



HARVARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2026-2027

**STUDENT & PARENT
HANDBOOK**

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HARVARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

810 HARVARD STREET
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77007



MAIN: 713-867-5210

FAX: 713-867-5215

WEBSITE: houstonisd.org/harvardes

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Harvard Elementary, in partnership with our community, is to empower each student with global awareness, knowledge, skills, and values necessary to make a better world.

MOTTO

Think You Can...
Work Hard...
Get Smarter!

SCHOOL COLORS

Royal Blue and Gold

MASCOT

Eagle in Flight

PROGRAMS

International Baccalaureate
Primary Years Programme (IB/PYP)
Magnet School for Science,
Technology, Engineering and
Mathematics (STEM)

Information in this handbook may be changed with or without notice based upon policy changes from the Harvard Elementary School's Shared Decision-Making Committee; the Houston Independent School District's Board of Trustees; the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Legislature or the Congress of the United States.



ADMINISTRATION AND OFFICE STAFF INFORMATION PAGE

Staff	Title	Email Address
Molly Lashway	Principal	Molly.Lashway@houstonisd.org
Dottie Lawrence	Assistant Principal	DLAWREN1@houstonisd.org
Danielle Clinton	Teacher Specialist	Danielle.Clinton@houstonisd.org
Claudia Moreno	Administrative Assistant	CMORENO3@houstonisd.org
Aseret Diaz	SIRS/ Registrar	Aseret.Diaz@houstonisd.org
Lindsey Vidal	Nurse	Lindsey.Vidal@houstonisd.org
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Thadey Diaz	Office Clerk/ Eagle's Nest Bookkeeper	Thadey.Diaz@houstonisd.org
Mia Sepulveda	Social Worker	Mia.Sepulveda@houstonisd.org
Carol Hernandez	SPED Chair	Carol.Hernandez@houstonisd.org

HISTORY OF HARVARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



On September 18, 1898, Harvard Street School opened its doors to the children of the south end section of the Heights. The City Directory for that year lists the school as “Houston Heights School No. 2 – Harvard, 8th Avenue.”

The school was built on two lots at Harvard and 8th, and its name derived from its location, although later the word Street was dropped from its title.

In 1902, rooms were added to the building. This enlarged, three-room frame building was still serving students in 1911 when a book about the Heights printed a picture of the first brick unit next to the old building.

The main structure, now called Harvard Elementary School, was built in 1923 with additions added in 1979 and 1988.

GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

At Harvard Elementary, we believe students flourish when school and home work together. We strive to develop knowledgeable, caring, and curious learners who embody the **IB Learner Profile** and are prepared to make a positive difference in their communities.

OUR STUDENTS

Harvard students are expected to:

- Be **Inquirers** by asking questions and exploring new ideas.
- Be **Knowledgeable** by building understanding and making connections.
- Be **Thinkers** by solving problems and persevering through challenges.
- Be **Communicators** by sharing ideas clearly and collaborating with others.
- Be **Caring** by showing kindness, empathy, and respect.
- Be **Principled** by acting with honesty, integrity, and responsibility.
- Be **Open-Minded** by valuing different perspectives.
- Be **Balanced** by caring for their mind, body, and well-being.
- Be **Reflective** by learning from experiences and setting goals.
- Be **Risk-Takers** by embracing challenges with courage and resilience.

OUR FAMILIES

Harvard families are encouraged to:

- Support the IB Learner Profile by encouraging curiosity, kindness, responsibility, and reflection.
- Ensure students attend school regularly and arrive on time, ready to learn.
- Foster a love of learning through reading, conversation, and new experiences.
- Stay informed through ParentSquare and communicate regularly with teachers.
- Partner with the school to support your child's growth and success.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME

Harvard Elementary is proud to be an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School offering the Primary Years Programme (PYP). The PYP is an internationally recognized framework that develops curious, knowledgeable, and caring learners through inquiry-based learning. Our Programme of Inquiry is organized around six transdisciplinary themes that connect learning across subject areas and to the real world:

- Who We Are
- Where We Are in Place and Time
- How We Express Ourselves
- How the World Works
- How We Organize Ourselves
- Sharing the Planet

Throughout each unit of inquiry, students also develop the **IB Learner Profile**, striving to become **Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-Minded, Caring, Risk-Takers, Balanced, and Reflective** individuals. Together, the Programme of Inquiry and Learner Profile prepare students to think critically, collaborate effectively, take meaningful action, and make a positive difference in their communities.



SCHEDULES

CLASSROOM SCHEDULES

Each classroom follows an individual daily schedule that includes instructional blocks, recess, lunch, and specialty classes. Your child's teacher will share their class schedule with families at the beginning of the school year.

RECESS

Harvard Elementary believes that recess is an important part of every student's school day. All students receive 30 minutes of unstructured outdoor play each day to support their physical, social, and emotional well-being. Recess may not be withheld as a punishment or disciplinary consequence.

Recess is held outdoors each day except during inclement weather, including rain or when the wind chill is below 36°F. Students are encouraged to dress appropriately for the weather so they can comfortably participate in outdoor activities.

SPECIALTY CLASSES

Students participate in a variety of specialty classes designed to enrich their educational experience. Each class visits every specialty class once per week as part of the regular school schedule. Harvard Elementary's specialty classes include Library, Physical Education (PE), Math Lab, STEAM Lab, and World Languages.

The specific day and time for each specialty class varies by classroom and will be shared by your child's teacher at the beginning of the school year. Students are expected to follow the same behavioral expectations in specialty classes as they do in their regular classroom.

BELL SCHEDULE

- 7:20 a.m. Campus Opens/ Students Enter Classroom
- 7:30 a.m. Instruction Begins
- 7:35 a.m. Students are Tardy/Morning Announcements
- 9:30 a.m. Official Attendance is Taken
- 2:55 p.m. Dismissal

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

The information below is listed for you to determine the best arrival and dismissal plan for your child. Please be sure to communicate your dismissal plan to the classroom teacher.

Please note, parents are not permitted to enter the building to walk their child to class. Staff members are posted at all arrival and dismissal locations to assist students.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES - School doors open at 7:20 a.m.

- Drop off locations:
 - Kindergarten students should enter through the Eagles Nest doors on Harvard St.
 - 1st and 2nd grade students should enter through the south wing pavilion on 8th St.
 - 3rd - 5th grade students will enter through the main entrance on Harvard St.
 - Pre-K and ECSE students will enter through the south wing pavilion on 8th St.
- Students arriving after 7:35 a.m. are tardy and must report to the office to receive a tardy slip before going to class.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES - Dismissal begins at 2:55 p.m.

Walkers Being Escorted by Parents

- Pre-K and ECSE students are dismissed from the pavilion located on 8th Street.
- Kindergarten walkers are dismissed from the classroom exit doors.
- 1st and 2nd grade walkers are dismissed from the pavilion located on 8th Street.
- 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade walkers are dismissed to parents from front Outdoor Classroom.
- Rainy day dismissal for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade walkers changes from Outdoor Classroom to the breezeway entrance by the Outdoor Classroom.

Independent Walkers

- 3rd-5th grade students may walk home independently with parent permission. A signed consent form is required and must be on file in the main office. Independent walkers will dismiss from Harvard Park and must leave school premises after being checked out. Students may not remain at Harvard Park unsupervised.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES (CONT.)

Car Riders

- 1st and 2nd grade car riders are dismissed from the pavilion located on 8th St. The line begins on the corner of 8th St and Cortlandt St.
- 3rd, 4th and 5th grade car riders are dismissed at the Main Entrance gate. The line begins on the corner of 8th St and Harvard St.
- Pre-K and Kindergarten students will only be dismissed as walkers. Please do not park in the car rider lines.

Siblings

- The eldest sibling will join the youngest sibling to be dismissed together from one location. Pick up at your youngest child's dismissal location.

Your dismissal tag or a photo of the tag is required at the time of dismissal to ensure students' safety.

EARLY CHECK-OUT & DISMISSAL CHANGES

To ensure a safe dismissal, every student should know how they will go home each day before arriving at school. We encourage families to establish a consistent dismissal routine and discuss it with their child regularly.

For the safety of all students, early check-out should be limited whenever possible. Students must be signed out through the main office by a parent, guardian, or other individual listed on the student's emergency contact information. A valid photo ID is required. Early check-out ends at 2:20 p.m.

If your child's dismissal plans change, please notify both the classroom teacher and the main office. The office must be notified of all dismissal changes before 2:00 p.m. to allow sufficient time to communicate the change to your child's teacher before dismissal.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL SAFETY

The safety of our students is our highest priority. We ask all families to help us maintain a safe arrival and dismissal by following campus procedures and reminding students to use safe practices when traveling to and from school. Students should always travel directly to and from school, use designated crossing areas, and avoid interacting with strangers. We appreciate your partnership in helping keep every Harvard Eagle safe.

WALKING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Students who walk to and from school should:

- Be picked up only at designated walker locations (unless a signed walker permission form is on file for eligible 3rd–5th grade students).
- Walk at all times and remain on sidewalks when available.
- Cross streets at designated crosswalks when directed by the crossing guard.
- Travel directly to and from school without unnecessary stops.
- Never talk to or accept rides from strangers.

BIKING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Students who ride bicycles to school should:

- Wear a properly fitted helmet.
- Walk bicycles while on school grounds.
- Park and lock bicycles in the designated bike rack.
- Ride only one person per bicycle.
- Travel directly to and from school using safe routes.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL SAFETY (CONT.)

DRIVING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

To help ensure a safe and efficient arrival and dismissal, all drivers are expected to follow campus procedures and traffic laws. Your patience and cooperation help keep our students, staff, and families safe.

Drivers should:

- Use only designated drop-off and pick-up locations.
- Display your assigned pickup number before entering the pickup line.
- Remain in the car line and do not pass other vehicles.
- Follow all traffic signs, cones, and staff directions.
- Observe the posted school zone speed limit.
- Avoid using cell phones while driving in the school zone.
- Do not park or stop within 30 feet of a crosswalk.
- Do not use the school parking lot for student drop-off or pick-up unless directed by school staff.

Thank you for helping us provide a safe, orderly, and welcoming arrival and dismissal for every Harvard Eagle.

EMERGENCY DISMISSAL

In the event that weather conditions become inclement or other emergencies exist and there is a possibility that school may be closed, HISD and the principal will notify parents via ParentSquare.

CAMPUS SECURITY

The safety of our students and staff is our highest priority. Harvard Elementary maintains a secure campus and follows Houston ISD safety protocols to provide a safe learning environment for all.

SECURED CAMPUS

To help protect our school community, exterior doors remain locked during the school day. Beginning at 7:35 a.m., all visitors must enter through the main entrance, where access is controlled through the front office.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Students and staff participate in regular safety drills throughout the school year, including fire, severe weather, lockdown, shelter in place, and other emergency drills. These drills help ensure everyone is prepared to respond safely in the event of an emergency.

VISITOR ACCESS

All visitors must check in through the front office, present a valid photo ID, and receive a visitor badge before entering the building. Visitor badges must be worn and remain visible at all times while on campus. Additional visitor expectations can be found in the Parent Partnership section of this handbook on page 20.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

In the event of an actual emergency, Harvard Elementary will communicate with families as quickly as possible through ParentSquare and, when appropriate, Houston ISD or the Houston ISD Police Department. Families should ensure their contact information is current so they can receive timely updates.

For the safety of all students and emergency personnel, please do not come to campus or attempt to pick up your child until you receive official instructions. Arriving before directed may interfere with emergency response efforts and delay the reunification process. When it is safe to do so, families will receive detailed instructions regarding student reunification and dismissal.

ATTENDANCE

Student attendance is taken daily at 9:30 a.m. Students must be at school in order to be counted present. A student must be in attendance at least two instructional hours in order to be counted present.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

The following are considered excused absences:

- Personal illness with parent note or email
- Dental or doctor appointments by physician note
- Death in the family with obituary
- Weather or road conditions making travel dangerous with administration discretion
- School sponsored or school sanctioned activities away from the campus
- Participation in school activities recognized by administration

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences are considered unexcused if a written excuse is not provided within three (3) days of return. Absences not stated above are deemed unexcused. All unexcused absences are subject to an administrative conference or investigation by an attendance officer.

***Students who miss more than 10% of the school year (excused and unexcused) may be required to attend summer school.**

TARDY POLICY

School begins promptly at 7:30 a.m. each day. Students are considered tardy at 7:35 a.m. While we understand that occasionally traffic, weather, or waking up late may cause a student to be tardy, persistent tardiness will not be tolerated. Chronic tardiness will be addressed by a school administrator.

STUDENTS ARRIVING AFTER SCHOOL BEGINS

Students arriving after 7:35 a.m. are to report to the main office. This includes students that are tardy or returning with a parent after an off-campus appointment. Students will be given a tardy pass and admitted to class. Parents may not walk their child to class.

DRESS CODE

Harvard Elementary does not require school uniforms; however, students are expected to dress in clothing that is appropriate for a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment. Students who do not meet the dress code expectations may be asked to change clothes, and parents may be contacted to bring appropriate attire to school.

SHIRTS

- Must have sleeves, short or long. No sleeveless shirts, spaghetti straps, or tank tops.
- Must cover the abdomen at all times, even when arms are stretched. No crop tops.
- Offensive (violent graphics, obscenities, etc.) clothing is not permitted and will be addressed immediately.

PANTS, SKIRTS, SHORTS, DRESSES

- Shorts, skirts, skorts, and dresses must be no shorter than mid-thigh.
- Jeans may not have rips, tears, distressing, paint, holes, etc.
- Leggings and shorts are recommended under skirts and dresses so that students are comfortable playing, sitting on the floor, and moving freely.

SWEATERS and SWEATSHIRTS

- If a sweatshirt has a hood, the hood may not be worn inside the building.
- All designs, graphics, and wording on sweaters and sweatshirts must be school appropriate (no violent graphics, obscenities, etc.).

FOOTWEAR and HEADWEAR

- Closed-toed shoes are worn at all times.
- For safety reasons, platform shoes, spiked heels, combat boots, steel toed boots, or any backless shoes including clogs, crocs, shoes with wheels, house shoes, sandals, open-toed shoes, or water socks are not permitted.
- Headwear (hats, caps) are not permitted.

*Occasionally, themed days (such as Go Texan Day) will be announced. On these days, temporary modifications to the dress code will be allowed and communicated to families in advance.



DRESS CODE (CONT.)

LOST AND FOUND

Harvard Elementary's Lost and Found is located under the stairs near the kindergarten entrance. To help lost items find their way back to students, families are encouraged to label all personal belongings with the student's first and last name. Student Council members regularly check labeled items and make every effort to return them to their owners.

Families are encouraged to check the Lost and Found weekly. Parents may access the Lost and Found before and after school. Unclaimed items are donated on a monthly basis, so please claim lost belongings promptly.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

SCHOOL NURSE

The school nurse provides care for students who become ill or injured during the school day. Parents will be contacted if a student's condition requires dismissal or additional medical attention. Please notify the nurse of any medical conditions, allergies, or health concerns, and keep emergency contact information current.

WHEN STUDENTS ARE SENT HOME SICK

If a student develops a fever, vomits, has diarrhea, or is otherwise too ill to participate in learning, the school nurse will contact a parent or emergency contact listed in school records to arrange for the student to be picked up.

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME

To help keep our school community healthy, please keep your child home if they:

- Have a fever of 100.0°F or higher.
- Have vomited or had diarrhea within the past 24 hours.
- Have symptoms of a contagious illness preventing them from participating in school.
- Have been diagnosed with a communicable disease and have not yet met the requirements to return to school.

Students should be fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and free from vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Parents should notify the school nurse if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease, such as strep throat, chickenpox, influenza, COVID-19, or another illness requiring public health reporting or exclusion from school.

MEDICATIONS

If medication must be administered during the school day, it must be brought to school by a parent or guardian and accompanied by the required physician's authorization and parent consent forms. All medications must be stored in the nurse's office and will be administered by authorized school personnel. Medications required during the school day will accompany students on school-sponsored field trips.



PARENT PARTNERSHIP

VOLUNTEERING AT SCHOOL

Classroom and specialty teachers are encouraged to establish a volunteer program in their classroom. The frequency for volunteering directly in the classroom and the types of activities the volunteer will complete is at the discretion of each teacher. Some volunteer activities can be completed at home if you are unable to come to the school during the instructional day.

All volunteers must be approved through HISD Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) procedures prior to volunteering. Registration should be completed online at <https://www.houstonisd.org/VIPS>. Allow 3-5 business days for the approval process. Please note that VIPS approval does NOT roll over from year-to-year and must be updated annually. Contact the front office for more information on VIPS.

CAMPUS VISITOR BADGES

Visitor badges must be worn at all times while in the building. There will be NO EXCEPTIONS. Every parent must report to the main office to obtain a visitor badge in order to remain on campus. Frequent volunteers may request a permanent visitor badge from the main office at the start of the school year. **Parents entering using their permanent visitor badge must check-in using the QR code prior to entering the building.** The QR code can be found outside the front door and on the back of permanent visitor badges.

CHAPERONING FIELD TRIPS

Parents and guardians may have opportunities to serve as field trip chaperones throughout the school year. To ensure student safety and the success of each trip, teachers will determine the number of chaperones needed and reserve the right to limit or deny participation when appropriate. In most cases, chaperones will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis. All chaperones must be approved through the district's VIPS (Volunteers in Public Schools) program prior to the field trip.

PARENT PARTNERSHIP (CONT.)

Chaperones are expected to ride the school bus with students unless otherwise directed by the school and are responsible for paying any required admission fees. Each chaperone will be assigned a student or group of students to supervise for the duration of the trip and is expected to remain with and actively supervise those students at all times. Chaperones must return to school on the bus with their student and the class. Students may not be checked out for the day until after they have returned to campus.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

Harvard Elementary School's Parent – Teacher Association has been in existence since 1910 when the Mother's Club of Harvard was formed. Harvard has been a member of the Texas PTA and National PTA organizations since 1945.

Harvard's PTA is a strong, connected community of parents, teachers, and school staff who come together to support one another and create a nurturing, inclusive environment where every student can thrive. The PTA sponsors, supports, and organizes many school programs and events throughout the school year including assemblies, art instruction, field trips, garden and outdoor classroom, and library/literacy programs.

Membership is renewable each school year and is open to parents, relatives, school employees, community members and business leaders. The membership campaign is conducted at the beginning of each school year, although membership can be obtained at any time.

Harvard PTA holds three general meetings for all parents and PTA members each school year. The first general meeting is held in the cafeteria on the first day of school.

For more information about membership, spirit store, and fundraising events, visit the PTA website at <https://harvardelementarypta.org/>

PARENT PARTNERSHIP (CONT.)

PARENT/STUDENT PAYMENTS

Harvard Elementary is committed to providing an equitable educational experience for all students. We strive to ensure that families are not required to pay for materials, activities, or resources that are part of a student's academic program.

At times, students may have opportunities to make optional purchases at school, such as at the book fair or for spirit items. Whenever possible, families are encouraged to use SchoolPay or other approved digital payment methods rather than sending cash to school.

If cash must be sent, please place the exact amount in a sealed envelope or resealable bag labeled with the student's name, teacher's name, the amount enclosed, and the purpose of the payment. Parents and students are responsible for keeping track of cash until it has been received by the student's teacher or the school office. The school is not responsible for money that is lost or stolen before it is received by school personnel.

All school collections and fundraising activities must be approved by the principal.

PARENT PARTNERSHIP (CONT.)

EAGLE'S NEST PROGRAM

Harvard Elementary's Eagle's Nest Program provides high-quality after-school care with a variety of enrichment opportunities for students. Registration opens each summer and is offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Enrollment is limited, and once the program reaches capacity, families may join the waitlist by completing the digital form available on the Eagle's Nest website.

<https://harvard.houstonisd.org/athletics-extracurriculars/eaglesnestasp>

For questions about enrollment, billing, or the program, please contact the Eagle's Nest office.

Email: harvardeaglesnest@gmail.com

Office Phone: 713-556-2249

Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 1:30–6:00 p.m.

Location: Room 141 (enter through the exterior door)

Program Staff

- Erick Vazquez, Coordinator
- Thadey Diaz, Bookkeeper

MEDIA RELEASE

Throughout the school year, Harvard Elementary and Houston ISD may feature students in communications that celebrate student learning, achievements, and school events. This may include district and campus websites, social media, ParentSquare, newsletters, publications, and the Harvard Yearbook.

A signed Media Release Form must be on file each school year for a student to be featured in any campus or district communications, including social media, ParentSquare, Houston ISD communications, or the Harvard Yearbook.

COMMUNICATION

PARENTSQUARE

ParentSquare is Harvard Elementary's primary communication platform for school-to-home communication. Families should check ParentSquare regularly for important campus news, upcoming events, and school announcements. Our campus calendar is maintained within ParentSquare and is the most up-to-date source for school events and important dates. Teachers also use ParentSquare to post weekly classroom updates that highlight teaching and learning connected to the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP).

COMMUNICATION FOLDER

Communication folders are sent home on Tuesdays containing important information from the main office and classroom teachers. Parents are expected to review the contents of the folder and return empty folders on Wednesday. Some items such as the Weekly Conduct Grade sheet require a parent signature each week. Individual teachers may also require parents to sign completed assignment packets or tests.

TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Families are encouraged to communicate directly with their child's teacher regarding questions or concerns. Please allow up to 48 business hours for a response before following up. Parents should contact the classroom teacher before reaching out to a campus administrator. Parents wishing to meet with a teacher should schedule a conference in advance.



LEARNING AND ACADEMICS

DAILY PLANNER

All students in grades 3-5 will be issued a daily planner to assist them in tracking homework assignments and projects. Students are required to enter information daily and to keep track of their planner. Parents are asked to monitor their child's homework by reviewing the planner each day. Teachers may ask parents to initial the planner each day if their child has a habit of not completing assignments.

TECHNOLOGY

Harvard students have access to student technology and devices while on campus to enhance learning. At Harvard, we follow the HISD Acceptable Use Policy for Electronic Services for Students.

Improper use of electronic services provided by HISD is prohibited. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. Misuse, damage, or vandalism of HISD technology resources may also lead to disciplinary action.

CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

In accordance with Texas House Bill 1481, all cellular phones and personal electronic communication devices, including smartwatches (such as Apple Watches), Fitbits, and similar devices, must be turned off while on campus. Devices must remain stored in the student's backpack, purse, or locker throughout the school day. Exceptions may be made for students with documented health, safety, or educational needs and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Students who use electronic devices without authorization will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct. Unauthorized devices will be confiscated and may only be returned following an administrative conference with a parent or guardian.

LEARNING AND ACADEMICS (CONT.)

HOMework

Homework is intended to provide students with additional practice of skills and concepts that have already been taught in the classroom. Homework is not graded and should be able to be completed independently by students. Assignments are designed to reinforce learning, build responsibility, and encourage positive study habits without placing an excessive time burden on students or families.

Students are also encouraged to read at home each evening, either independently or with an adult.

The following are general guidelines for the amount of homework students may receive:

Grade Level	Frequency of Assignments	Total Daily Average (all subjects)
PK/ Kinder	Daily (4 days a week)	20 minutes
1st	Daily (4 days a week)	30 minutes
2nd	Daily (4 days a week)	30 minutes
3rd	Daily (4 days a week)	40 minutes
4th	Daily (4 days a week)	40 minutes
5th	Daily (4 days a week)	40 minutes

LEARNING AND ACADEMICS

(CONT.)

If a student consistently has difficulty completing homework within the recommended time or has questions about an assignment, parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips will be arranged by grade levels to enhance classroom learning. Permission slips will be sent home by the teacher to be signed and returned. Students will not be permitted to go on a trip without a signed permission slip.

GRADING POLICIES

Grades are intended to communicate a student's level of mastery of the knowledge and skills taught in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Harvard Elementary is committed to grading practices that are fair, equitable, and reflective of student learning.

For students in kindergarten through fifth grade, report card grades are based on a combination of formative and summative assessments. Formative assessments, such as classwork, quizzes, interactive notebooks, and exit tickets, provide ongoing feedback throughout the learning process and account for 60% of a student's grade. Summative assessments, including projects, unit assessments, essays, presentations, and other demonstrations of learning, account for the remaining 40%.

Students who earn a 69% or below on a summative assessment will be provided a reasonable opportunity to demonstrate additional learning through reassessment or correction opportunities in accordance with district grading guidelines.

Pre-Kindergarten students receive standards-based report cards that communicate progress toward grade-level developmental expectations rather than numerical grades.

Questions regarding grading practices or a student's academic progress should be directed to the classroom teacher.

LEARNING AND ACADEMICS (CONT.)

HONOR ROLL

Students in kindergarten through fifth grade are eligible to earn Honor Roll recognition each six-week grading period.

- All A's Honor Roll: Students who earn an A (90–100) in all core academic subjects (reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies).
- All A's and One B Honor Roll: Students who earn A's (90–100) in all core academic subjects with no more than one B (80–89).

Honor Roll recognition is based on report card grades for the current six-week grading period.

PROMOTION STANDARDS

To be promoted to the next grade level, students must meet both academic and attendance requirements established by Houston ISD.

Students must earn a final average of 70 or higher in all core academic subjects. In addition, students must attend school at least 90% of the school year, meaning they may not miss more than 18 days, whether absences are excused or unexcused.

Students who do not meet one or more of these promotion requirements may be required to attend summer school in order to be considered for promotion. Summer school locations are determined by Houston ISD and are typically held at designated campuses rather than at Harvard Elementary.

Promotion following summer school is determined by the summer school staff in accordance with district guidelines. Final promotion decisions are not made by Harvard Elementary staff.

LEARNING AND ACADEMICS (CONT.)

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

Harvard Elementary follows a six-week grading cycle. Throughout each grading period, parents can monitor their child's academic progress through HISD Connect.

Progress Reports are issued during the third week of each six-week grading cycle. Parents are encouraged to review their child's progress and communicate with the teacher if they have questions or concerns.

Report Cards are issued at the end of each six-week grading period for all students in Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade. Report card grades reflect each student's performance during the grading period and are based on district grading guidelines. For students who transfer during a grading period, report card grades will be determined using grades earned at both the previous school and Harvard Elementary, as appropriate.

HISD Connect – ON-LINE GRADES, PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

HISD Connect allows parents and guardians to monitor their child's academic progress, including grades, progress reports, report cards, attendance, and other important student information. Families may register for an account by visiting www.houstonisd.org and selecting HISD Connect.

To create an account, you will need your child's HISD Student ID number, date of birth, and the last five digits of the student's Social Security number.

If you need assistance registering, please visit the Harvard Elementary main office. For the security of student information, registration information cannot be provided over the phone, by email, or by fax. All requests must be made in person.

LEARNING AND ACADEMICS

(CONT.)

REQUESTING RECORDS

Copies of student records may be requested from the main office. Requests can be made via email to our Registrar, Aseret Diaz (aseret.diaz@houstonisd.org). Requests for records must be in writing. The records will be prepared, and you will be contacted to pick up the documents in the main office. The records clerk will verify your relationship with the child and check your identification before releasing any information. The turnaround time for record requests is 2 business days after the request is made.

STUDENT BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

At Harvard Elementary, we believe that every student contributes to creating a safe, inclusive, and welcoming learning community. Guided by the IB Learner Profile, students are encouraged to demonstrate attributes such as being caring, principled, respectful, and reflective in their daily interactions with others.

Students are expected to follow classroom, campus, and district expectations in all areas of the school, including classrooms, hallways, the cafeteria, playground, restrooms, buses, and during school-sponsored activities. These expectations help ensure that every student can learn in a positive and supportive environment.

All students are expected to follow the Houston ISD Code of Student Conduct and comply with campus behavior expectations. When concerns arise, the school utilizes restorative practices, problem-solving, and appropriate disciplinary measures to help students learn from their choices while maintaining a safe learning environment for everyone. The complete HISD Code of Student Conduct can be found [here](#).

BEHAVIOR SUPPORT AND DISCIPLINE

At Harvard Elementary, behavior is viewed as an opportunity for learning and growth. Classroom teachers are responsible for managing student behavior through clear expectations, positive behavior supports, restorative practices, and appropriate classroom interventions.

LEARNING AND ACADEMICS

(CONT.)

When a student's behavior becomes more serious, repeated, or cannot be effectively addressed in the classroom, the teacher may submit an office referral. Office referrals are handled by the grade-level administrator in accordance with the Houston ISD Code of Student Conduct. Administrative responses may include restorative conversations, parent conferences, counseling supports, consequences outlined in the Code of Student Conduct, or other appropriate interventions based on the individual circumstances.

REPORTING CONCERNS

Harvard Elementary values strong communication between home and school. If a parent has a concern regarding a student's behavior, peer conflict, or school safety, the first point of contact should be the classroom teacher. Many concerns can be resolved quickly through communication and collaboration with the teacher.

For concerns involving peer conflict, families may also contact the school social worker, Mia Sepulveda, for additional support and guidance.

If a concern continues or has not been satisfactorily resolved, parents are encouraged to contact the appropriate grade-level administrator:

- Pre-Kindergarten – 1st Grade: Danielle Clinton, Magnet Coordinator/Administrator
- 2nd – 3rd Grade: Dottie Lawrence, Assistant Principal
- 4th – 5th Grade: Molly Lashway, Principal

LEARNING AND ACADEMICS

(CONT.)

RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE

The Harvard Elementary staff implements restorative discipline practices. Restorative discipline is defined as a relational approach to building school climate and addressing student behavior. The approach fosters belonging over exclusion, social engagement over control, and meaningful accountability over punishment.

CONDUCT GRADES

As part of our behavior system, students receive weekly conduct grades that communicate how consistently they are meeting classroom and campus behavioral expectations. These weekly ratings are used to determine the conduct grade that appears on each six-week report card.

Conduct grades reflect a student's overall behavior at school, including their ability to follow the school's Essential Agreements, demonstrate the attributes of the IB Learner Profile, and adhere to the Houston ISD Code of Student Conduct.

Conduct grades are reported using the following scale:

- E – Exemplary: Consistently exceeds behavioral expectations and serves as a positive role model.
- S – Satisfactory: Consistently meets behavioral expectations with occasional reminders.
- P – Poor: Frequently requires reminders and additional behavior support.
- U – Unsatisfactory: Consistently does not meet behavioral expectations despite interventions and support.

Students who receive an out-of-school suspension during a grading period will receive an Unsatisfactory (U) conduct grade for that grading period.

SCHOOL NUTRITION AND CELEBRATION GUIDELINES

BREAKFAST

Harvard Elementary participates in the Houston ISD Breakfast in the Classroom program. Breakfast is provided free of charge to all students each school day and is served in classrooms shortly after students arrive. Participation is optional.

BRINGING LUNCH FROM HOME

Students are welcome to bring a nutritious lunch from home to enjoy during their assigned lunch period. Lunches may be packed in a disposable bag or a reusable lunch bag. Reusable lunch bags and containers should be clearly labeled with the student's name.

Students are responsible for managing their own lunches. They should be able to independently open food containers and packaging and know which items should be thrown away (such as wrappers and disposable bags) and which items should be brought home (such as reusable containers, utensils, and lunch bags). Packing lunches that students can manage independently helps maximize their time to eat and supports their independence.

To promote healthy choices, students should not bring energy drinks, soda, or excessive amounts of candy in their lunches.

DROPPING OFF LUNCH

We strongly encourage families to send lunches with students at the beginning of the school day whenever possible. This helps minimize classroom interruptions and ensures students have their lunch on time.

If a student forgets a lunch, a parent or guardian may drop it off at the main office. All lunches must be clearly labeled with the student's name and teacher's name and left at the designated lunch drop-off area in the office. School staff will ensure the lunch is delivered to the cafeteria in time for the student's assigned lunch period.

To minimize disruptions to the instructional day, parents and family members may not deliver lunches directly to classrooms or the cafeteria.

SCHOOL NUTRITION AND CELEBRATION GUIDELINES (CONT.)

PURCHASING A SCHOOL LUNCH

Students may purchase lunch and select à la carte items, such as chips and ice cream, from the school cafeteria. Harvard Elementary no longer qualifies for the federal free meal program, and meal prices are determined by Houston ISD.

The monthly breakfast and lunch menu is available on the Houston ISD Nutrition Services website.

Families are encouraged to add funds to their student's cafeteria account online by creating an account at www.schoolcafe.com/HOUSTONISD. Using SchoolCafé is the preferred method of payment and helps reduce the need for students to bring cash to school. If cash is sent, parents and students are responsible for ensuring it is delivered to the cafeteria staff.

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

The cafeteria is an extension of the classroom, and students are expected to demonstrate respectful behavior while eating lunch. Students should use an indoor voice, remain seated unless given permission to get up, raise their hand if they need assistance, and clean up their eating area before leaving.

To promote safety and an orderly dismissal, students should remain seated until a cafeteria monitor brings the trash can to their table. Students are encouraged to use the restroom before or after lunch, as only a limited number of students will be permitted to leave the cafeteria to use the restroom during lunch periods.

For the health and safety of all students, food and drinks may not be shared or traded with others.

SCHOOL NUTRITION AND CELEBRATION GUIDELINES (CONT.)

FAMILY LUNCH DAYS

To promote campus safety and minimize disruptions to instruction, families may eat lunch with their child in the cafeteria only on designated **Family Lunch Days**. For the 2026–2027 school year, Family Lunch Days will be held on September 11, October 23, December 11, January 22, February 12, March 19, and May 7.

Harvard Elementary also hosts two **IB Portfolio Picnics** each year. These special events provide families with the opportunity to enjoy lunch with their child while exploring their student's IB portfolio and celebrating their learning throughout the year. The Fall IB Portfolio Picnic will be held on November 19–20, 2026, and the Spring IB Portfolio Picnic will be take place on April 29–30, 2027. Each grade level will be assigned a specific date for these events, and additional information will be shared as the dates approach.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS and SPECIAL TREATS

To minimize interruptions to instruction, birthday celebrations will take place during the student's scheduled recess.

Families who wish to provide a birthday treat for the class may send one store-bought treat per student (such as cupcakes, cookies, or donuts). All treats must remain in their original packaging with the ingredient label visible. Homemade treats and other food items, such as candy, sheet cakes, sodas, or fast food, are not permitted.

To ensure we can safely accommodate students with food allergies and other dietary needs, families must notify the school nurse, Lindsay Vidal, at least 48 hours before bringing birthday treats to school. Some students have medical accommodations that require advance planning.

Birthday treats should be sent to school with the student at the beginning of the day. Parents may not deliver treats directly to classrooms or attend classroom celebrations. Balloons, flowers, gifts, party favors, and other party items are not permitted at school.

STUDENT and PARENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE 2026-2027 Harvard Elementary

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE BY COMPLETING THE FORM
IN LINK BELOW (SCAN QR CODE).**

Student and Parent Handbook Signature Page (2026-2027)



A photograph of the Harvard Elementary School building, a three-story brick structure with white-framed windows and a green double door. The entrance is framed by a stone archway with the school's name inscribed above the door. A decorative urn sits on the steps leading to the entrance. The image is partially obscured by a dark blue vertical bar on the left and a diagonal graphic of yellow, dark blue, and white stripes in the top right corner.

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