

Houston MSTC High School

Go Tigers!



2025 - 2026 Parent and Student Handbook

Dr. Tanya Webb, Principal

**Houston MSTC High School
9400 Irvington
Houston, Texas 77076
Phone (713) 696-0200 - Fax (713) 696-8984**

Building Hours	6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Instructional Hours:	8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Teacher Hours:	8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

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EXPECTATIONS

Student Expectations

1. Arrive by 8:00 a.m.
2. Follow dress code policies and wear your student ID.
3. Ask for help when in need and offer help when appropriate.
4. Model respectful behavior and report inappropriate behavior.
5. Show appreciation for the campus and community by keeping it clean.
6. Do not have phones, AirPods, or smartwatch visible or audible at any time from arrival to dismissal, including during lunch and passing periods.

Parent Expectations

1. Make sure your child arrives at school by 8:00 a.m. and is picked up by 4:45 p.m.
2. Update contact information (phone, address, etc.) within 24 hours of a change.
3. Check your students' grades and attendance on the parent portal regularly.
4. Follow all arrival, dismissal, and check-out procedures.
5. Model the respectful behavior that you expect your child to have at school in your interactions with teachers and staff.
6. Students must leave their phones at home or store them, powered off, in their backpacks upon arrival.
7. Parents are not allowed to bring lunch for students or have take-out delivered to the campus for their students.
8. Parents are advised to avoid scheduling appointments or picking up students during school hours. Please note that any three absences in a class, excused or unexcused, will result in a loss of credit in that class for the semester.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

All school personnel can be reached at 713-696-0200. Please allow a 24-hour window for a return call. ParentSquare is an alternate way to contact teachers and staff. For safety reasons, the school will not deliver messages to students, nor will we pull students from class to speak with anyone calling the school. Please ensure that your child knows how to get home before leaving the house.

If parents want to arrange a conference, they may call the school office or message Parent Square to **make an appointment**. Due to various duties and commitments of school personnel during the school day, **teachers and other school officials may not be available to meet with parents who arrive at school without an appointment**. Parents can leave their names and phone numbers with the main office and request a return phone call.

Teachers are unable to meet parents during their instructional time, but they should be available for parent-student-teacher conferences when arranged in advance. Please keep in mind that the staff members' days are very full. Advanced notice is necessary for staff members to adequately prepare to assist you when you arrive at your conference. Parents

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must report to the main office upon arrival to sign in, present a state-issued identification card.

DELIVERIES AND UNAUTHORIZED ITEMS

To avoid unnecessary disruptions of instruction and maintain a secure campus, deliveries of any food from services such as UberEATS or local restaurants will not be permitted for any reason. Flowers, balloons, and related items for student use during the school day will not be allowed on campus. If a student brings flowers, balloons, and related items on campus, the items will be held in the front office to pick up at the end of the day. Food items improperly delivered will also be confiscated until the end of the school day.

SCHOOL VISITORS

Houston MSTC is glad to welcome visitors, parents, and guardians who have an interest in the welfare of the school and its students. To maintain campus security, all visitors must come directly to the main office upon entering the building and identify themselves, state the purpose of their visit, and receive a visitor's permit. Former students may not come back to campus during the school day to visit school personnel without arranging an appointment in advance with the appropriate personnel.

Rules for All Visitors

All Houston MSTC visitors must obtain a visitor's name tag from the main office immediately upon entering the building. The visitor's tag must be worn the entire time the visitor is on campus.

No visitors are allowed during standardized testing periods or during formal classroom observations being conducted by district appraisers. Other than parent/guardian are not permitted to visit classrooms with two exceptions:

- Educational professionals from in or outside the district may be escorted by campus or central office staff on classroom visits with prior approval from the campus administrator.
- Parents of students with disabilities who are being considered for placement in a new setting by an ARD committee may visit the proposed setting. The campus administrator must approve the visit in advance, and the parents must be escorted by the campus or central office staff throughout the visit.

The Texas Education Code (Section 4.23) states: "Any person loitering upon school property after being warned to leave by the person in charge shall be guilty of a misdemeanor... School property...include[s] the grounds of any public school and any grounds or buildings used for school-sponsored assemblies or for activities."

STUDENT PICK-UP/DROP-OFF

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Parents may drop off and pick up students at the front campus entrance via Irvington Blvd.

- During dismissal times, parents may wait in their car for their students on Irvington Blvd.
- During arrival and dismissal times, parents must not double park or block any campus entrance/ exits.

Early Pick Up

Students should not be picked up before the 4:30 dismissal time unless it is an emergency or an appointment. Please be sure that your child brings a note the next day if you must pick them up early for an appointment. Anyone picking up students early must be listed in the student information system. You can update this list at any time. We will not accept letters or phone calls from anyone to release a student to someone not on the student information system. The parent/legal guardian must report to the main office and present a legal ID or proof of guardianship before being permitted to pick up a student.

Leaving School Early Due to Illness

When students become ill during the school day, they should get a clinic pass from the classroom teacher and report to the clinic. If the nurse is absent, students are to report to their grade-level office. Under no circumstances can a student leave the school without administrative authorization.

Please Note: Students *leaving early for any reason (other than a regular off-campus permit) must sign out in the attendance office and have the approval of an administrator/parent (or his/her designee). Students must be signed out by an approved guardian or designee with an ID. Failure to follow this procedure will warrant disciplinary action.*

Closed Campus Policy

Once a student arrives on campus for the school day, he/she will not be permitted to leave the campus without administrative approval. Students may not leave school for any reason (other than for an approved school-sponsored activity) without checking out through the main office. These checkout procedures must be followed even if the parent knows the student is leaving. Students who leave campus without following the procedures will have consequences. Also, students are not allowed to leave campus during their lunch period.

Off-Campus Permits

Seniors who have met their credit, attendance, CCMR, and STAAR requirements for graduation may have off-campus privileges. Off-campus ID badges must be carried by off-campus students and must be available for review.

Students who have off-campus periods are expected to leave school grounds as soon as the tardy bell rings. If transportation is delayed, students must wait inside in the front of the school. Repeated offenses by students who linger on campus may result in the loss of off-campus privileges.

TRANSPORTATION

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HISD Transportation

School bus transportation is provided for eligible students. The time spent on the bus is considered an extension of the school day. All school rules apply. Any student who misbehaves on the bus or at HISD bus stops may lose bus riding privileges. Metro bus riders will be held to the same standards.

Bus Safety Rules

- Stand away from the road while waiting for the bus.
- Exhibit appropriate behavior at the bus stop. Behavior that is disruptive, destructive, or unsafe for traffic will not be tolerated.
- Be on time. Buses are not required to wait for students.
- Board the bus in an orderly manner. Do not stand. Fill seats in the rear first. If it is necessary for you to stand, hold on to the handrail. Do not change seats while the bus is in motion. If seats are assigned by the bus driver, students are required to sit in their assigned seats.
- Do not distract the driver by making unusual noises, shouting, or creating a disturbance. Do not speak to the driver while the bus is in motion unless it is necessary.
- Keep belongings and legs out of the aisles.
- Do not throw objects out of the windows. Do not extend arms, legs, or heads out of the windows.
- Smoking of any kind is prohibited on the bus.
- Keep the bus clean and free of litter.
- Ride only your assigned bus and get off at your assigned bus stop. No variations are allowed.
- Bus drivers are HISD employees with responsibility for student safety. If drivers experience any disciplinary problems, he/she will inform the Houston MSTC HS administrator.
- Students should know their bus driver's name and bus route number.
- Students need to remain on campus once their bus arrives.
- If your HISD bus arrives late, after 8:30 a.m., immediately go to the main office to sign in for your late pass.

Bus Loading/Unloading Area

HISD buses drop off and pick up in the semi-circle off the Hardy service road, near the gym. Faculty and staff will be there in the morning and afternoon to greet and dismiss your child. Buses will unload and load in the circle in an orderly fashion. Only buses can enter and exit through this semi-circle.

Remember, it is your responsibility to ensure that your child knows how he/she will get home every day. You or a designee must be available to pick up your child at 4:30 p.m. daily.

Late Bus or No Bus

Students must arrive at their stop 10-15 minutes early. HISD transportation will not wait for students who are tardy. If a bus is more than 20 or 30 minutes late, please call the bus

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barn of your scheduled route, inquire about late arrival, and then inform the main office. The bus will usually arrive, or another bus will be sent to the location.

HISD Transportation Phone Number: 713-556-9400

Bus Transportation Requests and Changes

Students are eligible for bus transportation if they live 3 or more miles from their school, with pick-up and drop-off at designated HISD bus stops. **To request transportation for your student, please complete the [transportation request form](#).** Once the Routing & Scheduling Department receives your request, it will be processed within 10 business days. Only students eligible for transportation based on HISD's transportation eligibility requirements will be approved for transportation.

Eligible students will be assigned a bus route within approximately miles of their home for students attending their zoned school or within approximately miles of their home for students attending a school of choice.

STUDENT PARKING

Student Parking Permits

Junior and senior students who wish to park their motor vehicles on campus must apply for a parking permit from the office manager.

All students applying for a parking permit must show:

- A valid and current driver's license
- Proof of current insurance for the vehicle for which a permit is being requested

Parking permits cost \$25.00 (cash only) for the entire school year.

Parking permits must be displayed on the vehicle's rear windshield. Students must pull into their parking space with the front end first. You may not back in a parking space.

The speed limit in the student parking lot is five (5) m.p.h.

Vehicles parked illegally will be towed at the owner's expense. Students are reminded that faculty parking areas and visitor parking areas are off limits before school and during the school day. Automobiles parked illegally or in reserved spaces will be towed at the owner's expense.

While every reasonable attempt will be made to ensure parking lot security, the school cannot guarantee that no incidents will occur. Therefore, Houston MSTC High School assumes no responsibility for accidents or the loss or damage of property in the student, staff, or visitor parking lots. All parking on campus is at the vehicle operator's risk. Parking privileges can be revoked at the discretion of administrators without a refund of the parking permit fee.

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Security demands that students leave their vehicles immediately upon arrival in the parking lot. Students must have a pass from an administrator to enter the student parking lot at any time during the school day. Students should not use their automobiles as lockers. Students found in the parking lot during the school day without authorization are subject to disciplinary action.

Verification of Enrollment (VOE) Forms

State law related to driver's license eligibility states that the Department of Public Safety may license a person as a class "C" driver who is under the age of 18 years, provided the person has obtained a high school diploma or the equivalent, if the student is enrolled in a school and has attended school for at least 80% of the fall or spring semester before the date of the application, or if the student has been enrolled for at least 45 days and is currently enrolled in a program to prepare persons to pass the high school equivalency exam. For the purposes of computing attendance for driver's license eligibility and for meeting the intent of the legislation, students must meet the attendance requirement for each class in which they are enrolled. The Verification of Enrollment (VOE) forms are available in the main office and require a notice of at least 24 hours.

Parking Violations

Failure to comply with any of the set rules and regulations can result in consequences including ticketing, towing, and other disciplinary actions. In addition, violations of Houston MSTC HS parking regulations can result in the revocation of campus parking privileges with no refunds of the parking fee.

ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

Excused Absences

Acceptable reasons for excused student absences include:

- Personal Illness
- Death of a Family Member
- Student Health Services; Family/Student Counseling Therapy Appointments
- Religious Holy Days and Major Activities (The student is counted present in school according to state statutes and is not considered absent.)
- Authorized School-Sponsored Activities
- Suspension
- Required (Subpoenaed) Court Appearance

Note: Any other request for an excused absence must be submitted to the attendance clerk in the front office. These must be provided far enough in advance so that the request can be given proper consideration according to state law and HISD Board Policy.

Notes about absences

Students returning from absences must submit the absence excuse to the main office. The note from the parent/guardian must specify the exact reason for the absence. Although students have up to three school days after an absence to bring a note to school, it is helpful

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to all if students bring a note on their first day back to school. Parent/guardian notes should clearly include the following:

- Absent student's full name and ID #
- Date(s) of the absence
- Exact reason(s) for absence
- Parent's name
- Parent's phone number(s)

Students are reminded that forgery of parent notes (or of any school documents) is a very serious offense and will be addressed to the fullest extent permitted under the HISD student code of conduct policy.

Unexcused Absences

An absence for any reason other than those previously listed shall be classified as unexcused. Absences will not be excused if the parent does not send an excuse note *within three school days of the absence*. The principal may, on a case-by-case basis, review reasons for absences other than those listed above and determine that they, also, may be excused.

A student is denied credit for a class if the student accumulates three or more excused or unexcused absences in a class during the semester. Students are allowed to make up any work missed due to any absence.

Truancy

Any unauthorized absence from school is considered truancy and will be unexcused. Disciplinary action will be taken and/or a police citation may be issued. This includes any class that is "skipped" during the school day or leaving campus during lunch.

When is a student tardy?

Tardiness is defined as arriving late to class without an approved permit after the tardy bell has rung. Students arriving after the first 30 minutes of the class will be counted absent from that class, not tardy. During the ADA period, students are absent at the ADA time, even if less than 30 minutes of the period have passed. It is imperative that students arrive promptly and prepared for each class.

Consequences- Late Arrivals and Tardies Students who arrive late to school may be caught up in a tardy sweep that will result in an immediate consequence. Tardies earned before any class period per the six-week marking period may result in a day of in-school suspension (ISS). If a student fails to show up for their assigned ISS, it will result in an additional in-school suspension assignment beginning on the following school day and parent contact.

Four-Period Rule

To be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity or athletic event, the student must have attended school for at least one-half of the school day on which the activity is

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scheduled. Based on the Houston MSTC HS schedule, it would need to be four (4) full classes.

Five-Day Rule

Students will not be permitted to participate in such activities that would require a student to be absent from class more than five days during the semester.

An exception to the five-day rule may be made on behalf of individual students who are competing in UIL-sponsored activities. These exceptions must be based upon circumstances that are unforeseen and result from the students' earning the right to compete at post-UIL district level competitions. Exceptions shall not exceed a total of five additional absences per year.

Students Requesting a Campus Transfer

Students transferring from one senior high school attendance zone to another will not be eligible to participate in the varsity-level extracurricular program of the new school for a period of one calendar year following the granting of the transfer unless an athletic release has been signed by his/her former coach. The eligibility of a student is not affected when there is a change in school due to a documented change in the family's primary residence.

Note: Students who choose not to participate in a group's required practices or after school events may be removed from that group or receive an academic penalty (if that group is part of a graded course). When selecting courses, a student should investigate practice and event requirements.

Hall Passes

Students will not be allowed to leave class 20 minutes after the bell has rung to begin class and 20 minutes before the bell rings to end class. If a student needs to leave the classroom for any reason, a cone/hall pass is required.

Students in the halls without a cone/hall pass are in violation of school rules and may be taken to an assistant principal for disciplinary action. Students leaving a classroom to the restroom need a cone to indicate that they are going to the restroom. Students leaving the classroom to visit an office or their counselor need a green hall pass. Students leaving the classroom to the nurse's office need a white clinic visit hall pass. The green and clinic visit hall pass would list the student's name, date, and time from a teacher before leaving the classroom.

CREDITS

Course Credit

Students must maintain a grade average of 70 or above on a scale of 100 to receive credit for a course.

A student may not be given credit for a class if he or she has attended fewer than the required number of days, which is 90% of the semester.

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Students must comply with all attendance requirements for each course taken. An *Appeal for Credit* form may be submitted at the end of the semester during which a student has not received credit due to excessive absences. Appeals will only be considered when the student has passed the course with a final semester average of 70 or better. All appeals must be submitted before the deadline announced.

Composite Grading

Composite (whole course) grading applies to core courses (A and B semesters taken sequentially in the same academic school year), except for one-semester courses.

A student who fails the first semester (part A) with a grade of 60 or above and passes the second semester (part B) with a grade for the two semesters that is equal to at least 140 will receive credit for the A part of the class. (For example, Student X receives a 61 in part A and a 79 in part B. Student X will receive credit for part A and part B since $61+79 = 140$.) Students who use composite grading for Pre-AP or AP courses will lose the quality points awarded to those courses.

Students who believe they are eligible for composite grading in one or more courses should contact their counselor. If it is determined that the student is eligible for composite credit, the counselor will submit a form to the registrar indicating the whole course credit requirements have been met.

A student who has excessive absences will not receive credit unless the student completes the appropriate number of tutorial hours as assigned by their counselor to restore credit.

Credit by Examination

In certain situations, it is possible to obtain credit for high school courses through examination. If interested, see your counselor for more information.

Grade-Level Assignment

Student grade level is determined by the number of credits a student has earned. Under ordinary circumstances, students are not reclassified during the school year.

The credits needed for each grade level are listed below:

Grade Level Classification		
Grade	Classification	Credits Earned
9	Freshmen	0.0 - 5.5
10	Sophomore	6.0 - 11.5
11	Junior	12.0 - 17.5
12	Senior	18.0+

Absences and Denial of Course Credit

The Texas Education Code requires that a student be in attendance for 90% of the days a class is offered during a semester to be awarded credit for that class (TEC 25.092). *(Additionally, HISD states that students with three or more excused or unexcused absences*

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*in any credit course will have their credit withheld and an asterisk (*NG) will appear on the student's report card.)*

This is a credit issue, not a pass/fail issue. A student may be passing the course but also have more than three excused or unexcused absences and a resulting asterisk indicating withholding of credit. A teacher should contact the parent and continue grading the student's performance without any regard to the absences. The asterisk will deny credit for the course marked.

Credit Appeals

A student who has had credit denied for a class may appeal for the credit if the student earned a passing semester grade in the class.

Students who desire to appeal for credit should secure a credit appeal request form from their counselor.

GRADES

Grading System

Report card and transcript grades are reported in accordance with HISD policy as follows:

Course Grades		
<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Numerical Average</i>	<i>Description</i>
A	100 - 90	Excellent Progress
B	89 - 80	Good Progress
C	79 - 75	Normal Progress
D	74 - 70	Poor Progress
F	69 - 0.0	Failure
I	(N/A)	Incomplete

Progress Reports

At the end of the first three weeks of each grading period, Houston MSTC HS sends home a school-wide progress report with every student. Progress reports are a way for both parents and students to monitor a student's academic progress, behavior, and attendance. Progress reports can also serve as an effective "early warning" device for students who might otherwise find themselves with a failing average too late into the six-week grading period for recourse.

Of course, parents are encouraged at any time to notify teachers if they suspect that their child is struggling and in need of additional help. If a progress report is lost before it gets home, please refer to the parent portal where parents may print additional copies of progress reports and report cards.

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Report Cards

Report cards are sent home with every student at the end of each grading period. A reporting cycle is established on the HISD and Houston MSTC HS calendars. Those calendars are distributed to each student and are on the website.

Please check the parent portal on a regular basis to see your child's grades. If needed, message your child's teachers for missing grades and additional information.

Incomplete Grades

Teachers may elect to give students an incomplete grade on a report card rather than a failing grade if there are extenuating circumstances explaining the student's failure to complete assignments during the grading period. An "I" allows students to finish their work, but it also makes a student ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities and competitions.

Incomplete grades must be changed to a numerical grade before the end of the next grading period. Teachers may not give incomplete grades during the last six-week grading period of a semester. If incomplete work is not made up, then the "I" mark becomes a 50 and is averaged with the other six-week grades to determine a semester average.

Final Exams

ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO BE PRESENT FOR THEIR SCHEDULED EXAMS. They need to arrive on time and come prepared for their exams.

Students who miss a final examination will receive a grade of zero. Students should be aware that spring semester make-up finals will be administered during the summer months after graduation.

Final Exam Exemptions

Criteria for final exam exemption is posted each year. Students who earn an exemption will receive the semester average. This exemption, however, does not excuse students from school attendance. Exempted seniors will be required to attend school activities on the day of their exempted final examinations. Students with more than three absences are not eligible for exemption.

Note: Seniors who are suspended or who have excessive disciplinary referrals will lose their exemption status.

Grade Point Average (GPA) and Class Rank

Houston MSTC HS seniors receive both a preliminary and a final class rank during their senior year. The registrar calculates preliminary class ranks in October based upon students' grades from all courses taken for high school credit through the spring semester of their junior year. At the close of the fall semester, the registrar then calculates final class ranks for 12th graders based upon all grades earned through the fall semester of the senior year. The class rank is determined in the following manner:

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- Grade points are assigned to each semester grade according to the HISD grade distribution chart.
- All high school credit courses are included (including, for example, any courses in which the student may have earned an “F” and any repeated courses.
- The registrar divides the number of grade points earned by the number of grades to determine a student’s grade point average.
- The numerical ranking of seniors is determined by listing all students according to their cumulative GPAs from highest to lowest. The student with the top GPA is ranked number one, the student with the second highest is number two and so on. The same list is used to divide the class into percentage groupings (i.e. Top 10%) and into quartiles.

Grade Points (HISD Policy)			
Numeric Average Equivalent Credit Courses			
Grade	Quality	Regular	Modified
90-100 = A	5	4	3
80-89 = B	4	3	2
75-79 = C	3	2	1
70-74 = D	2	1	1
Below 70 = F	0	0	0

Transcripts

Students who need an official transcript of their academic records must make a written request to the registrar by completing a form in the main office. At certain times during the school year, the demand for transcripts is very high. Please allow at least two weeks (10 workdays) to process a transcript request. Students who are currently enrolled may receive a transcript upon request at no charge. Graduating seniors will receive one sealed, official transcript and one unsealed, unofficial transcript free of charge.

Graduation Participation

Students may not participate in the graduation ceremony unless all graduation requirements have been met.

National Honor Society Graduates

Members of the National Honor Society who are in good standing at the time of graduation may wear NHS stoles with the NHS emblem.

CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR

Classroom Conduct Grades

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Conduct grades affect eligibility for participation in school activities. Poor conduct interferes with a student's ability to learn and a teacher's ability to teach. It is also disruptive to other students in the class who want to learn. Poor conduct will be reflected in conduct grades on a student's report card. Conduct infractions, however, may not be used to affect a student's academic grade. Classroom conduct grades do affect eligibility and senior exemption status.

Students who receive a discipline referral may receive conduct grades from the teacher for instances of misbehavior.

Student Standards of Conduct

It is the responsibility of the entire Houston MSTC community to develop character in our students. The way students conduct themselves at school is a reflection on the student, parent, and the entire community. Any misconduct becomes a matter of school discipline and will be handled accordingly.

The *HISD Code of Student Conduct* provides a description of a broad range of behavior considered to be student misconduct. The student who commits an act of misconduct that may be classified into any of the five levels will be subject to disciplinary action by the assistant principal, and/or principal. Please refer to your copy of the *HISD Code of Student Conduct* for more information.

Houston MSTC follows the HISD Code of Student Conduct. All students will receive a copy of this document at the beginning of the school year. It may also be downloaded from the HISD website (www.houstonisd.org).

Parents and students should note that some acts/behaviors are violations of state law and city ordinances and may involve law enforcement officers, as well as school officials.

Students who habitually commit level 1 and level 2 offenses will have those offenses documented and the parent will be contacted by the teacher. After the third occurrence of any level 1 or level 2 offense, the student will be referred to the administrator.

Damage to School Property

Anyone who accidentally or intentionally destroys or damages anything on campus must pay the cost for repair and/or replacement. Students who are caught in the act of vandalizing the school in any way will be fully prosecuted of the law, and they and/or their parents will be billed for the cost of repairs.

Defacing school property will result in consequences.

Academic Integrity and Dishonesty

Houston MSTC HS students are expected to always practice academic integrity and honesty.

The following examples will help students understand what kinds of behavior are considered dishonest:

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Cheating:

- Looking at another student's paper during a test or quiz
- Giving or getting information about a test or quiz before or while taking it
- Looking in the book or at notes during a closed-book test or quiz
- Collaborating with another student on an assignment or project unless such work has been specifically cleared with the teacher in advance
- Getting information from another student under false pretenses
- Using technology to access information when not authorized

Plagiarism:

- Copying sentences or parts of sentences manually or electronically from someone else's writing without proper credit and/or writing someone else's idea(s) without giving the source credit for the original idea(s).

Any student who is aware of another student's violation is also practicing academic dishonesty and is obligated to report the student to the teacher.

Actions or attempted actions that run counter to these principles are a violation of the HISD *Code of Student Conduct*. Violations will be handled in according with HISD policy as stated in the HISD *Code of Student Conduct*.

The HISD Code of Student Conduct indicates that it is a disciplinary infraction to cheat or copy another student's work in class. If a student is found to be cheating, the administrator will determine the appropriate consequence.

Smoking

Smoking and the use or possession of any tobacco products is prohibited on all HISD campuses and facilities. This includes Houston MSTC and all district athletic stadiums, arenas, and venues. Please be aware this policy is also in effect at any Houston MSTC function that is held off-campus.

Selling Items at School

At no time do students have permission to sell items while on campus. This includes, but is not limited to, candy, chips, soft drinks, or sport drinks. Any unauthorized items that are sold will be confiscated by administration.

Detention

Lunch detention may be assigned for minor classroom misconduct at the teacher's discretion. Failure to serve a teacher lunch detention will result in a disciplinary referral. Administrators may also assign lunch detention.

Before and after-school detention may be assigned by an administrator or teacher. Students will receive notice of detention at least 24 hours in advance.

If a student is tardy to or does not attend an assigned detention, he/she is subject to In-School Suspension (ISS).

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Level IV Offenses

Any student who possesses a firearm, illegal knife, explosive, or any other dangerous object or weapon on school district property, on school buses, and/or in attendance at district-related activities shall be immediately suspended and recommended for expulsion by the principal (as indicated in the HISD Code of Student Conduct). For purposes of this policy, an object used in a threatening manner shall also be considered a dangerous object or weapon even if its normal use is not as a weapon.

In every case where students in middle and high school commit a Level IV offense in violation of the Code of Student Conduct, Education Code, or Penal Code, principals must pursue charges, arrests, and removal to a juvenile detention facility or county jail. The Board of Education further declared that the Code of Student Conduct would be strictly applied.

DRESS CODE POLICY

The faculty and staff of Houston MSTC expect students to come to school each day dressed appropriately to ensure the health and safety of everyone on campus. Students are expected to dress according to the dress code on campus and while representing Houston MSTC at school-related activities.

Student ID's

Students will be issued a student ID that must be visible while on campus. ID pictures must be untampered and clearly visible. Faces must always remain uncovered. Names on IDs must be readable and unobstructed.

Do not swap or share IDs with others under any circumstances.

Shirts

Monday to Wednesday: Polo-style collared tops in black, white, gold or gray. Thursday's college spirit shirts. Friday's Houston MSTC school spirit shirt. Shirts must be worn in such a manner that no cleavage or midriff is exposed.

Bottoms

Monday to Wednesday: black or khaki bottoms. Thursday to Friday: denim bottoms. Pants must fit appropriately at the waist and crotch without sagging. Pants should not have rips or tears that expose skin.

Dresses, skirts, shorts, or skorts must be appropriate length to the knee. No pajama pants, athletic pants, biking shorts, leggings, or workout/athletic attire may be worn at any time unless students are directed to do so by a coach during P.E. or an athletic event.

Undergarments

Students must always wear appropriate undergarments. Undergarments must not be visible, including underneath clothing.

Headwear

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No hats, caps, bandanas, skull caps, doo rags, bonnets, hoods, or any other head covering may be worn at any time on campus, whether inside or out.

Footwear

Tennis shoes, Crocs, sandals, flats and other closed-toe shoe designs are the required footwear. Footwear deemed unsafe will not be allowed. Shoes are permitted for medical purposes only and only when accompanied by a doctor's note. Slides, flip flops, and/or house shoes are not permitted.

Jewelry and Accessories

Jewelry with symbols or representations of illegal or inappropriate items are not allowed (see note below). Sunglasses are not to be worn on campus, whether inside or out. No "grills" or other mouth accessory will be allowed (except for orthodontia).

Jackets and Outerwear

Jackets and outerwear with school-appropriate logos and designs are allowed. Hoods, caps, hats, and doo-rags are not allowed in the building.

Backpacks

Only clear, transparent, or mesh backpacks are permitted on campus.

Please Note: Any article of clothing with representations of weapons, gangs, drugs, alcohol, sex, violence, death, vulgarity, profanity, or any other design deemed inappropriate or distracting to the educational process is not allowed. Medical and religious exceptions to dress code must be accompanied by a note and approved by administration.

CELL PHONE POLICY

Cell phones, smartwatches or other wearable communication devices should not be visible or audible at any time from arrival to dismissal, including during lunch and passing periods. Unauthorized student use of cell phones and other electronic devices will result in disciplinary consequences.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Eligibility First Grading Cycle

All students are eligible for participation in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities during the first six weeks of a new school year if the student has been promoted to the next grade level and is not on disciplinary probation.

Students who have achieved a passing average in all classes after then the first six weeks become eligible to play or perform. However, if a student's average remains below 70 in any class after the first six weeks, the suspension continues for at least three more weeks.

Eligibility Subsequent Grading Cycles

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A student who earns a six-week grade in any course that is lower than a 70 at the end of a six-week grading period shall be suspended from participation in any extracurricular or co-curricular activity event for at least three weeks during the next six-week grading period. The only exception involves honor-level courses, such as advanced placement courses. Grades earned in Pre-AP courses are not included in this exception. However, a student suspended under these “no pass, no play” rules would still be eligible to practice and rehearse with the team or group. If the student has achieved a passing average after three weeks of ineligibility, then he/she becomes eligible to play or perform. However, if a student’s average remains below 70, the suspension continues for at least three more weeks.

Suspension due to six-week report card grades shall become effective seven calendar days after the last day of the six-week grading period in which the failing grade was earned. For example, if the fourth six-week grading period ended on Tuesday, March 5, and a student received a failing grade in that fourth six-week grading cycle, he/she could participate in any activity that occurs until Tuesday, March 12 @ 4:30 p.m.

Incomplete Grades

A student receiving an incomplete six-week grade in a course is considered ineligible seven days after the end of that specific six-week grading period in which the incomplete was recorded. Such students remain ineligible during the next six-week grading period or until the incomplete grade is officially replaced with a passing grade for the grading period.

Activity Ineligibility

Eligibility rules apply to athletic teams, UIL competitions, vocational competitions, cheerleading competitions, school-sponsored clubs/organizations events, etc. Students who do not meet the designated grade requirements may practice but may not compete or perform in any of these activities, even though the activity would not require them to miss any class time.

Extracurricular Conduct Requirements

Students with discipline problems of a severe nature are subject to probation. Students placed on probation are not allowed to participate in extracurricular activities or seek or hold an elected position in the school. In addition, sponsors of a group may suspend the student from participating in a particular activity of that group because of a student’s misbehavior or lack of preparation.

Extracurricular Dress Requirements

The administrator, in cooperation with the sponsor, coach, or other person in charge of an extracurricular activity, may regulate the dress and grooming of students who participate in the activity.

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Participation in school clubs and organizations supports the development of well-rounded personalities and strengthens the student’s feeling of school pride and spirit. Each student

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is encouraged to join and actively participate in one or more of the clubs and organizations available on the Houston MSTC HS campus.

Student Activities – Approval, Scheduling, and Supervision

All student activities and events must be approved in advance by the event's assistant principal (or designee) and listed on the campus calendar. The events assistant principal maintains a schedule for each of Houston MSTC HS major facilities and venues. Timely scheduling will minimize conflicts between competing activities and allow adequate preparation for student events. The sponsor and assistant principal will ensure that the physical plant is maintained and secured for all events.

A Houston MSTC HS faculty sponsor must attend and supervise all scheduled extracurricular activities. In addition, the administration may require security, additional chaperones, and/or other types of supervision for certain events. Regardless of whether a Houston MSTC HS sponsored event is held on-campus or off-campus, the same "school-day" rules of student conduct apply.

Official Recognition

The only activities that may use the school's name or "nickname" are those which are approved by the school administration. Any person or organization that uses the school's name without proper permission is subject to disciplinary action. No school clubs and organizations may be affiliated with fraternities or sororities.

Note: Initiations and hazing are strictly prohibited. Also, all club and organization activities must be approved and chaperoned by a faculty sponsor. Students who meet on campus without their faculty sponsor present are subject to disciplinary action.

The principal must approve all fundraisers for student groups and organizations each year, the duration of a specific fundraiser, and the number of fundraisers that can take place at any one time. These limitations apply to booster club fundraising as well. Students may not sell unauthorized items or services on campus at any time. All goods and monies will be confiscated by an administrator immediately.

School-Sponsored Trips

Student travel can be a worthwhile educational experience, but the benefits come with unique challenges for all involved. To achieve the full objectives of student travel, school officials must always have the full and complete cooperation of participating students. Due to the tremendous responsibility placed on school sponsors during any trip of this sort, there may be special rules that students are expected to follow.

Students are allowed to participate in travel away from school only when their academic, attendance, and conduct records are acceptable. The assistant principal and counselor (in collaboration with trip sponsors) has the right to make a final determination on whether a student may participate in a school activity that includes travel. Students should remember that participating in such school-sponsored trips is a privilege, not a right. Absences for school-sponsored travel will be excused.

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Students must be willing to cooperate completely with their sponsors and their fellow group members so that the trip is enjoyable and beneficial for everyone involved. Certain violations can be of such a serious nature when traveling with a student group as to cause a student to be sent home early at his/her parents' expense. In addition, the student may be subsequently prohibited from participating in any future activities in which the student would represent Houston MSTC HS. Trip sponsors will make both parents and students aware of the applicable rules when asking for parent permission for student travel. Also, because of the binding contractual requirements of some travel arrangements, students who find themselves unable to participate in planned student travel (due to a loss of eligibility or other reasons) will not be issued refunds.

CLASS SCHEDULING

Schedule Change Requests

In rare cases, students may be issued a schedule containing an improper course placement or where credit was previously granted. Students in this situation may request a schedule change request by completing a *Request for Schedule Change* form and submitting it to their counselor by the deadline listed. All requests are processed in the order in which they are received. Parent visits, phone calls, pages, voice mail messages, email messages, and faxes receive no higher priority handling than a student's complete *Request for Schedule Change* form. Unless a counselor sends for a student, he/she is to remain in class and follow the original schedule until notified otherwise. You will be told if a request has been denied or a change is not possible when you visit your counselor.

A schedule will be changed only for the purposes of correcting improper course placements and leveling classes. The school's highest priority is placing each student in his/her required coherent-sequence curriculum at the appropriate degree of difficulty. Remember that all schedule changes must be completed before the 15th day of the new semester, or the student may not receive credit in the course. Requests for specific teacher and class periods will not be honored.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT AND ELECTIVE COURSES

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses

Houston MSTC HS offers a variety of Advanced Placement (AP) courses in for students to participate in rigorous, college-level studies. Through AP courses, students can earn credit or advanced standing at most of the nation's colleges and universities.

AP courses will help students gain an edge in preparing for college. AP courses give students a head start on college-level work. Students will improve their writing skills and problem-solving techniques. Most of all, students will develop the study habits necessary for rigorous course work.

AP courses help students stand out in the college entrance process. Taking AP courses shows students' maturity, readiness for college, and their willingness to push themselves academically. AP courses also help show students' commitment to academic excellence.

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AP courses help broaden students' intellectual horizons. These courses are designed to allow students to study subjects in greater depth and detail. Students will explore the world from different perspectives, most importantly, their own.

AP courses are calculated as weighted grades in a student's GPA and are based upon a 5.0 scale.

For more information regarding Advanced Placement Courses, contact Ms. Pauli or visit www.collegeboard.com.

Career and Technology Education (CTE)

Career and technology courses are an integral part of the Houston MSTC HS curriculum. CTE provides skills that are appropriate for technical employment, technical post-secondary education, and/or college work. Students are required to follow a four-year coherent sequence of courses for their chosen career path. Since students are allowed to choose their pathways, it will be mandatory that they continue their chosen pathway all four years.

Electives

An array of elective courses complements Houston MSTC HS strong core academic curriculum.

- **Languages other than English:** Houston MSTC HS students may choose between Spanish and French. The department also offers classes for native Spanish speakers.
- **Fine Arts:** The fine arts program includes visual arts, mariachi band, instrumental music, dance, and photography. Advanced options in all areas are available for students who possess an interest, aptitude, and ability in these areas.
- **PE, Health & Athletics:** Houston MSTC offers a selection of quality physical education and health classes to students. Fall marching band and JROTC count as a semester PE credit.
- **JROTC:** Junior ROTC is an elective that provides students with vocational training in military science and leadership. JROTC program participants reflect the diversity of Houston MSTC HS students. Students who participate in JROTC can substitute this course for physical education credit. Students who fully participate may have opportunities to secure ROTC scholarships to major universities and all the U.S. military academies.

Note: Students should be aware that there are additional expenses required for some extracurricular activities, such as cheerleading. The sponsor will provide a written estimate of the required expenses.

STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY

School Nurse and Clinic

The school nurse provides clinical services in the event of illness or injury occurring during the day. A student may go to the clinic only after obtaining a clinic pass from a teacher. The student must sign in and out showing the time arrived in the clinic and the time left the

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clinic on the nurse's daily registry. If the nurse believes the student should go home, she or another school official will notify the student's parent/guardian. Students who feel ill and go home without going through the clinic and attendance office will be considered truant and are subject to disciplinary action.

Prescribed Medications

A *Physician's Request for Administration of Medication during School Hours* form is available in the clinic. This form must be filled out and signed by the physician or dentist and parent/legal guardian, then returned to the nurse to be kept in the clinic for the duration of the school year. No medication, prescription or non-prescription will be dispensed by the nurse without this form being on file. The medication must be in the original container and be appropriately labeled by the pharmacy. Non-prescription medication must be in an unopened container with a pharmacy label attached. The form must be renewed each year.

Any pertinent health information should immediately be provided to the nurse so that she may be of assistance in matters concerning student health. The school nurse is responsible for checking student's immunization records. Any paperwork regarding immunizations should be given to the nurse.

Illegal Drugs and Alcohol

The use and possession of drugs and alcohol are prohibited on campus and all campus or district affiliated events. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary actions indicated in the HISD Code of Student Conduct.

Pesticides

Houston MSTC periodically applies pesticides. Information concerning these applications may be obtained from the plant operator.

CAMPUS SECURITY

Fire Drills and Evacuations

On occasion, there may be a need to evacuate the Houston MSTC buildings due to emergency conditions (or due to a drill for such an emergency). In each room of the school, a map is posted that illustrates the appropriate route for evacuating the building. The routes are designed to avoid excessive crowding at the building's exits. Alternate routes should also be provided in case the original route is inaccessible. Teachers should review their students' various evacuation routes.

Students are to remain with their assigned teacher throughout the evacuation. When leaving the building, students are to move in a safe and orderly manner away from the building to the outer perimeter of the campus closest to the exit point. All windows and doors in the classroom should be closed and locked upon evacuation. Students are to take nothing with them except their valuables.

The teacher will take class attendance after the students have moved safely from the building. Students must stay with their teacher throughout the evacuation or drill. The drills

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are preparation for the reality of fire or imminent danger and should be taken seriously. The school administration, faculty, and staff expect each student to abide by these rules.

No person shall re-enter the building until an all-clear signal is given.

Lockdown Procedures

The purpose of a school lockdown is to provide safety for students and staff. All students will be expected to follow staff directions quickly and quietly. Students must remain silent during the lockdown, and cell phones should not be used. Once students are positioned in a safe lockdown situation, they will not be allowed to leave that area. Parents and school visitors will not be allowed in the building during an active school lockdown.

ADVERTISEMENTS AND FLYERS

Campus Distributions

No materials, circulars, advertisements, notices, or similar materials may be sold or distributed on the campus or at the school- sponsored activities unless approved by the principal or designee.

Posters, Signs & Advertisements

The principal or designee must approve all posters, signs, and/or advertisements. After the advertised event or deadline has passed, the organization or individual that posted the notice must remove the posters the day after the event has occurred.

Publications

The principal is responsible for all publications edited, produced, and distributed on campus, and therefore, may exercise editorial control over them. All school publications at campus must be supervised and approved by a faculty sponsor and reflect the high ideals and expectations of the citizens of the Houston MSTC community. No unauthorized publications may be produced or distributed on campus. See the principal for approval.