Students and/or parents are encouraged to discuss their questions or concerns about the expectations in this area with a teacher, counselor, building administrator, or the HISD EEO office at (713)892-6097.

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

The District will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by students when the allegations are not minor and will notify parents of any incident of sexual harassment or sexual abuse by an employee. To the greatest extent possible, complaints will be treated as confidential. Limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation. The detailed procedure for handling a sexual harassment or sexual abuse complaint can be found in the Code of Student Conduct.

SHARED DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE (SDMC)

The Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC) is established and maintained to facilitate communications on matters of common professional concern, and to allow flexibility for the school to solve problems unique to the campus. The SDMC is made up of the principal, teachers, professional staff, paraprofessional staff, parents, and community members. The SDMC meets the 2nd Monday of each month to discuss school and community concerns. Written concerns can be submitted to the SDMC in a box in the main office.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

HISD provides special programs for gifted and talented students, bilingual students, and migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered at the school, in HISD, or by other organizations. A parent with questions about these programs should contact the building administrators.

STUDENT RECORDS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. IF HISD refuses the request to amend the records, the requester has the right to pursue a complaint through the procedure spelled out in HISD Board policy. If records are not amended as a result of the process, the requester has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents are not allowed to contest a student's grade through this process.

STUDENT SAFETY / DROP-OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

Parents are asked to assist school personnel in keeping our students safe on their way to and from school. All safety precautions and regulations listed in this section should be reviewed with students periodically. Parents are requested to review the vehicle safety section below and observe all traffic regulations.

Student Safety Walking/Riding Bicycles to and From School:

- Crossing guards are stationed at Bissonnet and McAvoy, Fondren and Bissonnet, and Jackwood at Fondren. These are very dangerous intersections and students should cross only with the aid of the crossing guards.
- Because of possible danger from automobile traffic, students should always cross streets at a corner or crosswalk, never in the middle of a block.
- Bicycle riders should ride only one child to a bike. Bikes must be walked, not ridden, on school grounds. Students are responsible for their bicycle security; therefore, students are encouraged to lock their bikes. Neither the school nor HISD has any responsibility for stolen bikes.
- The Safety Patrol is organized to assist students in safely crossing intersections near the school

Vehicular Safety Before and After School:

- Please pay attention to all traffic signs, including the signs that indicate a specific area is a NO PARKING zone.
- Please drop off and pick up your child on the school side of McAvoy and Jason Streets only. Do not ask your child to cross in the middle of the block to meet you on the other side.
- Please follow the line of traffic for drop off/pick up.
- Please do not make U-turns on McAvoy and Jason Streets, and do not double park—this causes traffic congestion and causes safety hazards for our children.
- Do not pick up children in the Staff Parking Lot. This area is restricted for staff use and delivery trucks make the area very dangerous for pedestrians.

Before School Procedures:

- Breakfast is served in the classroom from 7:30 to 8:00 a.m. daily. Students should not arrive before 7:05 am, because staff is NOT on duty to supervise students before that time. Parents must monitor their children who arrive prior to 7:05 a.m.
- Students who arrive at school **at 7:05 a.m.** may line up in grade level lines in the hallway. Staff members are not on duty to supervise students in areas until 7:05 a.m.
- Students are expected to line up and wait patiently and in an orderly manner until the bell rings at 7:30 a.m.
- Instruction begins **promptly** at 7:50 am for K-5th and begins at 7:35 for PK. Staff members are on duty beginning at 7:05 a.m. to ensure that all students reach classes safely and in an orderly manner.

Dismissal Procedures:

- **For security and safety purposes, parents are not to enter the building prior to dismissal and congregate in the halls. Please meet your child outside at his/her exit door.**
- All students are to leave the building at dismissal at their designated dismissal locations and go directly home.
- Prekindergarten, kindergarten, and 1st grade students exit using the Jason Street entrance.
- Bus riders are to assemble in the main hallway and will be monitored until their busses arrive.

- Students who must cross the bayou in the rear of the building are to use the Grape Street footbridge.
- Students are NOT to stop and play in the park at dismissal.
- Any students remaining on campus after 3:15 p.m. are to be brought to the front of the building to await their rides.
- **All students should be picked up no later than 3:15 p.m.** In extreme emergencies, students may wait in the front until 3:45 p.m. Staff members are not responsible for students left after this time. HISD Police and CPS will be contacted to pick up students who are left unless prior arrangements have been made with staff regarding the time that the child will be picked up.

STUDENT SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES

Students will be released during school hours **ONLY** to parents/guardians or adults (18 years or older) authorized by the parent/guardian to pick up the child that day. Authorization by the parent/guardian for another adult to pick up a child may be made in the following ways:

- a. Parent/guardian lists the person on the student's official enrollment card.
- b. Parent/guardian sends written notice to the office of the person who is to pick up the child.

In extreme emergencies, parents/guardians may authorize a person to pick up a student by telephone. In these cases, the parent will be asked on the phone to provide information about the child and himself/herself to verify identity. The person who is to pick up the child will be required to follow the rest of these procedures before a student is released.

When a person comes to the office to pick up a student, identification is required, even for parents/guardians. Identification consists of a picture ID. If the person does not have a picture ID, authorization for release of the child will not be given unless approved by a building administrator. The administrator will release the child only if he/she can verify the person's identity and right to take the student. Office staff will copy the student's enrollment card and the picture ID of the person to whom the child is to be released and will file both. Once verification has been made, the parent/guardian or designee will sign the child out on the appropriate form. Staff members will NOT release any student to ANY adult, even parents/guardians, unless the parent has followed these procedures. Parents may not enter the building after 2:30pm.

TESTING

In addition to routine testing and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state assessment tests: Reading and Mathematics (Grades 3, 4 & 5) and Science (Grade 5). Test results will be reported to students and parents, and parents may review an assessment test that has been given to their child. Results of some of these measures are part of the HISD promotion standards and used to make decisions regarding promotion and retention. The testing schedule and information regarding specific assessment measures are communicated to parents through regular school communications.

Certain students, such as students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or a deferment. For more information, see the building administrators, school counselor, or special education chairperson.

Students will also take common assessments every grading cycle monitor progress on academic standards. Results will be communicated to parents and students.

TEXTBOOKS

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

VISITORS

Parents and others are welcome to visit HISD schools. For the safety of those within the school, all visitors (including parents) must first report to the Main office before proceeding to any other area of the campus.

Visitors will be asked to sign in, supply a photo ID, and state the reason for the visit. Visitors whose identity and purpose are authorized will be given a pass indicating the date of the visit and the person or area to be visited. Visitors are to return to the office to sign out and surrender the pass at the end of the visit. Regular volunteers are required to complete a VIPS registration form the first time they are in the building for volunteer purposes. Thereafter, they are required to sign in the appropriate notebook and wear a VIPS pass each time they are in the building. All visitors are to enter the building through the main front entrance, which remains locked from the outside during school hours. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the building administrators and teacher as long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

It is the policy of the Houston Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of age, color, handicap or disability, ancestry, national origin, marital status, race, religion, sex, veteran status, or political affiliation in its educational or employment programs and activities.