

---

# MIDDLE SCHOOL FACULTY HANDBOOK 2024-25



**HARKER®**

**Middle School Campus**

4525 Union Ave., San Jose, CA 95124

408.553.0300

[www.harker.org](http://www.harker.org)

---

The Harker Office of Communication follows the guidelines of the Associated Press Stylebook for all informational publications.

<b>WELCOME LETTER TO THE FACULTY.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>THE HARKER SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>I. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
A. THE HARKER PHILOSOPHY.....	3
B. HARKER'S EXPECTED SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING RESULTS.....	4
D. ADMINISTRATION, DIRECTORS, DEPARTMENT CHAIRS AND LEAD TEACHERS.....	5
<b>II. TEACHER PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS.....</b>	<b>7</b>
A. CRITERIA FOR TEACHER EVALUATION.....	7
B. FURTHER QUALITIES OF A SUCCESSFUL HARKER TEACHER.....	8
C. TEACHER EVALUATIONS.....	9
D. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.....	9
E. PERSONAL QUALITIES OF A HARKER STUDENT & MODELING.....	10
F. MODELING: DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND OTHER UNWELCOME BEHAVIOR.....	10
G. UNDERSTANDING THE EARLY ADOLESCENT.....	10
<b>III. ACADEMIC POLICIES &amp; INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>13</b>
A. PERFORMANCE GROUPING.....	13
B. PLACEMENT REVIEW.....	13
C. PLACEMENT FOR COURSES THAT PLACE INTO HONORS FOR THE FIRST TIME.....	14
D. CURRICULA.....	15
E. STUDENT ASSESSMENTS.....	15
F. OFFICE HOURS/TESTING CALENDAR.....	16
G. HOMEWORK.....	17
<b>IV. STUDENTS' GRADES AND GRADE REPORTING.....</b>	<b>20</b>
A. GRADE BOOKS & GRADE BOOK SNAPSHOTS.....	20
B. LOW EXAM SCORE NOTIFICATION.....	20
C. REPORT CARDS.....	20
D. PARENT-STUDENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES.....	21
E. REACH-OUTS.....	21
<b>V. COUNSELING DEPARTMENT.....</b>	<b>22</b>
A. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY.....	22
B. GENERAL.....	22
C. ACADEMIC FOLLOW-UP SYSTEM: THE HEART OF THE COUNSELOR'S JOB.....	23
D. ACADEMIC REFERRAL SYSTEM.....	23
E. REFERRING A STUDENT TO THE COUNSELING DEPARTMENT.....	24
F. RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS WHO NEED ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC HELP.....	24
G. FOR STUDENTS WHOSE GRADES ARE SIGNIFICANTLY BELOW REQUIRED LEVELS.....	25
H. COUNSELING PROTOCOLS FOR IDENTIFYING CONCERNING BEHAVIORS/RECEIVING REPORTS OF ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR.....	26
<b>VI. ACADEMIC AWARDS.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>VII. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS.....</b>	<b>28</b>
A. ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION.....	28
B. SOLICITING HARKER FAMILIES FOR FUNDRAISERS.....	30
C. PROCESS FOR HOSTING PARENT PRESENTATIONS.....	31

<b>VIII. STUDENT ATTENDANCE.....</b>	<b>31</b>
A. STUDENT ATTENDANCE.....	31
B. EXTENDED STUDENT ABSENCES.....	31
<b>IX. STUDENT APPEARANCE.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>X. FACULTY ATTENDANCE.....</b>	<b>32</b>
A. SUBSTITUTE TEACHER PROCEDURES.....	32
B. FACULTY LEAVING CAMPUS DURING FREE PERIODS.....	33
C. AFTER-SCHOOL TIME FOR TEACHERS.....	33
D. HOURS OF CAMPUS OPERATIONS.....	33
E. LENGTH OF SCHOOL YEAR.....	34
<b>XI. OTHER FACULTY POLICIES/EXPECTATIONS.....</b>	<b>34</b>
A. FACULTY MEETINGS.....	34
B. FACULTY APPEARANCE/PROFESSIONALISM.....	35
C. TEACHER AS TUTOR.....	35
D. TEACHER AS COACH.....	35
E. SUPERVISORY ASSIGNMENTS.....	36
F. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT.....	36
G. CLASSROOM DÉCOR/CLEANLINESS.....	36
H. RECYCLING PROGRAM AND SUSTAINABILITY.....	37
I. VOICEMAIL/EMAIL/MAILBOXES.....	37
J. STUDENT FILES.....	38
K. USE OF AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING DEVICES.....	38
L. TEACHERS AUDITING CLASSES.....	38
M. FACULTY CHECKOUT.....	38
N. INVENTORIES.....	38
<b>XII. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR FACULTY.....</b>	<b>38</b>
A. RECEPTION DESK.....	38
B. SCANTRON.....	38
C. BOOKS.....	38
D. BRING YOUR OWN LAPTOP (BYOL).....	39
E. CLASSROOM SUPPLIES.....	39
F. FURNITURE REQUESTS.....	39
G. LOST AND FOUND.....	39
H. UNIFORM EXCHANGE.....	39
I. VISITORS.....	39
J. COPIERS.....	40
K. FACULTY & STAFF GIFTING.....	40
<b>XIII. ATHLETICS, AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION.....</b>	<b>40</b>
A. ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY.....	40
B. PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES.....	40
C. AFTER-SCHOOL SPORTS.....	40
D. BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL ENRICHMENT (BASE).....	41
E. USE AND SUPERVISION OF POOL FACILITIES.....	41
<b>XIV. BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT.....</b>	<b>42</b>

A. GOALS OF BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICIES.....	42
B. BEHAVIOR OUTSIDE OF CLASS.....	43
C. BEHAVIORAL REFERRAL FORM.....	43
D. MAJOR INFRACTIONS.....	44
E. OTHER DISCIPLINARY POLICIES.....	44
<b>XV. SCHOOLWIDE COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RELATIONS: OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>XVI. BUSINESS OFFICE.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>XVII. LIBRARY.....</b>	<b>47</b>
A. LIBRARY MISSION.....	47
B. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AND RESOURCES.....	47
C. RECOMMENDING MATERIALS.....	47
D. BORROWING MATERIALS.....	47
E. LIBRARY PRIVACY POLICY.....	47
<b>XVIII. FIELD TRIPS / SPECIAL EVENTS.....</b>	<b>48</b>
A. SPECIAL CLASSROOM EVENTS.....	48
B. FIELD TRIPS – GENERAL.....	48
C. OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIPS.....	48
D. PERMISSION FORMS - GENERAL.....	49
E. FIELD TRIP TRANSPORTATION.....	49
F. FACULTY AND STAFF DRIVERS FOR FIELD TRIPS.....	49
G. SPECIFIC PROCEDURES.....	50
H. GENERAL CHAPERONE EXPECTATIONS.....	51
I. SPOUSES, PARTNERS AND FRIENDS AS GUESTS WHILE CHAPERONING.....	51

# WELCOME LETTER TO THE FACULTY

Dear Teachers,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the administration, I would like to welcome you to the 2024-25 academic year at The Harker School. The Harker School remains committed to its tradition of academic excellence, well-rounded programs, character education and global citizenship. These values, expressed in the mission and philosophy statements, have guided the school over the past century and will continue to guide us throughout the next century.

Harker encourages students to learn deeply across all domains and apply that learning towards making a difference in the world. We also believe in being the best educational institution we can be. At the heart of this commitment to excellence is the recognition that the teacher is the most important element in establishing the quality of the school. It is our sincere desire to support you in every way possible. The best way for the administration to assist you is through clear communication, and I urge you to contact us at any time.

Each of you is an important team member, and together we can make this year an experience on which we will look back with pride. Our efforts will have a significant, long-range impact on the lives of our students, and on the world we share. I wish you the very best this year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Yager". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" and last name "Yager" clearly distinguishable.

Brian Yager Head  
of School

# THE HARKER SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to educate students for success at college and beyond,  
and to foster kindness, respect, and integrity within  
a safe and nurturing environment.

We achieve academic excellence through the development of  
intellectual curiosity, personal accountability, and love of learning.

Our comprehensive program and exceptional faculty and staff help  
students discover, develop, and enjoy their unique talents.

We honor individuality, embrace diversity, and promote leadership  
and service, preparing students to take their place as global  
citizens.

The school tries to maintain consistency when referring to our various schoolwide goals.  
The mission statement explains our values as they relate to the tenets in the  
crest.

Please note the way these words are used:

## **Tenet**

This word describes the four words on the crest:  
Praestantia (excellence), Scientia (knowledge), Constantia (character), Beneficium (service)

## **Pillars**

This word is reserved exclusively for upper school honor code/code of conduct.

## **Values**

Our values are the words in the mission that are considered the most  
important for our community to live by, shown in italics:

"Our mission is to educate students for success at college and beyond, and to foster ***kindness,***  
***respect,*** and ***integrity*** within a safe and nurturing environment. We achieve academic  
excellence through the development of intellectual curiosity, ***personal accountability,*** and love  
of learning."

# I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to inform all faculty of the school's policies and procedures as well as to give a sense of our culture and in general, what we are working to accomplish during the K-12 journey on which our students embark. It is important that experienced personnel review this handbook thoroughly at the start of each school year as there are always some policy or other changes each year.

Teachers need to be familiar with the contents of this handbook, the personnel policies handbook for faculty and staff, the admissions materials and the Parent/Student Handbook. This will ensure maximum consistency in our dealings with students, parents and each other.

The first section is somewhat general and includes varied information pertinent to everyone. Subsequent sections are more specifically directed to individual departments. The scope and impact of this policy statement will be greatly enhanced by frequent review. Communication between administration, teachers and staff must be continuous, open and honest to ensure that we achieve our mutual goals.

## A. THE HARKER PHILOSOPHY

The Harker School is a coeducational, independent, college-preparatory day school serving students in K-12. Our goal is to develop lifelong learners and well-rounded global citizens. Through comprehensive academic and extracurricular programs, Harker provides a challenging and balanced education. The Harker experience comprises the following cornerstones: students and families, teachers, curriculum, and a learning environment which includes inspiring facilities.

### STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Harker students and families value learning and are kind, well-rounded global citizens. The students have passions within and beyond the classroom as they prepare to shape the world of tomorrow. Harker students are intrinsically motivated to pursue deep learning and extracurricular activities, and they take pride in contributing to a supportive peer culture where it is "cool to be smart and kind."

### TEACHERS

Harker seeks to attract teachers who are experts in their fields, love working with children, and who, through their teaching, inspire students to reach their highest potential. The Harker teacher creates a rich learning environment within and beyond the classroom so that students can find their place in the world today. Harker teachers, like the students, also care about the community, fostering the values that contribute to a successful and happy life.

### CURRICULUM

The Harker School believes in a deep understanding of subject matter, broad thinking skills and a love of learning as the key ingredients for success in the future. Our program provides a robust academic experience at a pace that meets individual student needs. Beyond the classroom, we have rich extracurricular offerings for a well-rounded, complete experience, with opportunities for students to pursue their passions wherever they lead.

### LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

There is no substitute for the special place that is the Harker campus. Motivated students, talented teachers, inspiring facilities and engaging programs, both within and outside the classroom, all combine to create the unique environment of The Harker School. The Harker experience extends beyond the campus walls as students reach out and serve the broader community. The school and its families are partners in helping the students achieve their highest potential.



## B. HARKER'S EXPECTED SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING RESULTS

Harker's Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs), outlined below, reflect the goals of the entire Harker community, and align with the accreditation expectations established by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and the California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS).

The Harker School focuses on four areas in the life of its students and the school: strong academics, broad programs, personal growth and community. We expect students to demonstrate the following ideals throughout college and life:

### ACADEMICS

- love learning for its own sake
- possess a strong foundation in core subjects
- learn and work independently and collaboratively

### BROAD PROGRAMS

- pursue a well-rounded education
- explore different activities and subjects
- develop lifelong passions

### PERSONAL GROWTH

- demonstrate and encourage moral and ethical behavior
- show kindness, honesty and respect
- pursue wellness in all its forms

### COMMUNITY

- appreciate individual similarities and differences
- develop local and global understanding
- participate in school, local and global affairs

## D. ADMINISTRATION, DIRECTORS, DEPARTMENT CHAIRS AND LEAD TEACHERS

### ADMINISTRATION

---

Assistant Head of School, Academic Affairs	Jennifer Gargano
Assistant Head of School, Student Affairs	Ken Allen
Chief Financial Officer	Martin Bradford
Director of Advancement	Kimberly Lobe
Director of Admission	Danielle Holquin
Elementary Division Head	Kristin Giammona
Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives	Joe Rosenthal
Facilities Director	Shayne Hayle
Head of School	Brian Yager
Middle School Division Head	Evan Barth
Office of Communication Director	Pam Dickinson
Primary Division Head	Debra Cope
Upper School Division Head	Paul Barsky

### DIRECTORS & MANAGERS - K-12

---

Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	Patricia Lai Burrows
Director of Global Education	Jennifer D. Walrod
Director of Health Services	Debra Nott
Director of Information Technology	Jesse Lara
Directory of Security	Tor Warmdahl
Executive Chef & Food Service Manager	Steve Martin
Human Resources Manager	Marissa Locketti
Learning, Innovation & Design Director	Elizabeth Brumbaugh
Library Director	Connie Hollin
Summer School Director	Cindi Gonsalves
Transportation Manager	Heather Armada

### DIRECTORS, MANAGERS & OTHER PERSONNEL - MIDDLE SCHOOL

---

Assistant Division Head, 6-8	Alison Ung
Athletic Director, Grades 4-8	Theresa Smith
Before- and After-School Enrichment (BASE) Director	Lorena Martinez
Campus Librarian	Bernie Morrissey
Counselors	Kara Seeger (A-L), Melinda Gonzales (M-Z)
Director of Admission, Middle School	Danielle Holquin
Director of Learning, Innovation and Design, Middle School	Liz Brumbaugh
Learning Specialist	Kristen Morelli
Nurse	Traci Senegal

## DEPARTMENT CHAIRS - MIDDLE SCHOOL

---

Computer Science, 6-12

English

History

Mathematics

Modern & Classical Languages, Grades 1-8

Performing Arts, K-12

Performing Arts Lead Teacher

Physical Education

Science

Visual Arts, 6-12

Eric Nelson

Arabelle Aguirre-Chow

Keith Hirota

Vandana Kadam

Julie Pinzás

Laura Lang-Ree

Paul Vallergera

Samantha Sellu

Kathy Peng

Josh Martinez

## II. TEACHER PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS

### A. CRITERIA FOR TEACHER EVALUATION

The outstanding faculty at The Harker School is one of the cornerstones that make an education here exceptional and unique. Harker teachers actively strive to reach the highest standards of teaching and professionalism in their work. While we recognize the unique talents and personal styles of individual teachers, we share a common vision of the exemplary Harker teacher. In articulating this vision, we drew inspiration and expertise from multiple sources: current and past Harker teachers, The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, the National Association of Independent Schools, and even our own fond recollections of teachers who have inspired us in the past. The following criteria represent our aspirations and commitments to the Harker community and to ourselves as professionals.

#### 1. Exemplary Harker teachers demonstrate their commitment to students by

- modeling proper behavior and promoting the Harker community;
- establishing a cooperative, respectful and positive rapport with students;
- maintaining professional boundaries with students;
- being effective, energetic and supportive as advisors or homeroom teachers;
- communicating their role as supportive advocates to students;
- supporting students by coaching, sponsoring clubs, and attending events, performances and contests.

#### 2. Exemplary Harker teachers demonstrate knowledge of their subject areas and of instructional methodologies by

- creating well-structured, thought-provoking classes and challenging assignments;
- having a thoughtful approach to teaching that includes a variety of techniques and appropriate use of technology;
- establishing an appropriate pace for students and keeping them positively engaged;
- designing long- and short-term plans that incorporate curricular content and reflect grade-level expectations;
- teaching concepts and skills in meaningful ways, such as encouraging students to apply them to real-life contexts;
- exhibiting mastery of the content they teach.

#### 3. Exemplary Harker teachers assume responsibility for managing and monitoring student learning by

- maintaining a classroom environment of respect and rapport;
- developing a culture of learning, in which high expectations are the norm and students take pride in their work;
- devoting ongoing attention to students who are having academic difficulties;
- assisting all students to become self-directed learners who can demonstrate, articulate and evaluate what they learn;
- answering questions in a variety of ways when a student does not understand a concept;
- incorporating a variety of teaching techniques that demonstrate a knowledge of students' varied approaches to learning;
- communicating information effectively to students;
- providing students with appropriate, explicit and timely feedback on their work so that they

- understand their strengths and can learn from their mistakes;
  - communicating with parents, counselors, administrators and appropriate personnel in a timely and effective manner;
  - involving all students in the assessment of their own learning.
4. Exemplary Harker teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience by
- initiating growth and change in their own intellectual and professional development;
  - creating annual goals and concrete steps to achieve them;
  - eliciting feedback from students, parents, administrators and peers;
  - modeling the actions of an educated person: reading, questioning and innovating;
  - critically examining their teaching practice on a regular basis.
5. Exemplary Harker teachers participate in learning communities by
- sharing best practices with the wider community;
  - pursuing opportunities to develop professional knowledge and skills and by participating in the extended professional community;
  - engaging with local and/or extended communities to improve professional practice.
6. Exemplary Harker teachers are active and supportive members of the school community by
- acting as ambassadors for the Harker community and its mission;
  - demonstrating enthusiasm for the Harker community;
  - meeting deadlines consistently, including – but not limited to – the prompt submission of grades, progress reports and reachouts;
  - carrying out supervisory tasks;
  - modeling consistent attendance and punctuality;
  - participating in the establishment and maintenance of an atmosphere of collegial support;
  - assisting in identifying and solving student, curricular and school problems;
  - collaborating with colleagues and the school's leadership in the design and implementation of programs and curriculum within the context of the school's mission.

The above criteria were created by a committee of teachers; some ideas were adapted from the following sources:

- teacher criteria already published in the Harker faculty handbook
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards,
- California Standards for the Teaching Profession
- NAIS Principles of Good Practice

## B. FURTHER QUALITIES OF A SUCCESSFUL HARKER TEACHER

The successful Harker teacher gives **HEC** every day. They have **H**igh expectations, are **E**ngaging and are in the students' **C**orners.

It is also imperative that Harker teachers be **positive role models** for the students, constantly bearing in mind the considerable impact they have on the personal growth, academic achievement and emotional stability of students. Teachers exhibit and foster a love of learning in their subject areas and are expected to display the same level of integrity that we expect of the students.

Each teacher is expected to establish a warm, cordial relationship with students while maintaining good classroom control. Verbal abuse, humiliation, name-calling, yelling or screaming at students

and physically handling students are both unprofessional and unacceptable. Students should feel confident that the teacher respects them and wants them to be successful. It is imperative that everyday teachers make sure that students feel that they are part of a **safe and nurturing environment**, per our mission statement. To ensure a safe and nurturing environment, teachers must also be mindful to follow through and be consistent in all areas, at all times. The importance of doing so cannot be underestimated or overemphasized.

Furthermore, teachers are expected to develop strong faculty relations – a cooperative and collaborative relationship with their colleagues. We expect that all faculty interactions, including emails, reflect a tone of professionalism and respect. In the event a problem or concern with another faculty or staff member arises, employees may decide to resolve the issue between them. However, certain situations may be uncomfortable or unsuitable for the parties to resolve informally. In those cases, employees should consult with human resources or the appropriate manager/ division head for guidance on how best to proceed.

## C. TEACHER EVALUATIONS

The purpose of teacher evaluations is developmental; they exist to help teachers continually improve the quality of teaching and, thus, of our students' learning. We therefore ask that teachers receive the feedback in the spirit in which it is given. Since we can all improve in our crafts, teachers should expect to receive regular informal feedback from their department chair, division head or other administrators.

Each teacher will be formally evaluated during their time at Harker, as well. The head of school, assistant head of school for academic affairs, division head and department chairs will formally evaluate teachers according to the following minimum observation schedule. All classroom visits for the purpose of formal evaluations will be unannounced.

- First-year teachers will be observed by the head of school, division head and department chair.
- Second-year teachers will be observed by the assistant head of school for academic affairs and the department chair.
- Third-year teachers and up – department chairs will observe them every year.
- Department chairs are evaluated by the division head.

Additional observations may be scheduled as deemed necessary by the administration. Teachers may also request observations or feedback from their department chair, division head or the assistant head of school for academic affairs should they desire additional feedback.

## D. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As part of a teacher's professional growth, teachers create a goal for the year that they identify as helping them grow as educators.

Teachers are also encouraged to seek out the various, unique internal opportunities provided at The Harker School for professional growth. These opportunities include, but are not limited to: working with the directors of learning innovation and design to learn how to meaningfully enhance the curriculum; working with the global education director to learn how global education can be used to meaningfully extend a lesson or unit; or working with the librarians to better understand information literacy and how it may be meaningfully integrated into a lesson, unit or curriculum.

Teachers are also encouraged to observe other teachers' classrooms within or across campuses, to better understand and appreciate the school as a whole and/or articulation of curriculum in a given discipline.

Harker teachers are also highly encouraged to share their expertise with educators outside of the Harker environment at conferences and workshops. We feel it is our responsibility to share our professional expertise in an effort to benefit the education of all students. Harker faculty are

encouraged to attend diversity, equity and inclusiveness professional development conferences and activities to be better prepared to handle discriminatory incidents and to better understand how to help build a safe and inclusive community.

There are professional development monies budgeted for every teacher annually, to use to enhance their professional skills. If a teacher's professional interests require an amount greater than the \$800 allotted annually, they must request this amount from their department chair during the budget submission time (November) for the following school year. The faculty member will then be told if this additional amount is not approved.

For professional development interests that are particularly expensive and will make impacts beyond a teacher's individual classroom, teachers may also apply for a Vegesna Foundation Teacher Excellence Grant. Information about that grant is given in November and applications are due in early January.

If teachers need ideas for how they can best further their professional growth, they should consult with their department chair, their division head or the assistant head of school for academic affairs.

## **E. PERSONAL QUALITIES OF A HARKER STUDENT & MODELING**

Harker students exhibit the following four aspects of our mission: kindness, personal accountability, respect and integrity. These aspects reveal themselves in a variety of ways. Harker students greet adults and peers respectfully, help those in need, use "please" and "thank you," and think about how others will receive a comment before they speak. Students are still developing these qualities and learning appropriate and positive ways to behave and interact with others. As educators, it is our responsibility to help students develop these qualities and to reinforce positive behaviors. One of the strongest tools we have to help students develop these lifelong and critical qualities is to model them. It is important to remember that you are role models in the lives of the students you encounter, by the way you acknowledge others or show care and concern for others. Exhibiting the school's values in action (VIA) strengthens our community in many ways, including the modeling it provides for the students in our care.

## **F. MODELING: DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND OTHER UNWELCOME BEHAVIOR**

Harker does not tolerate any act of harassment or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, religion, ability, sexual orientation, and physical and neural ability.

Harker also expects all faculty and staff, including coaching and extracurricular staff, to report any incident of actual or suspected discrimination or harassment to an authoritative figure, including the division head, dean of students, or a faculty member of the Diversity Committee, to ensure that Harker has a safe and inclusive community.

## **G. UNDERSTANDING THE EARLY ADOLESCENT**

At Harker, we expect our middle school teachers to be experts not only in their subject matters, but also in early adolescence. Our middle school teachers must love this age group and appreciate the unique dynamics and characteristics of this development stage.

During early adolescence, children are beginning to develop their own identities. As such, the relationships they have with their teachers, who are models of the kinds of individuals they may aspire to be, is of paramount importance.

The following information is adapted from the 2009 article from National Association of Elementary Principals, "Mining the Middle School Mine" by David Vawter. It outlines well the importance of establishing positive relationships with middle school students. It is important that our middle school

teachers understand and appreciate this unique age group and, in particular, follow the eight tips below for establishing a positive, productive relationship with our Harker middle school students. The full article can be found at [https://www.naesp.org/resources/2/Middle\\_Matters/2009/MM2009v17n4a2.pdf](https://www.naesp.org/resources/2/Middle_Matters/2009/MM2009v17n4a2.pdf)

The following is excerpted from the article.

"Middle school students are walking dichotomies. They can talk about world peace and then hit the kid next to them. They can recycle to ease global warming only to leave the cafeteria a mess. Why? Well, scientifically, it's because their brains don't work.

When we look at middle school students, we can plainly see the evidence of physical maturity. Some students look as if they could be in high school, and more than one administrator has wondered if the mother of that girl approved her outfit. Other students look as if they snuck in from the elementary school. But even though we can see the difference in physical maturity, we cannot see the difference in mental maturity. And while we know that physical and mental maturity occur at different rates, middle school personnel often assume that a more physically mature student should also demonstrate an equal maturity in mental processes, just as the less physically mature student is assumed to be less advanced in mental maturity.

#### *Inside the Early Adolescent Mind*

Brain research is finally focusing on the early adolescent mind. We now know that, between the ages of 11 and 15, the brain destroys more than 20 percent of all previously built connections. The brain is, essentially, pruning itself (Strauch, 2003). The connections and synapses patterns are so intertwined that some of the previous skills, memories, and learning are impacted. Sometimes students just can't access the part of the brain they want. It is possible that a connection that was present yesterday, or even a few moments ago, is either not working or is no longer in existence.

The brain develops from back to front. The primal brain and the visual centers located in the back of the brain develop first. The emotional brain, the amygdala, is more centrally located and develops next. The neocortex, the executive control portion of the brain—the part that can set goals, make plans, and choose the best course of action—is located just behind the forehead and is the last to develop (Sylwester, 2003).

The emotional brain develops differently in adolescence. We can advance the cognitive function of the brain, but the emotional brain does not necessarily advance with intelligence. For example, consider the case of Michael Kearney, a young man of advanced intelligence who graduated from high school at age 15 and medical school so young he had to wait two years, until he was 21, to practice medicine. He participated in an experiment to study his emotional brain, in which he was shown pictures of faces showing adult emotions. The result? He was no better than his peers at correctly identifying these emotions.

The female neo-cortex develops between ages 11 and 15 years, and from the late teens to early 20s for males. Therefore, expecting the same maturity from middle school females and males is not logical and, in fact, may be the impetus for single-gender classrooms.

#### *What Matters in the Middle School Mind*

The most important attribute that middle school teachers and administrators can have is an understanding of preadolescents, mixed with a dose of patience. That's because middle school students don't know why their brains don't work. They lose



things, they forget to turn in assignments, and they can get sidetracked walking to their next class. There are many ways to reach and teach the middle school mind, however.

With immature emotional brains, students misread adult expressions and see meanness or anger when none was intended. They hear yelling when voices are barely raised. Middle school brains make bad choices and decisions and, when possible, punishments that have long-term consequences should be avoided. Middle school brains learn in different ways.

The attention span of the average middle school student is 10 to 12 minutes, and there is little evidence that their brains can be trained to develop a longer span. So, direct instruction should be kept to no more than this span of time. Previous wisdom held that, in the normal classroom, students learn roughly 40 percent visually, 40 percent auditorily, and 20 percent kinesthetically. Now, perhaps due to the use of the computers at early ages, these young brains have formed different connections and learn less by listening and more by interactive teaching methods. Students need consistency of rules, expectations, and novelty, including movement, in the learning environment and teaching methods.

Research informs us that movement increases the flow of blood and oxygen to the brain, and this can't wait for PE. Movement in the classroom should include such things as hand signals, gestures, grouping, and music. The brain must be hydrated. Since a typical brain consumes up to one-third of all the water ingested, office referrals typically increase in the second half of the day, when many students become dehydrated. A simple way to help students learn better and make better choices is to make sure they drink enough water (Sprenger, 1999).

The middle school student may be a walking contradiction, but the opportunity to change the shape of their brains is still one of our greatest challenges – and our greatest opportunities.”

The following list of tips are for establishing a positive, productive relationship with our Harker middle school students as an engaged, positive member of the community. We expect all middle school teachers and staff to follow and actively use this information as a guide when interacting with middle school students.

- Talk **WITH** middle school students – not **AT** them. They appreciate a tone of respect between the two of you.
- **LISTEN.** Middle school students appreciate adults listening to their thoughts, ideas and perceptions.
- Use **group** problem-solving and work groups when appropriate. Middle school students enjoy and feel more comfortable participating in group processes.
- **Minimize humor** – especially sarcasm. Middle school students are not prepared to understand jokes that come from a person in a position of power over them.
- Be **PATIENT!** Don't get angry or frustrated if they don't respond with your first statement. Continue to encourage and state a reason to follow your direction.
- **“Mature” intelligence ≠ “mature” understanding** of humor or adult expressions.
- Don't place adult motives or intentions on the words or actions of adolescents. They are most often naïve about the history or meaning adults attribute to their words or actions.
- Don't personalize adolescent attempts to connect with you or get a reaction from you. These attempts can be very immature and inappropriate. Use their attempts to educate them about more appropriate ways to connect.

### III. ACADEMIC POLICIES & INFORMATION

#### A. PERFORMANCE GROUPING

What makes Harker a unique institution is our ability to customize our students' educational experience to meet their needs and foster their talents and interests. Harker's customization of classes allows teachers to meet each child where they are so that each student can receive the challenge and skill development needed in order to optimize their education. At Harker, we value all children for who they are and we value all placements. As such, it is important that we as a faculty and staff do not inadvertently reinforce the idea that some performance groups or placements are inherently better than others. Words matter, and when referring to placements or performance groups, words such "levels," "up" or "down" suggest a verticality and may suggest that our performance grouping system is a ladder that is to be climbed. We ask that faculty and staff refrain from saying that students are moving "up" or "down"; rather, it is important to state that a student is changing their placement or performance group. Additionally, we ask that faculty and staff refrain from stating that a student is changing "level"; rather, it is important that we say that a student is changing placement or performance group.

We group students in performance-based groupings in order to give each student a pace of learning that is challenging but not stressful. Material is targeted at a level that challenges each class grouping appropriately. The main differences between the class groupings are the pace and depth; the highest levels work at a faster pace and discuss concepts at a greater depth. All groupings are built so students can thrive and be challenged at each grade level as well as transition successfully to our middle and upper schools.

It is important that students requiring additional challenges beyond what can be offered in a given course are recommended for a possible change in performance group. Any student earning in the A to A+ range in all major grade categories of a class, coupled with strong, consistent work habits and intrinsic motivation, may be considered for a placement change. Similarly, for any student earning a B- (82%) or below in an honors section or below C- (72%) in an advanced core class where it is evident that the current placement is too challenging and ultimately not serving the student's best interest, a placement review of approximately three weeks should be given. If more time is needed for a student to show adequate growth and/or if the student is slowly showing signs of progress, the duration of placement review can and should be extended beyond the initial three-week period. Consult with your department chair or division head, if needed, to determine the best length of placement review for a given student.

Division heads approve placement movements within a grade level, while the assistant head of school for academic affairs approves placement movements across grade levels. For students doing poorly in any mid-level math or English work, closely work with your department and division head before discussing any moves to a support class.

#### B. PLACEMENT REVIEW

The students and their parents are integral parts in the communication of grades that fall below the minimum grades established for a class. When a student first slips below, either through missing or incomplete work or a low assessment grade, the student and parents should be contacted out of concern for the student. Study habits might be at fault or the processes in that class might not be fully understood. **This contact of concern should explicitly not use any words related to "placement review," as this is a first contact.** The resilience of middle school students, especially with parents made aware, can be impressive, and the opportunity to forge a positive working relationship filled with support from the teacher should not be wasted.

If, after this initial or multiple contacts, the student is consistently below the minimum grade for a class:

- the student may be put on an approximate three-week placement review, after consultation with the division head;
- the parents are again notified immediately by the teacher. This communication must occur by phone.
- the teacher notifies the appropriate counselor and the academic referral system begins.

Teachers are expected to have adequate grading opportunities during the placement review period to allow a student to demonstrate improvement. If longer than three weeks are needed to provide adequate grading opportunities, the placement review time should be extended. If, after the review period, the grade is raised to the acceptable level, the student remains in the class. If the achievement is below the minimum grade, after consultation with the division head the student moves to the appropriate class. Should the student make a placement change, teachers must notify parents by phone.

A student is eligible for a placement review two times in an academic year. If the student's grade falls below the appropriate level a third time, the student is immediately moved to the appropriate class. Recommendations for the student to move are made by the teacher. The final decision for a student's changing classes is made by the division head. A student may move from one level class to another twice in an academic year. If, after two moves, the student's grades warrant an additional move, an academic review of the student by the division head will be made to determine the best placement for the student for the remainder of the academic year.

## C. PLACEMENT FOR COURSES THAT PLACE INTO HONORS FOR THE FIRST TIME

As the academic program offerings broadens in the middle school, students will be placed into the appropriate level of study based on their current performance in classes. During the middle school years, some subjects offer an honors option for the first time. Students may be placed into honors Spanish 1b for the first time during middle school and honors science starts in grade 7. At the end of grade 8, it is determined whether students are placed into honors World History 1 in grade 9, the first time history is offered as an honors option at The Harker School. Additionally, there are some eighth graders who are placed into the third level of a language in grade 9; for Mandarin, Japanese, Latin and French, these are the first language courses for which honors is an option.

Placement qualifications for the above-mentioned courses are below. All placements are made based on student performance.

Language:

- Current grade 6 students must receive a grade of 96% or more to be placed in grade 7 Honors Spanish 1B.
- Current grade 8 students in languages other than Spanish must receive a grade of 93%+ in all categories to be placed in honors Mandarin, Latin, French and Japanese in grade 9.

Science:

- Current grade 6 students must receive a grade of 90% or more in semester 1 and 2 to be placed in grade 7 Honors Science.

History:

- Current grade 8 students must receive a B (83%) or higher in Honors English, or A- (90%) or higher in Advanced/Core English, and an A- (90%) or higher in U.S. History. Placements are based on a student's semester 1 grades. Students and parents will be notified of grade 9 course placements around mid-May.

If you believe a student should be placed into an honors course, also speak to the parent first to ensure that this too is a placement that they support. Please do not assume that all parents will welcome such a course movement; there may be reasons for which a parent may ask you to consider holding off on such a move. With all placement changes, parent communication and providing an opportunity to seek to understand is vital.

## D. CURRICULA

In order to maintain a well-articulated K-12 experience, it is important for each teacher to understand and closely follow the curricula for each course being taught. Since teachers need to cover the required curriculum in order for students to be equally prepared for subsequent classes, teachers must coordinate with colleagues in order to maintain consistency within the same courses and maintain course continuity from year to year.

While we are a traditional school when compared to progressive schools, we do encourage the faculty to incorporate new and creative methods of teaching and to develop personalized methodologies. We also urge teachers to share successful approaches and materials with colleagues. It is important for teachers to stay abreast of the latest technologies and methodologies that could potentially deepen and further the students' understanding of a topic or course.

Should teachers want to propose a change in textbook or curriculum, teachers must first discuss the change with their department chairs. Assuming the department chair supports the change, the teacher should then submit

the curriculum or textbook approval to the division head as well as to the assistant head of school for academic affairs. The link to the textbook and curriculum change form can be found on the faculty portal. The assistant head of school for academic affairs will ultimately approve the change if the request maintains the integrity of the course and the continuity of the K-12 student learning experience.

Please note that we expect all teachers to use good judgment when choosing appropriate resources and activities for their students. Teachers may not show R-rated movies to students younger than 18 years of age without approval from the division head and parental consent in the form of a permission slip. Please also note the curriculum is the property of The Harker School and should not be shared with anyone outside of Harker without approval from the assistant head of school for academic affairs.

## E. STUDENT ASSESSMENTS

Assessing student understanding is an essential part of the learning experience. Classroom dialogues, questioning techniques, beginning of the class warm-ups, and other **formative assessments** that assess student understanding of a previous night's reading or assignment are only some of many effective ways of gauging student understanding or lack thereof. Graded assessments such as tests, quizzes, projects and papers are other ways to assess student learning.

Teachers should give an adequate number of graded assessments during each grading period, as too few cause too great an emphasis to be placed on minimized samplings of the student's work. Thus, no one assignment, test, essay, etc., should constitute more than 15-20% of a student's semester grade.

Given the extensive length of the semester period, consistent or weekly testing is not always necessary to obtain an adequate number of grades. A healthy mix of graded and non-graded assessments should provide a teacher a sufficient awareness of the extent of the students' understanding of given topics in the curriculum.

Teachers must grade their own papers in a timely manner. It is imperative for teachers to be models for their students in this area; teachers need to return work promptly if they expect their students to return homework to them in a prompt manner. Tests and classroom assignments are to be graded

within two to three days and returned to the students with constructive corrections and comments; it is important that this occurs so that students can learn from past mistakes as soon as possible and use their tests as future study guides. **We believe reviewing a test in detail after it has been graded is an important part of the learning process.** As such, assessments should only be given once the previous assessment has been reviewed; that way, students have the opportunity to learn from past errors and/or misunderstandings.

Since detailed teacher feedback is essential and since assessment performance is a personal matter for a student, students should not exchange papers to grade any assignments or assessments.

We believe that all students who put sufficient effort into an assessment should be able to recover from an occasional poor score, particularly when the poor score is an anomaly for a given student. In the case of such an anomaly, teachers should invoke a 50% minimum; they can invoke this minimum on one major and one minor assignment per grading period. The goal of doing so is to help students recover from a special situation that might negatively impact a student's performance such as transition for a new student, personal situations that made studying or time management difficult, or unusual difficulty with a given concept. If students are receiving scores of less than 50% regularly due to ongoing difficulties with learning, time management or motivation, the division head and counselor should be contacted to discuss grades and possible further interventions.

Teachers should be constantly monitoring their assessments for efficiency and effectiveness. Given that our students take a variety of courses with many testing requirements, it becomes that much more vital for teachers to ensure that their assessments are necessary, efficient and accomplishing the intended goal.

For reasons of test integrity, all teachers must create new versions of tests and quizzes each year. In addition, all tests must be returned to students to use for review and processing of misunderstood concepts.

It is important for teachers to work with their department chairs to make sure the percentage makeup of their grade categories (tests, quizzes, homework, etc.) is appropriate and consistent with the rest of the department. Additionally, teachers need to plan all assessments, whether tests, quizzes or homework, to ensure that the value of each assessment grade is not significantly more or less than the teacher intended. It is a good practice for teachers to review the worth of each assignment to see if adjustments for the following semester need to be made. For example, the teacher may calculate that one test is 50/200 points for the category of tests and the tests category is worth 60% of the overall grade; as such, that one test is 15% of the overall grade. In doing this kind of calculation, the teacher might determine that a given assignment is worth more or less than originally intended; in that case, the teacher is encouraged to work with the division head to better ensure that each assignment in the following semester better matches the intended assignment worth, relative to the overall course grade.

Additionally, teachers may choose to give students extra credit on occasion; however, these opportunities should not be more than two or three percent of a student's overall grade.

## F. OFFICE HOURS/TESTING CALENDAR

Teachers need to follow the Testing and Homework Calendar so that homework is not assigned on special days/ weekends and so that assessments are assigned according to this by-day and by-department calendar. This system ensures that students do not have more than two assessments on any given day or more than four assessments in any given week. Teachers are not allowed to give more than one graded assessment in any given week. This includes tests, quizzes, vocabulary quizzes, oral quizzes, quests, etc. Pop quizzes are strongly discouraged overall but would also be included in this list.

Teachers are expected to give office hours during the designated time periods. If two teachers require the same student at the same time, they should coordinate with each other to see that the

student receives the necessary help in each subject. If this situation persists, the academic counselor should be involved to help the student navigate the needs as expressed by multiple teachers.

## G. HOMEWORK

### 1. Homework Guidelines

Homework should be an extension of concepts already introduced in class. New material should not be introduced through homework assignments. Homework should always be purposeful and help fulfill the objective of a given lesson.

Teachers should not be assigning homework over vacations; students need breaks over vacations to refresh their energy and minds. Teachers at the same grade level should coordinate with one another so that a heavy assignment load does not accumulate on any given night. In all grades, teachers should be paying close attention to the amount of homework given and making sure that we are paying close attention to **efficiency of learning**. Teachers need consistently to ask themselves, can the students learn the materials to the same degree with less homework?

There are also situations where individuals or small groups of students, such as those traveling internationally with the school (Tamagawa) or participating in Dance Fusion, High Voltage, Harmonics, the spring musical and dance productions, should be given special consideration because their involvement may have resulted in difficulties in completing their assignments. Division heads will make teachers aware of these special situations.

On evenings when there are awards assemblies, school productions or other major school events requiring students to stay late, division heads may announce that there are to be no homework assignments, tests or quizzes on the following day. When only a few students participate, teachers may offer an extension or excuse the students at the teacher's discretion.

### 2. Amount of Homework Each Night

Grade 6 students should not be assigned more than 30 minutes of homework for each class meeting. Grade 7-8 students should not be assigned more than 35-40 minutes of homework for each class period.

Teachers should not assign homework that exceeds the above time approximations. Teachers are not required to assign homework and should only do so when they believe the assignment will enhance student learning.

Students should be able to complete the entire homework assignment along with any necessary studying for tests and quizzes within this time allotment. If the student is asked to work through digital processes, please be aware that this will add time to the assignment and should be considered as part of the homework time allotment.

The Harker School is committed to ensuring a well-balanced approach to academics for all of its students. As such, if a student is not able to complete homework during the time allotment as written above, the school encourages parents to submit a note to their child's teacher indicating this. Students are not to be penalized for not completing their homework when students submit such a note. When a teacher receives such a note from a student, the teacher is encouraged to excuse that assignment for the student. If the assignment is of a larger nature that cannot be excused, the teacher should work with the student to find an appropriate timeline for the student to finish the homework. If teachers are receiving a number of these notes, this is an indication to the teacher to rethink the length or complexity of the homework being assigned. If a particular student is continually submitting such notes, the teacher should talk to the counselor, as this might be an indication of a larger problem for that student.

### **3. Completion of Homework**

Teachers are responsible for ensuring the completion of homework by students. We recommend having a systematic method for checking homework daily. If students do not complete their homework, the following interventions are available:

- counsel student
- assign to office hours and/or assign to the Test and Study Center (TASC)
- notify parents when homework issues become chronic or a pattern of late work becomes evident
- discuss issue with counselor or division head if ongoing interventions seem ineffective

### **4. Not Having Other Materials, Required for Learning, in Class**

Students who come to class without necessary materials should receive the following interventions in the following order. The teacher should:

1. counsel the student
2. inform the parents, then give a summary of contact to counselor
3. refer to division head if problem continues

Students may receive a homework penalty of no more than 20% per day. Some assignments may warrant penalties of 2-4% while others may merit the maximum penalty of 20% per day; common sense must prevail. For example, some minor assignments may merit a lesser point deduction while larger ones may warrant a greater deduction. Teachers are strongly encouraged to utilize the appropriate protocol for their division (TASC) for late homework assignments in order to mitigate the issue of late homework. If students submit a note from parents indicating that they were not able to complete homework since maximum homework time guidelines were already met, penalties should not be given. If this becomes a chronic issue, discuss it with the division head or counselor to determine the best way to work with the student and parent.

It is important that teachers are consistent in following the above protocol for late homework and being unprepared for class. As with most student issues, students tend not to change their behavior unless there is consistent follow-up and follow-through from their teachers.

### **5. Notification of Late Homework**

It is, of course, an expectation that all students complete assigned homework. When a student is not regularly turning in homework, a parent needs to be notified if non-completion of homework becomes a chronic issue or a pattern of late work becomes evident. Teachers should either call the parent or send a supportive email, indicating the assignments that the student needs to hand in and any resources available or suggestions that might help the student to submit the homework in a timely fashion. A summary of the phone conversation or a copy of the email needs to be sent to the counselor.

### **6. Procedures for the Test and Study Center (TASC)**

TASC is a place to facilitate learning; it is not to be used for student discipline. Assignments to the Test and Study Center (TASC) are made by an individual teacher using the following guidelines:

- Teachers can assign TASC after students have had an opportunity (at least one full day) to complete the homework assignment on their own.
- If a student completes the homework prior to the TASC assignment, and turns the homework in to the teacher, the teacher will excuse the student from attending TASC.
- Teachers will follow required protocol as usual to contact parents regarding late homework problems, and if the numbers are excessive (four or more in one half of a semester), to the counseling office also.

- Similar consideration should be given to students hosting international students.

Counselors or division heads may also assign to TASC students who have chronic homework issues or need additional study time.

## 7. Homework/Test Makeup

The academic counselor will coordinate makeup schedules for students who are absent three days or more. Counselors and division heads will adhere to the following guidelines for students who have had extended absences:

- Parents may incur the cost of hiring a sub/tutor/aide to administer missed assessments, if necessary.
- The student will have a prescribed amount of time to make up work (e.g., for a two-week absence, a student may be given a two-week period to submit work).
- The student's participation grade will be lowered because of unexcused absences.
- Parents are expected to notify the school of planned absences.

## INTERNATIONAL TRIP TEST AND HOMEWORK PROTOCOL

When students attend an extended international trip such as the grade 6 Japan or grade 7-8 China or Greece trip, teachers are expected to follow the protocol below to ensure that students can garner the intended benefits of the trip without unnecessary stress.

- All quizzes will be treated as practice.
- Any test that a teacher feels must be given will be administered as "grade optional." The student may decide if the grade earned is recorded in the grade book.
- Tests can be optional if the teacher chooses and can be given as a learning resource instead.
- Other work will be scaled to an effective level to ensure ongoing success without overburdening the student.
- Teachers who feel they have a situation which would need special treatment can meet with the appropriate division head to discuss how best to proceed. Similar consideration should be given to students hosting international students.

## 8. Assignments

Teachers are to post weekly assignments and activities via Schoology. By 5 p.m. Friday, tests, quizzes and big projects must be posted for the following week. Specific details about homework assignments can be posted on Friday but teachers are not required to do so until Monday at 12 p.m. Full detailed assignments must be complete and posted by 12 p.m. Monday. Changes to posted assignments should be rare. However, if changes are made mid-week, students must be notified verbally in class, and the assignment must be updated in Schoology by 4 p.m. of the date of change. **Failure to keep homework pages up to date handicaps the students and is a breach of professional responsibility.**

For long-term assignments or projects, teachers need to indicate the time they expect each student to spend on the given portion of the assignment. This time should be indicated next to the assignment. All assignments must be listed in Schoology. This helps to manage student and parent disclosure of expectations.

## H. THE IMPORTANCE OF NAMES

At the beginning of a school year or semester, we ask faculty to give their students a survey to get to know each student. As part of this survey, we ask faculty to ask students name preferences and preferred pronouns. Names are important and learning students' names and using their preferred names is the first step in knowing who our students are. Referring to students by their preferred names communicates respect and helps them feel recognized as individuals.



As a school, we too want to recognize our students by their preferred names. If a teacher finds that a student prefers to go by a name that is different than what is currently in Infinite Campus, please speak to your division head or campus counselor to determine how best to make sure the student's name is reflected properly in our systems.

## **I. RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS**

Teachers must be mindful of scheduling assessments and project due dates around spiritual, religious and cultural celebrations that are widely practiced by the student body, including but not limited to Diwali, Holi, Yom Kippur, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Easter and Lunar New Year. At Harker, there is a wide diversity of religious and cultural practices that are most important to and celebrated among your students and their families; some of those holidays may not be the more widely practiced ones as listed above. As such, it is important that teachers encourage their students to let them know if there is a cultural or religious holiday that they celebrate, such that they will require special consideration in terms of deadlines and assessments. To support these students, teachers need to demonstrate understanding and communicate with students as it relates to deadlines and assessments.

## **J. STUDENT ASSEMBLIES AND PRESENTATIONS**

Those who arrange for an outside speaker for our students are responsible for vetting the speaker. The OofC can help, if need be. One of the goals here is to ensure that the speaker represents the school well and is not affiliated with groups and/or have other allegations, records, etc., that might reflect poorly on the school.

# **IV. STUDENTS' GRADES AND GRADE REPORTING**

## **A. GRADE BOOKS & GRADE BOOK SNAPSHOTS**

Teachers must update their grade books in Schoology and sync to Infinite Campus by 4 p.m. each Monday. Division heads and, particularly, counselors regularly look at student grades to assess progress; when grade books are not up-dated, our ability to help the students is hindered. Parents will receive a categorical report in each class for their child. These reports will be available to the parents near the 15th of the following months: October, November, December, March, April and May. A final gradebook snapshot is included at the end of each semester with the report card.

## **B. LOW EXAM SCORE NOTIFICATION**

When students receive a score lower than 83% in an honors class or lower than a 73% in a non-honors class, teachers are responsible for notifying the parents. The contact should be supportive in tone, letting the parents know of the test score and what resources the student has available to improve future performance. When emails are sent, a greeting at the beginning of an email contact and specific statements or observations indicating that the teacher knows and appreciates their child will help create a positive relationship between the teacher and parent. When notifying parents about low exam scores, the parent communication model outlined on page 23 must be used. **A summary or copy of the notification needs to be sent to the counseling office.**

## **C. REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are available to parents and students at the end of each semester via the parent portal. Grade submission due dates are on the What's Happening Calendar.

Teachers should be in contact with parents of students receiving an 82% or below in an honors class or a 72% or below in a non-honors class prior to the report card. The formal reporting periods as

indicated above should not be the first time the parents hear that their child is not earning a required grade. Early notification of the concern and steps for how the student can improve performance is imperative.

## D. PARENT-STUDENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-student-teacher conferences are an essential tool to build relationships with parents and to help keep lines of communications open. In an effort to ensure that all parents have access to their child's teachers during the parent- teacher conferences, all faculty members who have scheduled appointments must be available during all available appointment times. It is important that all faculty members not make personal appointments during these two days as their attendance is vital to the success of parent-student-teacher conferences. Faculty members who need to make appointments to meet with their child's teachers need to do so outside of the scheduled parent-teacher conference times. As such, all faculty members will need to make themselves available to faculty parents during mutually agreed upon alternate meeting times. Please note that the faculty spouse/other parent is welcome to make an appointment on the conference days in the fall.

## E. REACH-OUTS

We believe in giving our parents timely, relevant communication that helps build strong relationships. Instead of sending a parent comment at a predetermined time of the year, all Harker teachers are asked to send one "reach out" to a parent of every one of the students they teach during the course of the year. This communication indicates to a family that you know their child, appreciate or notice their child's unique contributions to your classroom, and that you are in that student's corner. A "reach out" must have some reference to the academic subject the teacher has the child in. The teacher may reference performance in outside clubs and activities to show the parents the teacher knows the child outside the classroom but performance in the academic class must be the focus. A "reach out" is primarily a positive communication sent to a parent at the time of an earned recognition. While you may use these communications to guide the students' efforts, you are not required to make any type of constructive criticism. All "reach outs" are to be sent before spring break; however, it is recommended that teachers find a time to send such a communication during the first semester in order to establish a strong relationship early. Teachers are allowed more flexible timing so they can choose an appropriate occasion when such a communication would be relevant and genuine.

While email is preferred, there is room for other kinds of "reach outs" such as face-to-face or phone communication. If a teacher chooses to use a non-email "reach out," it is still expected that the "reach out" be timely, specific, substantive, positive, and relates to the course the student is in.

It is the teacher's responsibility to keep track of all communications to ensure a "reach out" is sent for all students. All teachers are expected to keep a record of when a "reach out" was sent or made to each one of their students. Additionally, if the "reach out" comes in the form of email the "reach out" must be sent to the parent, student and advisor.

Examples of a "reach out" follow.

Dear Mr. and Dr. Jones:

I wanted to let you know I have been quite impressed that after Shivani's setback with a low Chapter 3 test grade, she has been consistently coming to office hours every Tuesday asking specific questions she is confused about or desires further texture on. Last week, she had a particularly insightful question about trade restrictions influencing economic welfare, which resulted in a lengthy and enjoyable discussion during one of our Tuesday office hours sessions. Her dedication to improvement is impressive and her understanding of the course material appears to be advancing. I am enjoying having Shivani in class and look forward to Tuesdays.

Dear Mr. and Dr. Riley:

I hope you and your family had a wonderful weekend. All of the students in my English classes just

completed presentations on their favorite poems and the authors of those poems. I was particularly impressed by Randy's explication of "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe. I gave each group class time to work on this presentation and it was obvious from what I observed, his group did quite a bit of research on various interpretations. Randy then facilitated a discussion on which interpretation they felt was most in line with Poe's intention. Randy's ability to interpret and work well with a group to create a presentation that was of such a high standard, particularly at this grade level, was something I have rarely seen during my years of teaching. I've attached a picture of Randy and his group in front of the class reading the poem before the explication. I look forward to observing Randy's continued work ethic and dedication to strong analysis.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Chan:

After having had Emilie as a student for a full semester, I have grown to appreciate how she approaches chemistry class. She consistently submits thoroughly completed homework, eagerly writes solutions to the warm-up on the white board when asked, and embraces other students' ideas when working in her lab group. Yesterday, Emilie asked an involved question about the Kinetic Theory of Matter, which led to a stimulating conversation with the class about Brownian motion. While Emilie may not participate regularly, the contributions she does offer makes for a richer classroom environment. Emilie's work ethic and good attitude makes her the kind of student I am thankful I have the opportunity to teach.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Shah:

I recently found out about Julie's amazing success in debate. I wanted to send my congratulations to you. As I mentioned to Julie today, I am not surprised she did so well, given the dedication she shows in history class. She always comes with her homework prepared and with insightful questions after a difficult reading has been assigned. Moreover, few students generally can identify a weakness in an assertion I might make in class; however, Julie always politely but directly proposes an alternate and sometimes even a more accurate point of view. She is an insightful thinker and I was thrilled to hear that those skills are not only translating to success in history but also to debate, her extracurricular passion.

## **V. COUNSELING DEPARTMENT**

### **A. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

The counselor's primary goal is to nurture our students' well-being by encouraging, supporting and fostering positive emotional, social, academic and personal development. Counselors ensure our students are able to emotionally, socially and academically thrive in their everyday school experiences. Counselors and teachers work together to make sure our students can be fully present and benefit from the experiences and overall education at Harker. In that vein, should teachers have emotional or social concerns about a child, a teacher needs to contact a counselor and the counselor will speak with the student, and provide support as needed. Please note that the counselors must not only follow the policy and guidelines of the school, they are also bound by their clinical licenses. Therefore, because of confidentiality, counselors are not able to discuss sensitive information.

### **B. GENERAL**

Counselors provide Harker students with support in the academic, behavioral and social areas. This is a routine procedure at Harker and part of the way we help all students move toward their maximum potential. With the teachers' help, these counselors continually monitor and track a student's progress. Counselors are responsible for:

- academic monitoring and tracking of a student's progress. This includes monitoring students with grades of C- (72%) or below in core or advanced core classes, B- (82%) or below in

honors classes, as well as following up on report cards. Counselors also track late homework, notification of low exam scores, assignments to the Test and Study Center (TASC) and academic referrals.

- recommending outside testing, evaluation and/or counseling of students with the approval of the assistant head of school for academic affairs.
- facilitating student groups dealing with issues such as social skills, divorce, grief and loss. Although the counselors will help the student through difficult times, they cannot provide ongoing therapy.
- helping families get appropriate tutors.
- creating makeup schedules for students who have had extended absences.

In order for counselors to be at their most effective, a counselor may request information regarding a student. When teachers receive such a request, it is important to provide the information within the designated time period. Maintaining accurate grade files in IC allows for the easiest and most immediate access for administrators and counselors.

## C. ACADEMIC FOLLOW-UP SYSTEM: THE HEART OF THE COUNSELOR'S JOB

The academic follow-up system is the heart of what the counseling office does. If a child has an academic problem, there are four steps for teachers to follow:

1. Talk to the student.
2. Have the student report for office hours (OH) and/or the Test and Study Center (TASC) (see procedures for TASC).
3. Call the parent and email the counselor, administrator and advisor a summary of the conversation.
4. Contact the counselor.

When sending a counselor an email notification, always put the student's name in the subject line. When you merely want to notify the counselor of a communication you had with a family or student, please type "green sheet" in the subject line of the email you forward or send to the counselor. When you need the counselor to follow up on a situation or need advice of any nature from the counselor, please type "action requested" in the subject line of the email you forward or send to the counselor.

## D. ACADEMIC REFERRAL SYSTEM

If, after requiring office hours or TASC attendance and if after all of the preceding steps outlined above have been performed, a student's progress is still poor either because of late or unsatisfactory homework and/or low test and quiz scores, teachers will submit the appropriate paperwork to the relevant counselor, which serves as an academic referral. The consequences of a student being reported depend on the number and severity of referrals to date. With each referral, the students will be counseled by the appropriate counselor.

The counselors will follow these steps through the referral process.

1. Parents will be informed of the child's academic difficulties and the school's follow-up actions.
2. The students will attend a conference with parents, the student's counselor and/or administrators, and teacher(s) involved.
3. Should the preceding steps not be effective, a student may be placed on academic suspension, a one- or two-day period in which the student will be expected to make up work done poorly or missed. This work will be checked for completion on the day the student returns. Incomplete work will result in continuation of the suspension.
4. Should problems continue after the academic suspension, the students, parents, counselors and administration will have a second required conference. Parents are advised that

continued academic concerns may constitute grounds for immediate dismissal from The Harker School.

5. The student may be dismissed from The Harker School should academic problems continue.

## **E. REFERRING A STUDENT TO THE COUNSELING DEPARTMENT**

We are lucky, as a school, to have qualified and experienced counselors who work as partners with our teachers to help our students be as successful as possible in academics and in all areas of their school experience, including social and emotional.

Reasons for referring a student to speak with the counselor include, but are not limited to:

- non-completion of a long-term assignment or general negative repeated study habits.
- the quality of the homework is negatively affecting classroom performance overall;
- poor overall grade average or consistent poor tests and/quiz grades;
- social or emotional concerns

## **F. RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS WHO NEED ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC HELP**

### **Office Hours**

Office hours is for giving assistance to individuals or small groups having difficulty in a particular area. Students should be encouraged to approach the teacher on their own if they have questions. If a student is having difficulty in your class, assigning office hours is a required early intervention. Teachers must require students earning C- (below 73%) in a core or advanced core or B- (below 83%) or below in an honors section to attend office hours. The teacher should see any student who fails to report for required office hours to determine if the reason for missing the session was legitimate.

Teachers must remain in their classrooms during the office hours period and are expected to maintain an appropriate and productive academic atmosphere during that time. The office hours period should be used to examine and correct student weaknesses. Teachers should structure office hours sessions thoughtfully. They may hold one-on-one, small group or large group sessions. Since teachers need to be available to all of their students at this time, tutoring is not permissible during office hours.

If two teachers require the same student at the same time, they should coordinate with each other to see that the student receives the necessary help in each subject.

### **Tutoring**

When a teacher is concerned about the performance of a student, the teacher needs to communicate those concerns to the parent. In such communications, teachers should give recommendations for what a child can do to remedy the issues the teacher is seeing. Prior to any suggestion that additional help outside of Harker may be needed, teachers need to ensure that students are attending and fully utilizing extra help. If assistance beyond extra help becomes necessary, counselors should be notified. as they can determine whether additional strategies may be of help in each situation. Not every family may be able to obtain a tutor, so counselors can determine the best plan of assistance for a given family.

Should it be determined that tutoring is the best step for a student, please note that all referrals for tutoring go through the counseling office. Once a referral is received, the counseling office gives the family the names and contact information for three appropriate and available tutors. Those tutors may and will be encouraged to reach out to the students' teachers so that they can work with the Harker teacher to best determine how to optimize a given student's learning and growth in the area in which they are being tutored.

If a Harker teacher tutors, it is important that the teacher keeps the counseling department updated with the names of the students being tutored so that counselors, teachers and tutors can work together as a team to best support the efforts of the students. That Harker teacher tutor is also responsible for reading and knowing all of the information on the document "Tutoring Information Policies," which is found on the faculty and staff portal under Resources.

### **Psychoeducational/Psychological Evaluation**

Occasionally, a student's lack of performance is indicative of a significant learning or emotional challenge, or may be a result of a medical condition. Should a teacher have concerns that a student has serious challenges, the teacher should contact the division head or the counseling department. Teachers should not discuss potential disabilities or diagnoses with a student or a student's parent. The counseling department may recommend psychoeducational or psychological evaluation by an outside licensed professional for assessing students for possible learning or emotional disabilities. A copy of the comprehensive evaluation report is required in order to determine if a student qualifies for accommodations at school. The assistant head of school for academic affairs must approve any accommodations given to students with learning or social/emotional disabilities. Reports, accommodations and relevant paperwork for a given child will be documented and kept on file in the counseling office.

## **G. FOR STUDENTS WHOSE GRADES ARE SIGNIFICANTLY BELOW REQUIRED LEVELS**

### **Extracurricular Activity Participation Review: Protocol and Guidelines**

Students who have a grade of C- or lower in any one class are in jeopardy of losing their ability to participate fully in athletics, performing arts (theater productions, dance performances, concerts, trips, etc.) and debate (tournaments, trips). The current protocol is intended to encourage, empower and motivate the student to use office hours, the Test and Study Center (TASC), and other supports necessary to improve grades. The current protocol is also intended to actively involve the team of coaches, teachers, counselors, etc., to track progress and support the student. The protocol is similar to the three-week timing of our placement review protocol and gives the students ample time to adjust study habits and make progress before limiting their full participation in extracurricular activities.

Every Monday (beginning of the week) counseling will create a list of students with grades C- and below. This list will be provided to the division head, counseling, athletics, PA and study hall supervisors.

When a student has a grade of C or below:

First week on the list – a conversation with the student is initiated by counseling and the team is notified

(teachers, who notify parents of low grade, coaches, PA, debate, etc.)

- Student is notified that there are three weeks to raise the grade before participation is limited
- Student must attend office hours (OH) (monitored by teacher) and TASC, student is proactively working to improve grades
- Student can attend athletic practices only on Wednesday and Friday (2 of the 3 mandatory practice days)
- Student can attend only two rehearsals/meetings for PA, dance, debate per week
- Student is required to attend OH three times per week (prioritized by counseling and monitored by teacher)
- Student is required to **attend TASC three times per week** (monitored by counseling)
- Extracurricular staff helps to motivate student and remind student of OH/TASC support
- If student has study hall, study hall supervisors help to ensure the student's time is being used

wisely

Second week on the list – Team continues to monitor and support student's efforts to improve grade. Student is reminded that another week of C- will lead to limited participation in athletics, PA, debate, etc. Positive reinforcement and encouragement from teachers/coaches is emphasized.

Third week on the list – Student's participation in extracurricular activities is limited as above and counselors notify the coaches/teachers of the protocol.

- Student cannot participate in games, tournaments, trips, performances, etc., until grade is above C-.
- When grade improves, student returns to full participation.

This protocol gives the student an opportunity to earn the return to full participation and allows for ongoing positive reinforcement. Being allowed to participate in practices/rehearsals honors the relationship with and dedication to the team, cast, ensemble, etc. Involving coaches and extracurricular teachers early in the process helps to build an effective support system outside of the classroom. Sharing that there is a support system in place for academic success with parents/students at athletic meetings (start of new seasons) and at PA meetings may help families understand the importance of commitment to extracurricular activities and the joint support.

### **Re-Enrollment Requirements**

All students must achieve specific academic and behavioral standards to qualify for re-enrollment. For re-enrolling into grades 1-8, the minimum standards are earning a yearly average of at least a C- (70 %) or higher for the year in English, math, history and science with a D (63%) average or higher in foreign language and remaining courses, as well as good attendance, behavior and citizenship as outlined in this handbook. To support a successful learning experience in the upper school, grade 8 students must earn a C (73%) average or higher for the year in English, math, history and science with a D (63%) average or higher in foreign language and remaining courses. They must also exhibit good attendance, behavior and citizenship as outlined in the handbook. The middle school faculty and counselors will make every attempt to assist students who are experiencing academic difficulties.

## **H. COUNSELING PROTOCOLS FOR IDENTIFYING CONCERNING BEHAVIORS/RECEIVING REPORTS OF ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR**

Any time a teacher notices a student behavior that is concerning (the student writes a distressing poem or journal entry, draws a picture containing violence, exhibits a drastic change in appearance, social interactions or moods, etc.) we ask that the teacher notify the appropriate division head and/or counselor right away. The division head and assigned counselor will investigate the matter and, with the assistant head of school for academic affairs as well as necessary outside resources, determine whether the student is a threat to him/herself or others, and what, if any, further steps need to be taken to ensure the safety of our students. In general, teachers should always be watchful for signs that might be indicative of concerning behaviors. Submitting work that is of poor quality or incomplete, conducting oneself in a manner that is disruptive, inappropriate or unusual, and exhibiting academic patterns that may indicate a special need are just a few of the behaviors that teachers must analyze, review and then handle appropriately. Teachers should notify counselors or the division head should there be any such concerns.

Teachers are mandated reporters. If a child reports that they are being abused or if you have reasonable suspicion that a Harker student is being abused, as a mandated reporter, you must report your concerns or suspicions to Child Protective Services (CPS). If you have heard an allegation of abuse or neglect from a student, it is your responsibility to make the CPS report. If you would like a counselor's assistance when making a report, please contact the counselor and the counselor can

provide the needed support. All CPS reports are required to be made within 36 hours of hearing the concerning information. If a counselor or administrator is not available for consultation (summer, late evening, weekend, etc.), you must call Child Protective Services for Santa Clara at 408.299.2071 or at the phone number of the CPS agency where the incident occurred, to file the report. Please know that it is not the faculty member's responsible to investigate the matter; rather, it is the responsibility of the faculty member to report reasonable suspicions of child abuse to CPS. The responsibility of the mandated reporter is to report, in their professional capacity, or within the scope of their employment, when they have reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect. Their responsibility is not to prove that the child abuse or neglect occurred. It is the responsibility of CPS or another governing agency to investigate the matter and decide whether the child abuse or neglect occurred. All faculty at The Harker School must annually complete the online mandated reporter training that outlines legal expectations as it relates to reporting abuse. If you have further questions, we also encourage you to review the information on the Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training website given to you at the beginning of the year:

<https://www.mandatedreporter.ca.com/training/general-training>

Please know that it is not a faculty member's responsibility to investigate the matter; rather, it is the responsibility of the faculty member to report reasonable suspicions of child abuse to CPS. The responsibility of mandated reporters is to report, in their professional capacity or within the scope of their employment, when they have reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect, and not to prove that child abuse or neglect has occurred. It is the responsibility of CPS or another governing agency to investigate the matter and make a determination on whether child abuse or neglect exists.

All faculty at The Harker School must annually complete the online mandated reporter training that outlines legal expectations as it relates to reporting abuse.

## VI. ACADEMIC AWARDS

Students can earn the following semester honors, which are mailed to the student's home at the end of each semester.

### Academic

- Students who have earned grades of at least A- (90%) or higher in science, history, math, English and language and B (83%) or higher in remaining courses.

### Citizenship

- A student who has exceeded expectations in at least two classes for the entire semester and has earned meets in the remaining classes.

### Effort

- A student who has exceeded expectations in at least two classes for the entire semester and has earned meets in the remaining classes.

A student can qualify to be on the Honor Roll in one of three ways: earning Citizenship Honors, Effort Honors and/or Academic Honors as indicated above.

Students may also earn the following annual recognitions. Teachers will be asked to nominate students to earn the following awards.

### **Mission of the School Award**

This award is given to students who exemplify the tenets of Harker's mission and philosophy. These students foster kindness, respect and integrity and are intellectually curious. They also contribute to building a strong community and are role models for their peers.

### **Love of Learning Award**



This award is given to students whose engagement in the classroom environment enriches the learning experience. They approach their education with a genuine desire to learn.

### **Leadership Award**

This award is given to students who successfully enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common goal that improves the community of the school. These students guide positive behaviors and actions with their example.

## **VII. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS**

### **A. ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION**

It is important to view the parent as a partner to optimize the student's learning experience. The importance of effective and supportive parent communications is therefore vital and cannot be underestimated.

Issues that teachers should be communicating to parents are:

- concerning patterns
- low scores on tests/quizzes
- not handing in homework (pattern)
- placement changes (see section III B)
- disruptive behaviors

All of the above mentioned issues and poor or declining performance in general should never come as a surprise to parents at the end of a reporting period.

Phone calls should be the primary mode of communication for all sensitive or serious communications.

This includes, but is not limited to, placing a student on or off of placement review or any serious matter that is best discussed, so a plan can be made that is customized to a student's needs. For example, sensitive information of news where a supportive tone could be easily lost should be communicated by phone or in person. Phone calls are always preferred for any communications that are complicated or for news that might be perceived as less than positive.

Concerns about possible learning disabilities or other sensitive counseling issues should never be discussed with parents. If teachers have concerns about issues such as learning disabilities or depression, teachers should notify the counselors, who will follow up with students and parents. Once a communication is made, the teacher must send a summary of the communication or a copy of the email to the appropriate counselor and advisor as outlined in the counseling portion of the handbook. Teachers should ensure that important communications are sent to or communicated to both parents if a student has two households.

"Reach outs" will be an important tool as well to ensure the teacher is sending parents positive, timely and relevant communications that will help to build strong parent, student and teacher relationships (see page 19).

### **Communication Model**

All communications, whether by phone or email, must contain the following:

- a greeting and positive introduction
- a description of the situation
- the teacher's expectations of student and family

- positive encouragement, which includes what the teacher can offer to support the student
- a follow-up plan
- a warm ending/salutation

Parents want to know that their child's teachers know and respect their child, and are in their child's corner. Following this model will ensure that is communicated. Communications that are curt or suggest frustration or anger will not hasten the student's improvement and may hurt the relationship between the parent and teacher.

The following samples follow the model above.

### **Sample 1**

Dear Mrs. Parent:

I enjoyed seeing you at Back-to-School Night.

I wanted to make you aware that Johnny has now missed three consecutive homework assignments and his grade has dropped to a B+ as a result. Johnny needs to turn in his homework by this Friday in order to get partial credit for his work. I know Johnny generally has great follow-through so I am confident he will be able to do this. If he is having trouble with the homework, he can refer to the resources on Schoology or see me on Wednesday morning for office hours.

I will contact you after school Friday to let you know if the homework was submitted. Please don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions.

Ms. Teacher

### **Sample 2**

Dear Mr. Parent:

I hope your week is progressing well. I don't want to alarm you but I wanted to let you know that I did have to speak to Teddy after class today since his calling out during class became disruptive. I need your support by speaking to Teddy so he understands the importance of letting other students speak in class.

Teddy has generally been very responsive to feedback so I am hopeful he will be able to turn his behavior around quickly. I will touch base in two weeks to discuss Teddy's behavior in class and whether or not he is still having difficulties refraining from calling out.

I hope to see you at the upcoming grade level party.

Mrs. Teacher

### **Sample 3**

Dear Ms. Parent:

It was wonderful to see you at the recent dance show. I know you like to stay abreast of Nikhil's progress so I wanted to make sure you are aware that while his overall grade is strong, he has had some difficulties with his timed tests and understanding the concept of multiplication in general. I need Nikhil to review his multiplication flashcards for 5 minutes at some point each day. I also need Nikhil to come to office hours on Wednesday morning at 7:45 a.m. so I can review the concept of multiplication. I made an extra set of flashcards for Nikhil that he can use during office hours or at home.

I know Nikhil enjoys math so it is important we work together so he can thrive and continue to enjoy the subject. At the beginning of next month, I will contact you to let you know if the additional work at home is resulting in any improvements in his timed tests.

I am hopeful that with both of us working together, Nikhil can continue to thrive in math.

Dr. Teacher

#### **Sample 4**

Dear Mr. Parent:

I hope you had a great weekend. I feel it is important that you are aware that Sally's recent test score was lower than her usual performance. There is no need for alarm at this point but I need Sally to do test corrections and then come to office hours on Monday so we might review them. I know Sally is capable of correcting her test successfully. If she needs additional support, she can refer to the study guide we reviewed prior to the test or she can see me on Friday for the 9 a.m. office hours.

Our next test is on Nov. 14. I will let you know then if her test performance has improved. I will of course notify you as well if she does not submit the test corrections.

Have a great weekend.

Mr. Teacher

Proactive and supportive communications often curtail the potential for negative parent interactions. However, if parents prove to be demanding or difficult in their communications, teachers should discuss the situation with their department chairs or division heads to determine the best next course of action. We do not tolerate parents who are excessively demanding or abusive, so division heads should be notified immediately if such a parent situation becomes uncomfortable.

## **B. SOLICITING HARKER FAMILIES FOR FUNDRAISERS**

We have a generous and active community that is involved in hundreds of fundraising efforts each year for various causes, and we applaud those efforts. Due to the variety and volume of these efforts schoolwide, the school has the following policies.

All fundraising efforts must be pre-approved (see specifics below). Emails to families or employees from students, parents, faculty or staff soliciting funds or donations are not permitted unless they are doing so on behalf of Harker's advancement office. Approved fundraising would include the school's annual giving, capital giving, annual picnic, Harker Day, etc.

### **Student Fundraisers**

All student fundraisers at Harker must be approved by the pertinent faculty advisor and division head. Promotion of student-run fundraising activities must be through student channels, such as assembly and meeting announcements, campus posters, etc.; students may also use their personal social media to publicize fundraisers.

### **Parent Fundraisers**

All parent-organized fundraisers at Harker must go through the advancement office for prior approval. Parent-run fundraisers should not go through official school channels, such as school email lists, grade-level coordinators, or room parents; parents may use their personal contacts and social media to publicize fundraisers.

### **Faculty/Staff Fundraisers**

Faculty- or staff-run fundraisers at Harker must be approved by the pertinent division head. Faculty and staff who organize a personal fundraiser on their own outside of Harker should not go through official school channels, such as school email lists, grade level coordinators, or room parents. Faculty or staff may use their own personal contacts and social media to publicize fundraisers.

## **C. PROCESS FOR HOSTING PARENT PRESENTATIONS**

There is an approval process in place for any employees interested in hosting a parent presentation at The Harker School. The first step in this process is to contact the assistant heads of school for both academic affairs and student affairs, who will then direct the host through a process that includes but is not limited to submitting a form that highlights information relevant to the presentation and receiving a document that highlights the responsibilities of a presentation host. Following this process allows us as a school to present our best selves to our community. This process also helps to provide the school sufficient time to promote the speakers to our parent community and identify the best audience for the presentation (K-12, 6-12, etc.). For presenters who are not members of The Harker School community, this process also helps to ensure all speakers are vetted thoroughly since it is important that those who present at Harker publicly model the values we represent.

## **VIII. STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

### **A. STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

Teachers must take attendance each period within the first five minutes of each period. Attendance for the school will be posted by 9 a.m. Attendance duty is not to be delegated to a student at any time. Students arriving late must report to the attendance office and must not be admitted to class without a late slip.

Although it is the responsibility of the attendance office, teachers are to report patterns of repeated tardiness or absences; teacher input on this topic is also encouraged. Please notify the division head in the event of excessive tardies or absences.

If a student is repeatedly tardy to class, the teacher must first counsel the student. If the pattern continues, the teacher must notify parents and finally, if the problem persists, issue a behavioral referral. Teachers should remind students to check out at the attendance office when leaving early or when leaving by any means that is not routine.

### **B. EXTENDED STUDENT ABSENCES**

The school discourages extended trips during the time school is in session. While we recognize the value of extended travel, we are aware of the impact lengthy absences have on a child's academic progress and performance. We realize that teacher-directed instruction, collaborative group work, hands-on activities and experiential learning cannot be recreated for the absent child.

Therefore, teachers should be aware that an extended absence (non-medical) must be approved by the appropriate division head in advance of the trip. Division heads and counselors will adhere to the extended absence guidelines as outlined in the student/parent handbook. The school does not expect teachers to create or provide special assignments for students who miss school for unexcused reasons.

## **IX. STUDENT APPEARANCE**

Staff members need to understand and enforce student personal appearance and grooming requirements as outlined in the student/parent handbook. The best way to encourage and lead students in this regard is to set a proper example and consistently enforce the uniform policy.

### **Uniforms**

All teachers are expected to understand, monitor and enforce uniform requirements during all class periods. Students are to be in proper uniform, including shoes and belts, at all times. Uniform shirts

are to be tucked into skirts, pants or shorts at all times, the exception being that students may untuck their shirts at recess. If a student is out of uniform, please implement the interventions listed under "consequences for uniform violation." Sweaters are not required except for full dress uniform days, school picture days and some assemblies and/or field trips.

### **Free Dress**

Free dress privilege will be granted to any student who has not received an Out of Uniform notice for being out of uniform since the prior free dress day. Period 1 teachers or advisors are responsible for checking to see that only eligible students participate in free dress. Regular free dress days will occur on specific Fridays. Free dress privileges can be revoked by the assistant head of middle school or division head once several warnings have been given.

## **X. FACULTY ATTENDANCE**

### **A. SUBSTITUTE TEACHER PROCEDURES**

The following procedures should be followed as early as possible if a teacher will be absent:

Contact your division head to ask permission for a planned or known absence on a given day or periods during the day. Examples of this include doctor appointments (for yourself, your spouse or your child), conference or work related events, jury duty and personal time off. Please note that all sick and PTO absences must be requested via Paycom prior to the close of the given pay period. Once your division head has approved an absence, contact our substitute coordinator at 408.345.0102 or at [subline@harker.org](mailto:subline@harker.org) in order to arrange for a substitute to cover your classes. Substitutes are often difficult to get, so we ask that teachers give us advance notice and contact the substitute coordinator as soon as possible. **Do not coordinate substitute coverage on your own with one of our substitutes.** If you have a preferred substitute who you would like to use, please note that when contacting the sub coordinator. In addition, you should provide the following information to the coordinator:

- Your name (please say it slowly in case the voice message is garbled)
- Your campus (middle and upper school teachers need to provide their parking space numbers)
- The grade level and/or subject you teach
- The date and time (if needing coverage for specific periods) you need sub coverage. Please be specific and identify the day of the week, month and date. If identifying period coverage, please indicate the times of your classes as the sub coordinator will not know your specific schedule details. All of this is especially helpful if the coverage is needed more than one week out.
- The reason for needing the sub. You only need to state the following exceptions: sick, personal day, jury duty, conference or work related absence
- The substitute you may be requesting for your absence (if applicable).

Should the absence be unplanned, such as an illness or personal emergency, a phone call must be placed to the sub coordinator (at 408.345.0102) as soon as possible to arrange for substitute coverage. Please do not send an email. Should you realize that you need a substitute teacher for that day, and it is after 6:45 a.m., call the middle school office admins to ensure your message is received. If possible, you should speak with one of them directly.

Even when a teacher will only miss one or two periods, the process must be followed in requesting a substitute teacher.

Teacher presence and teacher quality are by all measures and studies among the most important aspects that contribute to a successful academic experience. As such, it is important that teachers

be present in their class whenever possible. That said, we realize that there may be emergencies that may take a teacher away from class. In the case of such an emergency when a teacher is absent for four hours or more, the teacher must record the absence in the Paycom attendance program. If faculty need to miss an obligation during a school day such as a class, office hours, school meetings, faculty meetings, etc., notify your department chair and division head in advance by email. While we understand such shorter absences may be necessary from time to time, the expectation is that you will meet all obligations of a given school day. We will reach out and discuss the recording of PTO if the frequency of such absences is greater than ideal for consistency of program or of our students' learning. Please use the appropriate code as noted in the fifth bullet point above. If you have questions about the absence and corresponding pay code to utilize, please contact human resources.

When teachers plan to be absent, they are expected to make detailed lesson plans that allow the substitute to continue the student learning in a productive manner. Each teacher also keeps a substitute folder in the front office to assist substitute teachers. Be sure to keep it up to date as the year progresses, and make sure all sub plans are easy to understand and implement, yet meaningful for the students. Upon arriving at school, substitutes will check in with the receptionist at the front office, substitutes will pick up a substitute folder and classroom key at that time. Teachers are asked to keep at least five copies of your class lists, in addition to your advisory lists if applicable, for attendance purposes. It is important that class lists are updated as often as necessary to keep the substitute folder current.

Since we ask families to not extend school breaks by extending their vacations or leaving early for vacation, we too ask our teachers to honor class time and to not do the same. Recall all PTO requests need to be made in advance with the division head.

Additionally, note that if a teacher is absent the entire day, Paycom must reflect the 8-hour absence, not just the class and advisory hours missed. This is to accurately reflect a teacher's missed time and also to honor the community impact all teachers have, whether in the classroom or out.

We ask that you make your division head aware of any concerns you have regarding a particular substitute. Positive feedback is also welcome.

## **B. FACULTY LEAVING CAMPUS DURING FREE PERIODS**

All teachers must notify and sign out at the front desk if leaving campus during the school day. You may not take students off campus with you during a free period unless you have official permission slips for those students. Please refer to the personnel handbook for additional procedures around leaving campus during the school day. Also note that when faculty enter another campus (PS, LS or US), the faculty member must sign in at the front office.

## **C. AFTER-SCHOOL TIME FOR TEACHERS**

Teachers are not required to remain on campus after school hours unless they wish to or there is a mandatory function. However, if parents or students ask to meet with a teacher for additional help, teachers should be available to help after school or at another time that the teacher establishes with the student and/or parent.

## **D. HOURS OF CAMPUS OPERATIONS**

The middle school campus is staffed by security from 6:30 a.m. to 11 p.m., Monday through Friday. Teachers should plan their on-campus presence accordingly. It is preferred that teachers limit their working schedule to daylight hours, which can fluctuate during the school year. If working on campus after dark, teachers should make contact directly with security to advise of their presence. That phone number is 408.639.1002. It is recommended that if teachers are on campus after dark or in the morning prior to 7:30 a.m. that they work with their doors closed and locked unless students are present. If teachers want an escort to their cars after hours they may call security for that service.

Saturday hours for teacher access to campus are limited to daylight hours only. There is usually no security present at that time, so teachers are responsible for locking and unlocking campus access gates, their classroom doors, and disarming and rearming the security system. Instruction on all of those can be gathered from the security team on campus. It is important to note that the campus is closed to everyone on Sunday. Teachers cannot work in their classrooms or be on campus on this day.

If a teacher is to be working with a group (i.e., Dance Fusion or similar) on campus after normal school hours or on a weekend during approved hours, the event must be entered into RAR (Reserve A Room) for security purposes.

If coming to campus alone on the weekend, an email should be sent in advance to the division head so someone is aware of your presence on campus. In these instances, teachers should work in their classrooms with the doors locked. If teachers know in advance they will be working on a weekend, they should use the RAR system to "reserve" their classrooms. This is another means of letting security and facilities know in advance of your planned presence on campus. If you need help with the RAR system, please contact the facilities coordinator.

Utilization of the campus for student tutoring on weekends is discouraged.

## **E. LENGTH OF SCHOOL YEAR**

Should there be an extenuating circumstance such that the school has to close and classes are unable to be delivered to students, the school reserves the right to add additional school days to the school year calendar. Teachers, of course, would then be required to carry out their usual duties and requirements during these days.

# **XI. OTHER FACULTY POLICIES/EXPECTATIONS**

## **A. FACULTY MEETINGS**

Teachers are expected to attend all Wednesday after-school meetings including teachers and coaches. They must request permission from the division head to miss a meeting if they have a personal conflict. Such instances should be rare.

All teachers are required to attend all K-12 (all-faculty) meetings. Similarly, after-school club meetings or activity practices should not be scheduled during any all-faculty meeting times.

All-Faculty Meeting Expectations

- Teachers needing to miss an all-faculty meeting must ask permission from their division head prior to the meeting.
- Teachers identify themselves to their department chair at the beginning of each all-faculty meeting. This will help the department chair ensure all of the teachers in the department are present.
- Teachers give each speaker the attention and respect they would expect to receive if they were speaking to adults or to their students. Teachers should therefore refrain from distracting behaviors including, but not limited to, grading papers, working on a computer or phone, and chatting with fellow faculty members.
- Teachers should remain attentive to the speakers and information presented during the full time of the meeting. If sitting for such extended periods of time is physically uncomfortable, please notify your division head so that alternate accommodations can be found.

## **B. FACULTY APPEARANCE/PROFESSIONALISM**

Please refer to personnel handbook for faculty appearance and professionalism guidelines

Teachers are also expected to maintain clean classrooms, and desks should be kept in a neat and clean condition. We also believe that all students should refer to their teachers in a professional manner, with the use of one's surname (Mr. Jones, Dr. Lee, Ms. Shah, etc.).

## C. TEACHER AS TUTOR

Teachers who provide tutoring to our students are vital and valued team members of our learning community. In an effort to avoid conflicts of interest, teachers are never allowed to tutor students they are currently teaching.

In addition, teachers may not tutor during the school day, which includes office hours. It is important your own students have access to your help prior to the start of any tutoring. You must notify the counseling department with the names of the students you are tutoring so that counselors, teachers and tutors can work together as a team to best support the efforts of our students.

All tutoring relationships are professional relationships between teachers and students. When tutoring students on any Harker campus over the weekends, teachers must notify their division head of which students they are tutoring, the day and time they are tutoring, and where they are tutoring the students. They must also reserve the use of their own rooms through RAR. Teachers should encourage parents to remain on campus while their child is being tutored on the weekends. Teachers may never tutor students after 7 p.m. on campus. In addition, we discourage teachers from tutoring students at the teacher's home; if you do so, a third person, preferably an adult, should always be present.

For reasons of liability, teachers are also never allowed to tutor non-Harker students on any Harker facilities.

All teacher-tutors must familiarize themselves with the tutor protocols and policies. A document titled "Tutoring Information & Policies" can be found on the faculty portal. All teachers need to read this document in its entirety before tutoring any Harker student.

## D. TEACHER AS COACH

The after-school coaching hours are from 3:30 to 5 p.m., with occasional extensions on game days. The school draws its coaches from off campus, but is also fortunate to have several Harker teacher-coaches on staff. Details regarding the general expectations for coaches are included in the athletic handbook, published annually.

During their season of sport, coaches are required to conduct daily practice and attend all games for their team, whether they are head coaches or assistants. Faculty meetings are scheduled after school and may come in conflict with the after-school coaching schedule. The administration recognizes that coaches are teachers and have to be with their classes during their season of sport. As such, student practice needs to continue even if there are departmental, class dean or divisional meetings. Solo teacher-coaches are relieved of the responsibility of attending all after-school meetings, with the exception of all-faculty (K-12) meetings, during their season of sport. Teams and programs with multiple coaches should coordinate with each other and the athletic director prior to a scheduled meeting to have practice led by one of the coaches so the other(s) may attend meetings. If this is a divisional meeting the attending coach should take notes and report back to the other coaches. Coaches missing divisional or department meetings are responsible for checking with their division head, assistant head of middle school or department chair in advance of each meeting.

**Coaches are expected, however, to attend all all-faculty (K-12) faculty meetings.** Games for teams led by teacher-coaches will not be scheduled during all-faculty (K-12) meeting times, and



assistants will end practices on these dates.

## E. SUPERVISORY ASSIGNMENTS

All full-time teachers may have supervisory duties such as supervising students during performing arts performances or social dances.

It is imperative to keep in mind that the safety of students is of paramount importance. Therefore:

- arrive at the supervision area on time;
- be actively involved – do not sit and chat with other teachers, talk on the phone or grade papers;
- enforce all school rules and discipline policies at all times;
- report behavior to the BASE director;
- use behavioral referrals for major infractions;
- be familiar with rules of games;
- facilitate return of equipment;
- do not tolerate roughness, fighting, foul language or harassment of any kind.

All classrooms should be locked when not in use. No student should ever be in a classroom without a teacher present. In addition, no student may perform laboratory work unless supervised by a teacher. A negligent teacher is personally liable when a student is injured in an unsupervised classroom.

Please note that students eat lunch under the supervision of aides and the BASE team. Students should be encouraged to eat what they take. Food of any kind is not to be wasted. Teachers supervising the lunch area need to encourage and ensure proper manners, decorum and trash cleanup. Moreover, when supervising break or any playtime, teachers need to enforce playground rules.

Additional policies and procedures for lunch supervision will be distributed by the enrichment and supervision director at your campus.

## F. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Good classroom control is essential for learning. Teachers are responsible for safeguarding the learning environment in the classroom. Additionally, a well-managed class allows for a safe and nurturing environment to be realized. It is expected that classrooms be reasonably quiet, orderly and free from tension. Teachers are expected to develop thought-provoking discussions and activities while maintaining control of the classroom.

Teachers should use discretion when allowing students to leave class to go to lockers, attend to personal business, run miscellaneous errands, or for any other purpose that is not absolutely necessary. Every minute out of class is a loss of valuable academic and teaching time. If a teacher sends a student out of class for any disciplinary reason, the student should not be sent to the hallway, but rather to the office. A call to the office should be made to alert an administrator to expect the student.

## G. CLASSROOM DÉCOR/CLEANLINESS

Teachers are expected to decorate their classrooms in an interesting and appropriate manner. Material used should be related to the subjects taught. Attractive, seasonal bulletin boards are important and necessary in each classroom. Children's work should be displayed whenever appropriate. It is also important that classroom décor not create unnecessary distractions.

A classroom is a reflection of the teacher as well as the learning environment. As such, teachers are expected to maintain clean, neat classrooms and desks. Classrooms should not appear cluttered.

Writing or markings on desks, tables or other classroom furniture is to be reported to the office. Teachers should watch closely for markings or damage to desks in classrooms where students are changing rooms.

In order to save costs, teachers should have their students empty wastebaskets and keep the classroom looking neat and tidy on a daily basis. Spray bottles for cleaning desks and windows can be obtained from the maintenance department. Please caution students not to overload the trash containers when emptying wastebaskets. Teachers should keep a receptacle in their classrooms to accommodate paper to be recycled. Large recycle bins are located throughout the campus.

## H. RECYCLING PROGRAM AND SUSTAINABILITY

The Harker School maintains a wet/dry recycling program to reduce the percentage of our waste stream that goes to the landfill, following guidelines set forth by the city of San Jose and Republic Services (the waste management company for commercial users in San Jose). In fact, the city of San Jose presented an official commendation to the school for its outstanding efforts. All campus trash bins are labeled either "Compost" (food that will break down, dirty paper/cardboard – or, as our youngest students say, "things that worms will eat") or "Other" (clean paper/ cardboard, plastics, metals, glass). Harker also discourages the use of single-use plastics in the school setting. Please be aware of this, especially if organizing field trips or events where students' refillable water bottles can offset the need for disposable ones. This may be expanded when sandwiches are ordered through the catering system, to replace small condiment packages with larger, refillable and recyclable units that can be shared. These are just two examples of best practices we hope to exemplify whenever possible. Please set a great example for the students by following the guidelines and demonstrating your commitment to this waste-reducing measure to our community.

Harker's sustainability mission is: "Modeling and teaching a sustainable relationship with the environment." To do this, Harker is dedicated to helping all members of the community (employees, parents, students & visitors) to act in ways that demonstrate our connection with and commitment to the environment. Harker recognizes that many of the activities that occur as part of running a school have a negative impact on the environment. To reduce this impact and hopefully one day be carbon neutral, Harker encourages all members of the community to be cognizant of their behaviors and reduce their negative effect on the environment whenever possible.

Harker has developed an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy (available in the portal resources tool) that states each individual is responsible for seeking, requesting and purchasing environmentally preferred products, as appropriate. Harker is also dedicated to managing its waste stream in a way that minimizes waste, making sure to reduce, reuse and recycle where possible. For example, Harker uses 30% post-consumer recycled paper, follows Republic Services guidelines for managing our trash, adheres to Santa Clara county direction for reducing handling and disposal of hazardous waste, and encourages drivers to turn off their engines rather than idling.

As a certified green business Harker strives to use environmentally preferred practices for managing our resources and creating a healthy environment. The seven major areas of focus include energy usage, green schoolyards, toxics reduction, healthy food, waste and recycling, transportation and water quality. The Harker community should feel empowered to make sustainable choices and make suggestions for how the school can operate in a more eco-friendly way. Suggestions can be made by contacting your division sustainability leader.

## I. VOICEMAIL/EMAIL/MAILBOXES

To ensure timely responses to parent, faculty or administrator needs, voicemail, email and mailboxes should be checked at least twice per day, and teachers must respond in a timely and appropriate manner. A 24-hour response window (one working day) is reasonable for parent/colleague responses, even if it's just to say, "I'll get back to you!" Faculty should also be sure to check such communications

for an appropriate tone to maintain and promote a positive community.

## **J. STUDENT FILES**

A cumulative file is maintained for each student. Files contain student grades, ERB scores and OLSAT scores, in addition to teacher comments. Contact an administrator or counselor if you feel you need further information about a given student.

## **K. USE OF AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING DEVICES**

The use of audio/video recording devices in school-related conversations or meetings is strongly discouraged and allowed only with the formal consent of every party involved. Teachers should feel free to prohibit the use of these devices unless there are extenuating circumstances.

## **L. TEACHERS AUDITING CLASSES**

Teachers may not audit another teacher's course. A teacher's focus needs to be on the enrolled students. Moreover, it is important that teachers are able to create a unique rapport with their students.

## **M. FACULTY CHECKOUT**

At the conclusion of each regular school year, all teachers must follow prescribed checkout procedures. Teachers receive a form for this purpose and must collect signatures from the appropriate supervisors. The completed forms are turned in to the division head for final approval.

## **N. INVENTORIES**

Each department and/or grade level is responsible for keeping accurate, updated inventories at all times. Teachers need to check inventories early in the school year to be sure items are present. Inventories must be updated at the end of each school year. This operation should be supervised closely by the department chair.

# **XII. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR FACULTY**

## **A. RECEPTION DESK**

The reception desk facilitates communications between parents and the school as well as between students and the office. All messages for staff and students as well as the registration of visitors are processed there.

## **B. SCANTRON**

Scantron machines are located in the teachers' rooms. Scantron forms can be found in the main office.

## **C. BOOKS**

Middle school students will purchase their books prior to the beginning of the year. All middle school texts are owned by the student.

## **D. BRING YOUR OWN LAPTOP (BYOL)**

The BYOL program in the middle school provides more pedagogical opportunities for teachers and

increased learning opportunities for students. We are finding in many areas, whether science, mathematics or social studies, digital resources and methods are frequently available that affect not only what students learn, but how they learn it. Providing the students with ready access to digital tools extends the possibilities of how teachers can teach and how students can learn. Maintaining a positive and interactive culture amongst our students is a primary concern and therefore strict guidelines and a clearly defined code of behavior has been established to support faculty and staff and direct student behavior and actions.

Students in grades 6-8 are required to have their names permanently labeled in their laptop cases, and to keep their laptops secure at all times. Laptops are to be kept in a case and may be stored with the student, inside the locker or inside the backpack. Students may not instant-message, use personal email, play games or download multimedia, unless explicitly directed by the teacher, while on campus before "escape time," which is typically at 4 p.m. daily. Teachers are responsible for making sure that students follow this procedure.

## E. CLASSROOM SUPPLIES

Classroom supplies needed by teachers for personal use can be obtained by submitting a supply request. Requests will be processed two times during the school year, in August and January. It is essential that you plan ahead when ordering supplies. The school maintains a small inventory of basic supplies for emergency purposes. A serious effort should be made to conserve as these items are costly.

## F. FURNITURE REQUESTS

Furniture requests should be thought about in advance so we can budget accordingly. Teachers need to submit all furniture requests to their division head during the budget process in late November, so the furniture can be bought the following school year. Should a teacher have an immediate need for furniture that falls outside the budget cycle, the teacher must contact the division head directly to see if the request can be accommodated. Furniture from home such as sofas and other seating can not be used in the classroom. Teachers wanting to bring in other furniture into the classroom that was not purchased by the school should seek approval from the division head.

## G. LOST AND FOUND

We believe that students should develop the responsibility to manage their belongings. Taking care of possessions is an important skill. Items will be collected at the end of each day, labeled with a date and made available for student pickup in the lost and found for one month. After one month, the item will be donated and will no longer be available for pickup.

## H. UNIFORM EXCHANGE

The middle school BASE team manages a uniform exchange program, allowing parents to donate gently used uniforms their children have outgrown in exchange for larger sizes.

## I. VISITORS

Please note that all visitors on campus are required to check in at the front desk, wear Harker-issued lanyards visible while on campus, and follow any health/safety guidelines in place (such as wearing a mask) at the current time. Faculty and staff expecting visitors should alert the front desk in advance. If you would like a visitor to observe or spend time with your class, you need to request approval from your division head in advance.

## J. COPIERS

Teachers should not send students to the faculty room and/or copy room to make copies or pick up

materials from the printers. Faculty spaces need to remain dedicated faculty/staff areas.

## **K. FACULTY & STAFF GIFTING**

In a school, tradition is such that occasionally students, parents or vendors give gifts to employees, generally in recognition of appreciated efforts. While Harker does not prohibit employees' acceptance of gifts, all employees should make sure that doing so does not influence or give the appearance of influencing business or academic decisions, transactions or service. As a guideline and to protect employees from the appearance of influence, if any gift appears to have a value above \$200, staff members should discuss options with their supervisor.

## **XIII. ATHLETICS, AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

### **A. ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY**

See Extracurricular Activity Participation Review: Protocol and Guidelines section on page 24.

### **B. PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES**

All students are required to participate in physical education classes unless excused for medical or health reasons. The exception to this requirement is the student who is involved in a rigorous, on-going sports program outside of school. In this case, the student must complete a P.E. exemption form and submit it to the division head for review.

Health classes are conducted by the P.E. staff and are not exempt for any reason.

The gymnasium floor has the following limitations, intended to maintain the surface at a level conducive to athletic play and competition. Varying activities are destructive to the finish which causes premature deterioration of the floors and increases maintenance costs.

As a result, the following activities should be restricted in all gymnasiums:

- Use of scooter boards as part of P.E. or recreational activities;
- Use of hockey sticks or any form of club in activities where impact with the floor may occur;
- Use of any type of hard wheeled tricycle, cart, or other apparatus in conjunction with P.E. or recreational activities;
- Use of hard plastic balls, such as golf balls;
- Use of human-powered spring apparatus, such as pogo sticks;
- Sliding of any abrasive materials for transportation of materials or human beings.

All activities should be assessed for potential damage to the floor surface before they are conducted. Please consult the campus maintenance manager or facilities director with any questions in this area.

### **C. AFTER-SCHOOL SPORTS**

All students are eligible to participate on school teams, which compete interscholastically or as intramurals. Separate teams are organized for boys and girls and are coached by members of the athletic department staff. At both the middle school and intermediate levels, several teams are organized by ability. All coaching staff will report and coordinate with Theresa Smith, the athletic director.

Girls in grades 6-8 may compete in cross country, volleyball, soccer, basketball, softball, swimming, water polo, lacrosse, tennis, track and two golf tournaments.

Boys in grades 6-8 may compete in cross country, flag football, basketball, soccer, baseball, swimming, water polo, tennis, volleyball, track and two golf tournaments.

All teams meet for practice or games Monday through Friday, beginning at 3:45 p.m. Grade 6-8 team practices end at 5 p.m. Off campus practices usually occur between 4 p.m. and 5:15 p.m. Occasionally special practice times may be developed for a specific team. These must have the approval of the athletic director or division head.

No student who attends regularly and demonstrates a good attitude and maintains a C average will be dropped from the sports program. Each case is dealt with on an individual basis. While attendance is expected daily, mandatory days are Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and all game days.

## D. BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL ENRICHMENT (BASE)

BASE provides programming and services that are designed specifically with the needs of the middle school student in mind. Although we may have a class or two offered remotely, the majority of classes are taught in person. BASE staff teach a variety of enrichment classes like coding, photography and karate. Additionally, there are some classes that are taught by outside vendors for an additional fee. BASE activities also include the following:

- Activity Avenue: Students play foosball, air hockey, bumper and pool, video games, crafts, among other activities.
- Drop-in Activities: Students can sign in for drop-in activities organized by BASE staff in the amphitheater or gallery.
- Fun Fridays: Students participate in a small-carnival-like environment in the amphitheater each Friday, where students play games and spend time with friends.
- Daily Activities: Students participate in activities that vary from day to day after school. Some are more activities, while others allow students to relax, create and reflect.

The goal of the BASE department is to provide an authentic, relaxing, fun and safe environment built on the diverse interests of all students. We utilize reciprocal contributions from both students and staff to teach kindness, empathy and compassion towards others.

BASE transforms after school into an atmosphere where students can explore options, discover new challenges, build character, and learn responsibility through enrichment and social activities.

BASE leaders are guides and mentors who serve as supervision aides and role models, incorporating meaningful services to enhance community principles. They teach students to develop sustainable connections through appropriate relationship building.

## E. USE AND SUPERVISION OF POOL FACILITIES

The Harker Pool Safety Operations Protocol is posted under Resources in the faculty portal and must be adhered to at all times by teams practicing at the lower or upper school campuses. Coaches of swim and water polo programs must also be directed to following the same document for guidance. Others who may be authorized for recreational pool use will need to be provided access to the document by the school's facilities rental director. While more detailed information is provided in the pool safety operations protocol, here are a few of the primary responsibilities of the coach during any given use:

- All rescue equipment must be in place prior to swimming.
- The water must be tested and chlorine and pH levels must be within acceptable limits.
- Ensure that required coach/student ratios are met.
- This applies to all team practices that are part of the Harker program, as well as all outside rental groups.

Students must be given instructions in pool rules before the beginning of any interscholastic sports seasons or free swim activity.

In order to participate in interscholastic swim programs, students must demonstrate the ability to perform the following skills:

- Enter and exit the pool via the steps or the ladder.
- Perform a front/back float and front/back crawl (water polo).
- Perform a 100 yard lap swim (swim team).
- Climb out of the pool without using the steps or ladder.
- Students who cannot pass the above test are not permitted to participate in the interscholastic aquatics.

Full rules and regulations regarding group pool use will be found in the Group Pool use instructions available in Resources in the faculty portal.

## **XIV. BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

### **A. GOALS OF BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

We are committed to creating a nurturing environment while maintaining a learning environment which ensures our students' physical and emotional safety and well-being. To this end, The Harker School prescribes basic behavioral standards for all students, governed by the overriding expectation that kindness and respect prevail as each student progresses through the school day, both inside and outside the classroom. It is important that students display a positive attitude toward school, as well as a pride in their school. All students are expected to adhere to these standards and appropriate consequences will apply to students who do not.

Students are expected to be polite, helpful and cooperative in their interactions with peers and staff; it is this type of behavior that has led to the warm, friendly atmosphere that defines and distinguishes our campuses. It is our belief that students should clearly understand the policies established by the school, as well as understand that they will be held personally accountable should they show a disregard for such rules. We base our approach to discipline on the premise that the children will learn from their mistakes and that they must be supported in their efforts to become increasingly responsible decision-makers. Students should be able to build on these experiences and learn to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects heightened personal integrity and willingness to act according to the principles and values of the school community.

At The Harker School, the character and behavior of the students are of paramount importance. We believe that the "kind" of people who graduate from Harker is just as important as the skills and knowledge that they acquire. In keeping with this belief, students are expected to live by the four tenets of character and behavior highlighted in our mission, which our faculty and administration must reinforce in developmentally appropriate ways. Those tenets are:

- Kindness
- Respect
- Integrity
- Personal Accountability

#### **Classroom Behavior Expectations**

We believe the foundations of learning and good behavior begin in the classroom. Students respond well to clear and simple classroom rules and expectations that are reinforced. When behavior transgressions occur, a strength-based approach is needed. By helping students understand the impacts of their choices, they learn from their mistakes and grow in their ability to make sound decisions in the future. This approach requires students to engage in acts of empathy and take

ownership of their behavior.

### **Common Classroom Rules**

- Keep hands, feet and other objects to yourself.
- Support your classmates and participate in creating a safe and kind environment; thoughtless comments, puts downs or teasing is now allowed.
- Be an upstander.
- Allow others to speak; avoid talking when others are speaking.
- Follow the directions of the teacher.

All teachers should provide an immediate and clear response when student behavior is not appropriate. It should be in accordance with the community and classroom norms that the teacher and school have established with the students. Failure to follow through with the initial step of the behavioral management protocol may compromise the learning environment and the school's ability to support the teacher. There may be occasional times when behaviors warrant an automatic referral; however, these situations should be discussed with the assistant head of middle school or division head.

### **The D<sup>3</sup> Program**

Educate First

1. Student conference with the teacher and parent update
2. Phone conference with parent
3. Behavioral referral and parent update

Sent from class: Students who are so disruptive that they must be sent from class will report immediately to the division head or assistant head of middle school.

This system is set up to support the teacher to better deal with students who need extra boundaries.

## **B. BEHAVIOR OUTSIDE OF CLASS**

Harker standards of conduct do not change when students are out of class on the playgrounds, athletic fields, field trips or other school activities. Students are expected to treat one another with courtesy and respect; listen and follow the directions of the BASE team, coaches, etc.; and support the rules for the activities in which they participate. As in the classroom, rules need to be simple and clear and positive management techniques need to be used.

In grades 6-8, staff members observing a particular behavior will talk with students so the student understands what behaviors are unacceptable. A report should be provided to the director of the BASE team for follow-through. The middle school BASE director will determine those circumstances which will be referred to the middle school division head or assistant head of middle school, as well as communicate with parents.

Even when students are off campus outside of school hours, they may be subject to disciplinary action if they exhibit inappropriate behavior affecting other students or behavior that is prejudicial to the good name of the school. This includes email and electronic media.

## **C. BEHAVIORAL REFERRAL FORM**

Teachers fill out the behavior referral Google form when a behavior incident occurs so that patterns of behavior can be tracked and managed appropriately. This information enables the administration and teachers to work in concert to support and manage student behavior, helping the students become aware of the impact of their actions on themselves and others.



The administration works with the teachers, counselors and advisors to provide a well-rounded approach towards behavior management, one that is focused on strength building to help students learn from their mistakes and assign consequences that match the initial infraction.

Consequences may include:

- Campus beautification assignments
- Behavior plans
- Introspective Study Hall.

## D. MAJOR INFRACTIONS

Refer to the grade 6-8 student/parent handbook for a listing of the behaviors or actions that The Harker School considers major. It also lists the range of consequences for those actions.

## E. OTHER DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

### **Consequences for Uniform Violation**

Monitoring each child's adherence to the uniform requirement is every teacher's responsibility. If a child is out of uniform, the teacher needs to address this specifically with the student, so the student is aware of this violation. Repeated uniform violations may result in any of the following consequences: loss of free dress, campus beautification, or introspective study hall.

Uniforms are required on all non-free dress school days, awards assemblies and on field trips. Handling free dress passes is the first period teacher's responsibility. Return the free dress pass to the student after it has been signed and dated. With this procedure, the student will have the signed pass to show a teacher should the student be questioned about free dress later in the day.

### **Introspective Study Hall (ISH)**

Introspective study hall will be assigned at lunch or after school. An effort will be made to assign the study hall as soon as the incident occurs. Hours in study hall are issued by administration after meeting with the student first.

### **SATURDAY STUDY HALL**

Students who accumulate five hours of study hall during a grading period may be assigned a Saturday five-hour study hall or an in-house restriction in lieu of suspension. This action may be implemented solely at the discretion of the administration and only once during the school year. Parents must pay for any necessary supervision. Following a Saturday study hall or in-house restriction, accumulation of more than two additional hours during the same grading period may result in suspension.

Students who are required to attend office hours, the Test and Study Center (TASC) or study hall will receive additional consequences for failure to attend.

Typically the student will serve the original event (ISH, EG, etc., plus one additional event. Repeated no-shows will be handled appropriately.

### **Tardy to Class**

Students are expected to be in the classroom on time. Teachers should monitor students who are chronically tardy. Repeated tardiness should result in counseling students, parent contact and then issuance of a behavioral referral should tardies continue even after parents and students have been advised. Teachers must excuse students promptly at the end of class so that they will not be late to the next class. Students should not be dismissed early.

### **Tardy to School**

It is important that all students arrive at school on time. It helps the students maintain continuity in

their academics and to begin the day in a calm fashion. As such, chronic tardiness is a concern and tardies exceeding 10 in a semester will result in interventions by the school including but not limited to meetings with the division head, letters sent home and other more serious consequences. Excessive tardies may also impact a students' re-enrollment status.

## **XV. SCHOOLWIDE COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RELATIONS: OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION**

Harker's Office of Communication oversees the public website, Parent Portal, internal and external publications, including the Harker Magazine, photo and video coverage, social media, media relations and the Harker News, Harker's daily digital news source. Email [communications@harker.org](mailto:communications@harker.org) with any questions or suggestions.

**Parent Portal:** Harker's Parent Portal is your dashboard for information and resources. In this password-protected space, accessed from [www.harker.org](http://www.harker.org), you can (depending on your student's division): update your family's information; view report cards, announcements, the staff directory, lunch menus and homework; find tuition and re-enrollment information; customize calendars; purchase tickets for events; access the photo database and video channels; sign up for after-school activities; and more.

**eWeekly:** The eWeekly is sent each Thursday to all Harker families with calendar and event reminders for the coming week, including links to RSVP or purchase tickets to events and access to our photo database for downloading. (Additionally, parents may receive unofficial reminders and updates regarding grade level social activities by Grade Level Coordinators or other parent volunteers from our advancement office).

**Online News, News Express, Harker Magazine:** We publish news and updates about the Harker community in Harker News on an almost-daily basis here: <http://news.harker.org/>. You can subscribe to a daily digest, which we highly recommend so you don't miss interesting and exciting news of the community. The Harker News Express is emailed in the first week of each month to all families and to alumni. It recaps the top stories from the previous month and includes event reminders for the coming month. The biannual Harker Magazine includes in-depth features, alumni news and more. It is mailed to homes and also linked in the Parent Portal. To submit story ideas and suggestions for any of these publications, email [news.harker.org](mailto:news.harker.org).

**Photos & Video:** We photograph events and activities at all four campuses regularly, and those photos can be found in our robust photo archive, linked from the Parent Portal, where families can download photos for free; they are also accessible from the eWeekly. We record major student performances and provide them for free on the Performing Arts tile. Photos and videos are available in the Parent Portal on the Photos tile and the Video on Demand tile, respectively.

Parents are expected to show consideration for students, teachers and coaches if video recording or photographing extracurricular events, such as performances and sporting events. No recording (audio or video) of in-class or athletic practice activity is permitted without the explicit consent of the instructor or coach.

To enable parents to devote their full attention to their child's performance, all major performing arts shows and concerts are professionally recorded and photographed by the school and made **available for free** to parents in the Harker Video On Demand channel and photo galleries in the portal shortly after the performance. Therefore, we ask families not to videotape or photograph these events so that all families can enjoy their children's performance without distraction. A quick phone photo is acceptable, but no flash photography is allowed. Specific guidelines will be announced prior to each performance. The public release or posting of any portion of any of these recordings is strictly prohibited without the explicit consent of the administration of The Harker School.

**Logo Use:** Harker logos are trademarked, and any use must be cleared by the Office of Communication. If logo products of any kind are needed, the request and order must go through the Eagle Store so that the O of C can vet and approve the logo use. Email [communications@harker.org](mailto:communications@harker.org) with requests.

**Media Relations:** The O of C oversees the school's media relations. The goal of the school's media relations is to maintain a professional working relationship with the press; seek opportunities to share timely news of the school, its people and its programs; ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of any information being disseminated about the school; and protect the school's reputation. Faculty, staff, students or parents who are contacted by the media for a Harker-related story should refer the reporter to [news@harker.org](mailto:news@harker.org) or call 408.345.9273. You can also contact the O of C with the information, and they can approve or discuss any concerns and/or suggestions with you. Members of the media wishing to visit any of our campuses must contact the O of C at [news@harker.org](mailto:news@harker.org) who will clear and supervise the visit.

Note: Harker's student journalists are members of the community, as well as developing journalists, and we encourage the Harker community to participate in their learning process and to respond to their inquiries. Given that the stories covered by our students can be obtained by external media and could be considered in any legal matter, it is important that all Harker community members exercise good judgment when discussing any matter. Harker community members who have questions about a given topic or information requested, should inquire with the head of school or Office of Communication.

While we do our best to monitor Harker media coverage, please be aware that media companies and individuals over whom we have no control may take photos of the school, students, faculty and parents, both on and off campus. Also, social media has created a proliferation of information about the school, students and faculty over which we have little control, but that we monitor regularly.

If you have any questions, contact [communications@harker.org](mailto:communications@harker.org) or Pam Dickinson, Office of Communication director, at [pam.dickinson@harker.org](mailto:pam.dickinson@harker.org).

**Social Media:** Follow Harker on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/harkerschool/](https://www.facebook.com/harkerschool/)), Instagram ([www.instagram.com/harkerschool/](https://www.instagram.com/harkerschool/)), and YouTube ([www.youtube.com/user/harkerschool](https://www.youtube.com/user/harkerschool)). Follow athletics on Instagram ([www.instagram.com/harkerathletics/](https://www.instagram.com/harkerathletics/))

It's important that employees exercise appropriate discretion when using social media (even for personal communications), monitor their sites to keep them safe and/or clear of spam and hijacking by inappropriate sites, and keep in mind that social media activities may be visible to current, past and prospective students, parents, colleagues and community members.

To ensure clear boundaries, faculty and staff can only "friend" or "follow" a Harker student in social media, such as Facebook, Instagram and SnapChat, after the student has become an alumna/us of the school and is 18 years of age or older (exceptions are of course made for faculty/staff parents following their own children). Using social media as part of a classroom, club or off-campus trip must be cleared by the division head and Office of Communication.

Remind is the school-approved and supported application for use on all field trips and for informal student-teacher communication in grades 6-12. Before planning a field trip, you must meet with a LID director to be trained in Remind's use at Harker. Additionally, if you find that your students are unable to use Remind (due to a lack of a mobile device, parental agreement or other such reason), you may collect cell phone numbers only for communication that is minimal, formal school business and includes a serious need to reach them immediately.

## **XVI. BUSINESS OFFICE**

For any information relating to the business office or to human resources, please refer to the personnel handbook.

## **XVII. LIBRARY**

### **A. LIBRARY MISSION**

The mission of the Harker library program is to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information. Our library staff empowers students to be critical thinkers, enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and ethical users of information.

### **B. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AND RESOURCES**

Harker's professional librarians are eager to assist faculty with collaborative curricular planning with an eye toward infusing all disciplines with information literacy objectives. Librarians plan units with classroom teachers, and purchase excellent fiction and nonfiction titles in all formats for avid independent readers of all ages.

Access the Harker library website at [library.harker.org](http://library.harker.org). The lower, middle and upper school library websites provide 24/7 access to online resources including subscription databases, the library catalog and project LibGuides. See the "For Teachers" tab on any of the campus library websites to access professional resources.

The lower, middle and upper school libraries are open from 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m. on regular school days.

### **C. RECOMMENDING MATERIALS**

Librarians welcome suggestions of materials for purchase, including books, eBooks, audio books, magazines and films. Contact your campus librarian or use the Recommend a Resource box on the For Teachers page on the library portal.

### **D. BORROWING MATERIALS**

Faculty may check out materials from any Harker library for educational or personal use for three weeks. Items can be requested from and returned to your campus via the library catalog. Items may be renewed if they are not in demand. There are no fines for overdue materials. You can access adult print titles, eBooks and audiobooks on the upper school library portal.

### **E. LIBRARY PRIVACY POLICY**

Among the many values important to The Harker School community is respect for the individual. Harker librarians adhere to a professional code of ethics that safeguards patron rights, including confidentiality of library records. Information on what patrons have checked out of the library will be treated confidentially by the library staff and volunteers.

## **XVIII. FIELD TRIPS / SPECIAL EVENTS**

### **A. SPECIAL CLASSROOM EVENTS**

Any on-campus event must be approved by the assistant head of middle school or division head. Use of campus facilities other than one's classroom must be reserved online using RAR. The instructions for that process are printed in the personnel policies manual. These reservations are not to be entered until receiving the above-mentioned approval.

### **B. FIELD TRIPS – GENERAL**

The easiest way to determine if an activity is considered a field trip is to answer the following test questions:

1. Is Harker providing transportation?
2. Is a Harker faculty member providing direct supervision of the students?
3. Is it mandatory for a class, club or team?
4. Is it overnight?

If the answer to any of those is "yes" then it is a field trip and the following guidelines apply. Faculty and staff may not take any student off campus without prior notification to and signed permission from parents and without the approval of the assistant head of middle school and division head.

Teachers are responsible for scheduling their own field trips via the VersaTrans Trip Tracker system, found online in the faculty portal. Tutorials for use of the system are also available online. If possible day field trips for the year should be planned and submitted to the assistant head of middle school for approval prior to October 1. All overnight field trips for the year should be approved by the assistant head prior to October 1, and then immediately entered into Versatrans.

As a general rule, day-long field trips may not depart prior to 8:30 a.m. or return after 3 p.m. due to BASE, athletic, and performing arts needs. Trips extending beyond this time period must be specifically approved within the VersaTrans system, but notification must be provided directly to the athletic director and director of performing arts by the requestor prior to scheduling to identify and resolve any potential conflicts with those programs.

Please review Section G "Specific Procedures" to make sure you are fully informed while considering the creation of a field trip.

### **C. OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIPS**

If you are taking students on a trip that involves an overnight stay of any kind, you must submit that trip for consideration to the assistant head of school for academic affairs' Google form by April 1 of the school year prior to which the trip will be taken. This means for a trip taken in July 2025, the submittal and approval will be required by April 2024. The division head should be informed of this submission concurrent to its insertion on the Google form. The assistant heads of school will advise you of the trip's approval by May 30 following the April submittal. No overnight trip is to be discussed with students or parents prior to submission to the assistant heads to avoid confusion or disappointment should the trip be modified or not be approved. Once approved, you and your team of chaperones must complete overnight trip leader training with the assistant head of school for student affairs and, for international trips, the director of global education. All other details are included in the Domestic Overnight Field Trip Handbook or International Field Trip Handbook located in Resources on the faculty portal.

All international trips will be overseen by the director of global education, who will coordinate the preparation of the affidavit for international travel. The assistant head for student affairs will

coordinate with you on the permission form package for any domestic overnight trip. When the trip is approved in the previous school year, you will be advised the date at which time your permission/affidavit process will need to begin.

## D. PERMISSION FORMS - GENERAL

Teachers must generate a permission slip for the parents of each student attending any field trip. Permission form templates for simple day field trips in editable PDF format are available online in the faculty portal. Paste-in links to the forms are located within the VersaTrans email confirmation system. Reminders should be sent home in weekly packets for younger students to get materials returned on time – at least five days before the scheduled departure so that the attendance office can enter the information into Infinite Campus (IC).

Complete, distribute and collect permission slips for all trips in advance. No student may leave campus without submitting a signed permission slip. In the event that students fail to submit their permission slips on the due date, attempt to have the parents fax or email a signed slip. Emails from parents are not a substitute for the permission slip.

Permission slips are not required for intercampus travel such as those that take place for performing arts events and athletics. **Overnight field trips require a forms package created by the assistant head of school for student affairs' office as mentioned above.**

## E. FIELD TRIP TRANSPORTATION

Chaperones ride with students on field trips. All Harker students who are transported by bus, train or plane on a Harker field trip must be chaperoned from start to finish. Particularly in the case of bus travel, faculty and staff chaperones must ride to provide support and supervision while drivers concentrate on the road ahead. Bus drivers, whether Harker or chartered, cannot be responsible for supervision or check-in/out of students on field trips. In general, this rule can be followed for the middle school: a bus that is half full requires at least one adult chaperone and a bus that is full requires a minimum of two. Consult the assistant head of middle school or division head for guidance.

Bus drivers are instructed not to leave the departure point unless the requisite numbers of faculty or staff members are on board. The transportation director will ensure that adequate space exists for both the students and chaperones riding on the bus.

In some cases, a shadow vehicle with other chaperones aboard accompanies a trip. These vehicles should stay in visual contact with the bus during the trip, unless required to go ahead and arrange logistics for the following group at the field trip site. All chaperones should share cell phone numbers for easy contact in case of an emergency or if they somehow become separated on the road.

All chaperones on the transport should have accurate attendance lists, and carefully check students onto the bus or other mode of transport prior to the start of the trip and after every stop during which students are allowed to leave the vehicle or other mode of transport. A copy of the original, verified attendance list must be left at the front desk of the campus from which the field trip departs; this should be done just prior to departure to insure accuracy.

For day field trips lasting longer than 3.5 hours, or occurring during the driver's normally required lunch break, the teacher who is organizing the field trip will be responsible for providing lunch for the driver or budgeting for the driver's reimbursement for lunch.

## F. FACULTY AND STAFF DRIVERS FOR FIELD TRIPS

A teacher or staff member can only provide field trip transport for students if the teacher or staff member has completed the process of being added to the Harker Approved Driver List. The policy summarizing this procedure is online in the faculty/staff portal. In these cases, information regarding who is driving must be included on the permission slip to the parents. The approval, permission form

and insurance combine to provide protection for the staff/faculty member and the school in the unfortunate case of an accident. Any faculty or staff member driving a Harker vehicle on Harker business who receives a moving violation/ticket, parking violation/ticket or toll road/gate violation/ticket will be held responsible for the fine levied for the violation. Approved drivers must have provided information regarding appropriate levels of personal vehicle insurance in order to drive students in their own cars on a field trip. No one is allowed to transport a student alone with them by car on a field trip.

## G. SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

All VersaTrans requests for recurring trips must be submitted by October 1 via the online reservation system in the faculty portal. These are the essential requirements for entry of field trip requests into the VersaTrans system:

- If approved after October 1, trips must be entered a minimum of 14 days ahead of schedule.
- Overnight trips require a minimum of 30 days for approval and scheduling processes to occur. Any field trip that may be unable to meet these criteria should be brought to the attention of the division head and assistant head of school for student affairs before promotion to parent or students to determine if cost-effective transportation is effective or available.
- If you have not submitted a request before, you may need to contact the office of the assistant head of school for student affairs to establish an account in VersaTrans. Once that is done and you have submitted your request, the email response system will keep you informed of the approval chain. And, once officially scheduled for transport, you will receive a notice as well. Throughout the process, the trip request can be viewed online in the VersaTrans system. Instructions and training can be obtained from the office of the assistant head of school for student affairs.
- If the transportation request is for a charter bus rather than a Harker bus, a request for a quote should be forwarded to the transportation manager before entering the VersaTrans request. This is to maintain budget integrity and transport availability.
- Once initial approval is confirmed, you may contact the appropriate organization and solidify your off-campus reservation. There is a field trip fiscal information sheet, also available via the faculty portal, to collect all necessary information for a day field trip to be fully supported.
- You will receive a transportation confirmation email from the transportation manager via VersaTrans the week before your trip is scheduled. Any amendments to the schedule or location can be done online in VersaTrans prior to that time. However, significant changes should be communicated directly to those who have previously approved the trip to see if the changes may affect other school activities.
- At least one week prior to the trip, if a meal request has been previously submitted, forward the lunch/meal count (separately indicating the number of students and adults) to food service. It is the trip leader's responsibility to inform food service regarding the number of students who will not be present for lunch. Confirm from the prior request the number of vegetarian lunches needed and any special dietary requests.
- At least one week prior to the trip, teachers should be informed if any class time is to be missed, and after-school coaches or directors advised if absences may extend to that aspect of the school schedule.
- Five days prior to the trip, teachers should bring permission slips to the attendance office. This allows for permission forms to be reviewed for completeness and then maintained on file during the trip.
- The day before the trip leaves, trip leaders will visit the nurse's office to pick up first aid packs. They should be returned to the office upon return to campus. This is also the point at which you will pick up the Extended/ Overnight Health Forms if that is the nature of the trip.
- On the day of the trip, teachers will leave an accurate list of students taking part in the trip

with the attendance office. In case of emergency during a day trip the teacher will contact the office to fax any necessary information to a treatment center as needed.

- Teachers should not dispense medications to students on day field trips without calling and checking with the campus nurse first. Instructions for dispensing prescription medication on overnight trips should be reviewed with the nurse prior to departure.
- Check to see that your students are appropriately dressed for the trip.
- Brief any parents who may accompany a day field trip as chaperones on their responsibilities, and be sure they have received prior approval as chaperones from the assistant head of middle school. Parents may not act as chaperones on overnight trips.
- If using a bus for transport, please be aware that the driver is in charge. State law prohibits teachers and other adults from standing or moving about on the bus while the vehicle is in motion. Chaperones should disperse throughout the bus to maintain supervision over the students.
- Throughout the trip maintain an accurate count of the students. A recount should be performed each time you move to a different location and each time you board the bus or change to another mode of transport.

All faculty should be familiar with and abide by all of Harker's travel policies. The travel policy document can be found on the faculty and staff portal under the HR and Business Office tab.

## H. GENERAL CHAPERONE EXPECTATIONS

These general guidelines can help create a successful experience when you are chaperoning a dance or other event:

- Be positive and flexible. Your attitude sets the tone for the students.
- Be proactive and pitch in where needed. Act as a team. Events always run smoother when everyone works together.
- Be on time. If you cannot make a chaperoning duty because of illness or dire emergency, contact the trip leader, assistant head of middle school or division head as soon as possible.
- Field trips, performances, games and events are a time for students to enjoy those specific activities. They are not a time for teachers to mention grades, assignments or other classroom-related issues.

When chaperoning a student trip, faculty and staff should understand and address job responsibilities with the same professionalism demonstrated on campus. The expectations related to student supervision are heightened due to the fact that the standard support services available at school (i.e., nurse, counselor, parents, etc.) are not available to chaperones. Whenever chaperones are on duty they need to be present, attentive and in a condition to act appropriately and effectively. Chaperones are always responsible for maintaining themselves in such a manner where they can exercise good judgment. Therefore, no alcohol should be consumed 24 hours before any chaperone duty, since chaperones in these cases are the primary caretakers of the students. Please remember that responsibility for the safety of the collective student group is shared by everyone on the trip and each chaperone needs to be able to depend on the others for help and support in the event of an emergency.

A detailed list of chaperone responsibilities and expectations for overnight field trips is maintained on the faculty portal under field trips.

## I. SPOUSES, PARTNERS AND FRIENDS AS GUESTS WHILE CHAPERONING

The guidelines above should act as the basic guide when considering the attendance of a spouse, partner or guest when you are acting as a chaperone. All such requests for the presence of spouse, partner or guest while you are on chaperone duty must have the advance approval of the division head. Before considering such an invitation, consider the event and whether or not you will be able



to fulfill your responsibilities to the students and the other chaperones while your spouse, partner or friend is present. Your division head can assist with that decision. If approved, any interaction between the spouse, partner or friend and the students can only occur in the presence of a faculty member, and cannot be directive in any way.

Overnight trips require special consideration, and trips such as grade-level trips have unique challenges to consider. There are occasions when the spouse, partner or friend may be able to chaperone on other trips, but to do so they must submit TB test results and submit to fingerprinting to be approved.

All faculty should be familiar with and abide by all of Harker's travel policies. The travel policy document can be found on the faculty and staff portal under the HR and Business Office tab.







**LOWER SCHOOL**

4300 Bucknall Rd.  
San Jose, CA 95130  
408.553.0501

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**

4525 Union Ave.  
San Jose, CA 95124  
408.553.0300

**UPPER SCHOOL**

500 Saratoga Ave.  
San Jose, CA 95129  
408.345.9200

O of C: 8/24 (CS)