



Student Handbook

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www.horizoncharter.org

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Welcome to Horizon Charter School of Tampa

HCST believes that well-informed parents and students promote a positive and successful school environment. Consistent with this philosophy, all parents and students are expected to familiarize themselves with the school's policies and procedures. This student handbook includes policies, procedures, activities, and our Student Code of Conduct and other general information that should be used to inform your choices and allow each student to have a successful school experience.

Thank you for choosing HCST as your partner in your child's education!

The Governing Board, Administration, Faculty and Staff of Horizon Charter School of Tampa.

Mission

It is the mission of Horizon Charter School of Tampa (HCST) to equip all students with the knowledge and skills to lead a productive and successful life.

Vision

Horizon Charter School of Tampa will provide a high-quality education in a safe environment.

History and Philosophy

HCST was established in 2003 with the philosophy that every student, regardless of race, ethnicity, language, gender, nationality or socio-economic status was entitled to an educational environment dedicated to lifelong learning.

Since 2015 HCST has been located at 7235 W Hillsborough Avenue, Tampa, FL 33634. Also in 2015 HCST was designated a High Performing Charter School, having shown excellence in the areas of academics, finance and safety. In 2018 the Florida Department of Education established the Schools of Excellence Award for those public schools that demonstrated academic excellence above the 80% mark. Horizon Charter was one of 66 Florida schools designated as a School of Excellence in the initial year.

Non-Discrimination

HCST does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, disability, sex, age, or politics in educational programs, operations, activities or employment practices. Students and Staff shall be provided learning and working environments free from sexual, racial or ethnic, and religious discrimination and/or harassment of any kind for any reason.

Application and Lottery

- Any student eligible for grades K-8, who is a resident of the State of Florida, is eligible to apply for attendance at Horizon Charter School.
- Families wishing to apply should go to our website and click on the “Get Started” button to begin the process.
- **FS 1002.31 Controlled open enrollment; public school parental choice.**—(e) Students residing in the district, including charter school students, may not be displaced by a student from another district seeking enrollment under the controlled open enrollment process.
- Application for new students for the upcoming year begins on or about October 15th of each year.
- Applications are collected from on or about October 15th of each year through January of the following calendar year.
- The first Lottery of the year is held on or about the first week in February for Kindergarten and any seats in grades 1st-8th grades that might be available.
- Seating will continue throughout the year as seats come available.
- Preference for seating is given to students who are children of employees or Governing Board members, siblings of current students, children of members of the military, or student displaced by a court order or foster care situation. Preference does not guarantee a seat.

Re-Enrollment for Current Students

- Current HCST students have the option of keeping their seat for the next school term so long as they remain in contract, complete re-enrollment according to the specified method, and completed re-enrollment within the time frame given.
- Siblings of current students, that will attend for the upcoming year, will be given preference so long as application is made by the specified method and within the time frame given. Preference does not guarantee a seat.

Volunteer Requirements

HCST recognizes that parents are busy working adults, and that volunteering can be challenging to schedule. To address this issue, families are only required to spend 36 hours each school year **with each parent working at home with his or her child.**

Kindergarten Orientation

Required, as a condition of attendance, each Kindergarten student and at least one legal parent or legal guardian must attend Kindergarten Orientation prior to the student beginning at HCST. During Orientation, the Kindergarten student will be screened for reading proficiency and the legal parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will attend an Orientation Session. While another adult may attend with the parent, no adult may attend in place of a legal parent/legal guardian. Attendance is not optional but is a condition of accepting the seat.

Organization

Governing Board: Ensures that the organization complies with Florida Law and is faithful to the mission of the charter.

Chief Education Officer: Manages school operations.

Principal: Oversees the staff and daily operations of the school.

Dean of Students: Reports to the Principal and manages the Lottery, Medical and Records Compliance and oversees the support staff.

Administrative Resource Teachers: Reports to the Principal and provides support and leadership in the area of Exceptional Student Education.

Lead Teacher: Reports to the Principal and provides support and leadership to the Professional and Support Staff.

Communication

Civility Policy

To ensure a safe, caring and orderly environment, Horizon Charter School of Tampa expects civility from ALL who visit our campus and engage in school activities. Below are examples of behaviors that would be considered unacceptable. However, the list below is not intended to be complete list and parents are reminded that Senior Administration has the final determination of whether or not a behavior rises to the level of unacceptable.

- Behaviors that interfere with, or threaten to interfere with, school activities.
- Intimidating, harassing, bullying or threatening behaviors.
- Verbal threats or threats of physical harm
- Loud language, offensive language or profanity
- Refusal to comply with the directions given by a staff member while on campus.
- Communications, whether written, electronic, verbal, pictorial or body language that is identified as threatening, abusive, obscene, or accusatory.

Class Dojo

www.classdojo.com is the primary means of communication between HCST and the families of students. Families must ensure that they monitor their child's Class Dojo regularly. HCST provides step by step instructions for registering and using Class Dojo to any family who wishes more support in using the tool. Unless disabled, this tool will send "push notifications" to parent phones and emails of new information posted and is a great way to ensure that you are seeing any school communications. This platform is where we will post:

- Announcements, Events and Newsletters
- Emergency Notifications

- Progress Alerts, Report Cards, Health Screening Reports, Completed Conference Forms, etc. (archived in the Portfolio section).
- Class Dojo is an announcement tool only and not a two way communication tool. Parents wishing to contact the teacher should do so through email or phone.
- Student Behavior will show on their Student Profile on the Daily Report.

www.horizoncharter.org

Our website resources provide parents with ready access to a wide variety of information including our current Student Handbook, Governing Board members and meeting schedule, Parent Liaison contact information, Items required by Florida Statute to be posted publicly, and our school calendar. Many of these items are also placed in Class Dojo for parent convenience.

Email

Families must ensure that their email contact information is updated and current at all times and must monitor that email address regularly. The email contacts for all professional staff members are listed on our website. Simply click on the email listed or hover over the photo of the staff member for their contact information.

Please remember that email is NOT an appropriate choice for issues that are time sensitive, such as same day changes for pickup or emergencies. Teachers are not able to review and respond to emails during the school day when they are supervising students.

Phone

Families must ensure that their phone contact information is current at all times. For emergencies and issues such as same-day pickup changes, a phone call to the office staff is the most appropriate choice. Families may also call the office to leave a message for any professional. ***However, teachers are NOT available to***

Speak to parents during the hours when they are actively teaching and/or supervising students.

The school telephone is not available for student use. Students will not be called to the phone, nor will students be permitted to use the school phone. Messages will only be given to students in the event of an emergency that requires a change in afternoon pickup.

Automatic Notifications

The school will utilize various automatic notification systems, such as Parent Link, to send reminder messages to parent phones and emails.

Communication Responsibilities

As indicated in the Parent/Student contract, it is the responsibility of the parents of every student to work with HCST staff in support of the student. Refusal to communicate, refusal to update contact information, failure to respond to communications in a prompt manner or failure to comply with requests within a reasonable timeframe will be considered violation of the contract.

In Person Visits

Any parent wishing to eat lunch with his or her child may do so during that child's regular lunch hour! Schedules of lunch times will be sent home during the first weeks of school, showing the lunch times for that class. Parent should proceed to the front office and ask that their child be called to the front to sign out and eat with them. The parent will sign the child out and take his or her child off campus or eat at the picnic tables under the front canopy. Students may be signed back end at the close of the lunch period.

A Parent may certainly visit the school and ask to speak with his or her child. However, if the reason for the visit is to impart upsetting information, **parents should be aware that the school will not allow the student to sign back into class if the child is crying or otherwise visibly upset.** It is recommended that

parents wait until after school has finished to discuss information that might upset or distress a child.

Confidentiality

HCST maintains strict confidentiality of any student information or records. We do not email or fax any student record that contains sensitive student information.

Conferences

A parent may request a conference with his or her child's teacher at any time by emailing the teacher to ask for an appointment, or leaving a message in the front office that an appointment is requested. **Parents are reminded that teachers are NOT available to conference, speak to, or meet with parents during the following times: drop off, pick up, during class time, evenings or weekends.**

There will be a limited number of evening conference events during the school term. If having an evening time is essential for your schedule, please email your child's teacher as soon as possible to request that you be on the schedule for one of those evenings and ensure that you keep your appointment time.

Learning Management System (CANVAS)

Currently, HCST utilizes CANVAS as a Learning Management System (LMS). An LMS is a tool that is utilized to provide lessons and resources electronically. CANVAS is utilized for both "in class" and "out of school" materials and is also the platform that will be used if the school is ever required to enter the eLearning mode for emergencies such as those experienced during the COVID19 event. All parents should ensure that they are able to sign on and access this platform.

As a reminder, CANVAS is a teaching tool and is NOT a tool for parents to utilize when communicating with teachers. If you wish to communicate with your child's teacher, please utilize one of the tools listed above: email, phone or a conference.

Primary Student Folder

Our Primary (K-2) students experience a need for more frequent parent-teacher communication. Primary students will have a daily take-home folder that is provided by HCST. Parents are expected to review this folder nightly as they supervise their student in daily practice.

Governing Board

- HCST is overseen by a Governing Board, who make decisions for the school. The names and contact information for the Governing Board are posted on the school website at www.horizoncharter.org and are sent out through Class Dojo at least annually.
- Board meetings are open for attendance and are held quarterly at the school location, 7235 W Hillsborough Ave, Tampa, FL 33634.
- Parents and community members have the right to observe board meetings and to address the Board in turn to give input on school operations. Any person wishing to place an item on the Board Agenda should send a request to the principal or to the Parent Liaison. Contact information for both may be found on our website at www.horizoncharter.org.
- Specific student issues are not topics for Board meetings and must be addressed to school administration or the Parent Involvement Liaison in a private setting.

Board Parent Liaison

The Governing Board appoints a representative to assist parents and community members with questions and concerns, and to resolve disputes. The current representative can be reached at 727-546-9681. The current Parent Involvement Liaison's contact information is posted on the list of Governing Board members and is also sent out to families at least once every year. **The Parent Liaison is not a resource for general information, nor a substitute for issues that should first**

be addressed to school administration, but assists those families with concerns that they have not been able to resolve with school administration.

Grievance Policy: Health, Safety and Welfare

If a parent has a student issue that involves the health, safety or welfare of a student, he or she should follow the steps as indicated below:

- The parent of the student must notify the principal in writing of the health safety or welfare complaint.
- The principal shall have 7 days to respond to the parent with a satisfactory resolution or advise the parent of his or her right to file the health, safety or welfare complaint with the sponsoring district.
- Should the health, safety or welfare complaint not be resolved, the parent shall submit the complaint to the Hillsborough County Schools Charter Office at 901 E Kennedy Blvd, Tampa, FL for resolution.
- The sponsoring district (HCPS) shall have 30 days to resolve the health, safety or welfare issue.
- If the issue is not resolved, then the parent shall be able to submit the complaint to a state Special Magistrate.

Grievance Policy:

Should the parent of a student have a complaint that is NOT in the area of Health, Safety or Welfare (ie., student academics, outstanding monies due, etc.) then the following steps shall apply:

- The link to the Grievance Form may be obtained by emailing info@horizoncharter.org or by emailing a member of Administration.
- A grievance must be submitted within 30 days after the aggrieved person knows of the act or condition on which the grievance is based. If not, the grievance is waived.
- The principal shall respond to the grievant in writing within 7 days from the date that the form was received at the site. Forms submitted after 4:00pm shall be deemed to have arrived on the next school day.

- The principal shall have 7 days to respond to the parent with a resolution.
- If the complaint is not resolved, then the parent should contact the Parent Involvement Liaison for assistance in resolving the complaint.
- The Parent Involvement Liaison shall have 30 days to respond to the complaint.
- Grievances addressed by the Parent Involvement Liaison on behalf of the Governing Board shall be considered as a final response.

Fortify Florida

<https://getfortifyfl.com/> is a suspicious activity reporting tool that allows you to instantly relay information to appropriate law enforcement and school officials. The link for this site is on our website and is displayed in our lobby for your convenience.

Campus Life

Hours of Operation

Regular School Hours	8:15am-3:00pm
Early Release Day	8:15am-11:30pm
Early Release Pickup courtesy window	11:30am-12:00pm**
Before Care (fee based)	7:15am-7:45am
Before Care (non-fee based)	7:45am-8:15am
Afternoon Pickup courtesy window	3:00pm-3:30pm*
After Care	3:30pm-6:00pm

**Pickup is at 11:30am, students still not collect at 12:00pm will be charged a late fee

*Pickup is at 3:00pm, students still not collected at 3:30pm will be placed in aftercare and a charge will be incurred.

Student Arrival

No student may be alone on campus prior to 7:15am. Students arriving alone or left alone by a parent on campus after 7:15am will be placed in Before Care and the parent will incur a charge. Parents are responsible for a safe student arrival.

Before Care

Parents with accounts in good standing may utilize our Before-Care program beginning at 7:15am. The cost is \$5.00 daily.

Arrival Line

Please see the map featured on our website for the appropriate drop off and pick up routes. **All parents are requested to utilize the drop offline for the safety of students, parents and staff.** Students must arrive at the Café door prior to 8:15am or come through the drop off gate on Comanche to be considered “on time”. Students arriving after the gate on Comanche is closed or after the Café door is closed are considered tardy.

HCST utilizes an electronic clock, updated multiple times daily to the Atomic clock, in order to determine the official time. Only the official school clock will be utilized to determine on time or tardy arrivals.

Park and Drop Off

While we request that all students be dropped off and collected through our car line, there is an option for a parent to park and drop off his or her child. A parent must accompany his or her child to the area indicated by a sign and by yellow stripes on the pavement prior to the closing of the Café Door. If the Café door is closed, then the student is tardy and must be signed in through the front office.

Car Line

All parents are urged to utilize the pick-up line for the safety of students, parents and staff. Please see the map at the end of the handbook for the appropriate drop off and pick-up routes.

Pick-up time is at 3:00pm on regular school days and at 11:30am on Early Release Days. Any car that enters the pickup line will be considered an “on time” pickup, regardless of the time it takes to traverse the entire pickup line.

Park and Pickup

While we request that all students be dropped off and collected through our car line, there is an option for a parent to park and pick up his or her child. Dismissal for students not departing through the pickup line begins at 3:20pm on regular school days and 11:50am on Early Release Days. Any parent wishing to collect his or her child by walking up should bring the car tag that they were issued to the area indicated by a sign and by yellow stripes on the pavement.

Sign In and Sign Out

Valid photo identification will be required for any adult requesting to sign out a student. Any student arriving after the door has closed at 8:15am must walk with his or her parent to the front office for sign-in. Afternoon dismissal of students for pickup is paused between 2:50pm and 3:20pm to allow for the car line. Student pickup will resume at 3:20pm.

Tardy to School

- Any student arriving after the arrival door is closed is considered to be tardy to school and must be signed in by an adult.
- Students arriving through the drop offline before the gate is closed are considered to be “on time”.
- A tardy will be excused for any of the same reasons as would result in an excused absence.

Absences

Parents are responsible for reporting information about any scheduled or unscheduled school days for which their student is unable to attend. The school will show due diligence by contacting parents for absences that go unexcused.

- Parents may report an absence by going to our website www.horizoncharter.org and clicking on the “Report An Absence” link. Parents may also notify us of an absence by emailing their child’s teacher, calling the front office to leave a message for the teacher or sending a note (this method is not recommended).
- If a note is sent for an absence it will be the parent’s responsibility to follow up and ensure that the note was given to the teacher.
- Florida Statute allows three basic reasons for an absence from school. Medical needs of the child (ie. illness, surgery), legal needs of the child (ie. court order) or religious holidays/instruction.
- Parents notifying the school of a child’s absence for a religious holiday should utilize the website link to provide that information.
- For a student to be excused, a parent must give a reason for the absence. **Please note that the following are a list of reasons that alone would NOT result in an excused absence:** Family Emergency, transportation issues, birthday of the child or child’s family member, family visiting, parent or sibling illness, “out of town”.
- Parents with questions about whether or not an absence would be excused are urged to contact Administration as soon as possible to discuss the situation.
- Parents will receive attendance alerts after a student has missed 5 days and again after 10 days. Notices will be sent regardless of whether or not the absences are excused or unexcused.
- Students who are absent more than 10 days in any school year may be required to present evidence from a professional in order to excuse any further absences.
- Should the principal determine that a pattern of non-attendance is developing, or that student tardy/sign outs are impacting student

performance, parents will be required to attend an in-person meeting to discuss remedies.

- Attendance issues that are not resolved will result in the remand of the student back to the school assigned to the home address.
- Parents may request up to 5 school days absence for reasons other than medical, legal or religious by emailing the Principal directly to his or her email three (3) days or more in advance of the first requested date of absence.
- ***Under no circumstances will a personal absence of longer than 5 school days be approved.***
- Bereavement Leaves of up to three (3) days may be requested by emailing the principal prior to the first date that a student must be absent.
- Absences longer than 5 days may only be approved for documented medical reasons or documented legal reasons.
- Students who are absent and unexcused from school for more than 5 days will be withdrawn and remanded back to the school associated with the parent's home address.

Attendance

HCST is a public school of Choice. As a result, students have the right to apply and attend regardless of their county attendance area. Below are a list of attendance rights and responsibilities:

- Prompt and regular attendance is a contractual obligation. Failure to maintain good attendance may result in remand.
- Students must be in attendance more than 50% of the school day in order to be considered to have attended that day.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

- Students with an excused absence will be allowed to make up all missing work and tests.
- Students with an unexcused absence will be given materials and information for the missing work, and may sit for exams, however they will receive a zero on all work due to the unexcused nature of the absence.
- Parents should email the attendance line or their child's teacher promptly to report an absence. The communication must include the child's name, parent's name, date or dates of the absence, the reason for the absence and the date the student will return to class.
- **Please note that the following are a list of reasons that would NOT result in an excused absence:** Family Emergency, transportation issues, birthday of the child family member, family visiting, parent or sibling illness, "out of town".

CurbSmart and Car Tags

Each student will automatically be issued two car hang tags with his or her name and CurbSmart pickup number. CurbSmart is our electronic pickup system that allows us to monitor when a student has left the building.

Car tags change every year and tags from a prior year cannot be utilized for pickup. Families needing additional tags should send an email request to info@horizoncharter.org. The additional tags will be sent home with your child within a few days of the request.

Please Note: Any person picking up a child at HCST must be prepared to promptly and cheerfully offer valid photo identification to any staff member that asks! Any person who refuses to show photo identification or who exhibits verbal or physical reluctance to comply shall be deemed to be outside of contract. Our primary focus is the safety and well-being of your child!

Transportation

Parents are responsible for drop off and pick up of students at HCST. Parents must notify the school if a before/after school vendor will be dropping off or picking up their child.

Walking, Non-Motorized Transportation or Other Transportation

- Students who are 6th Grade or older may request to walk to their home or an approved final destination that is one mile or less from the school only after approval by the Principal.
- Students approved to walk must leave the campus promptly upon release and go directly to their designated final destination.
- Any student observed loitering in the area for pickup will have their approval for walking home withdrawn.
- Parents wishing to request that their child walk to/from school should contact the front office to request the appropriate forms and should not plan for their child to walk to/from school until final approval is received by the parent.
- Parents wishing for their student who is 6th grade or older to arrive/depart by bicycle must schedule a meeting with the Principal to discuss the request. Please note: Due to the dangerous nature of the road surrounding HCST this is strongly discouraged.
- Parents are reminded that students who walk may only leave the school site during a regularly scheduled dismissal. Should a student become ill, or need to leave early for any legitimate reason, a parent will need to come and pick up the student.
- Students who walk will not be released during dangerous weather events. Parents will be called and alternative dismissal arrangement discussed.

Photography on Campus

While on campus each parent may only photograph his or her child.

After Care

Parents with accounts in good standing may utilize our After-Care program on any day without advance notice. The cost is \$10.00 daily, begins at 3:30pm and closes at 6:00pm exactly. Late arrivals will incur a charge of \$1.00 per minute for every minute they are late and will lose the privilege of utilizing the program.

HCST employees operate the Aftercare program, under the supervision of a HCST Professional staff member. The program features a snack, indoor and outdoor activities and quiet time for homework or reading.

Billing for aftercare charges will be sent out at least 2 times monthly. Any family using aftercare will be expected to pay on schedule and keep all accounts current. Failure to keep accounts current will result in the loss of the privilege for using aftercare.

Breaks, Snacks and Water Bottles

All students at HCST are scheduled for a morning short break prior to the lunch hour. Parents are encouraged to send a small snack and a refillable water bottle. Students visit the restroom with their class, and are given time to eat their snack and relax a moment before returning to work. While snacks may only be eaten during the break, water bottles may be utilized at any time during the day. HCST has a number of stations throughout the school for the purpose of refilling water bottles. **For safety reasons students may not utilize glass bottles.**

Lunch

Students at HCST may bring lunch from home, may purchase from daily lunch options or may do a combination of both. Our current lunch options will be shown in our online ordering system. Please be advised that this may change at any time during the year, as we are dependent on vendor's schedules. If changes occur, you will be notified through Class Dojo.

Supplies

Each year HCST sends out a student Supply List through Class Dojo. Each parent should review the list with his or her child, ensuring that the student has all of the materials on the list. As a reminder, the following items MAY NOT be in a student's possession: ink pens, spiral notebooks, permanent markers, rubber bands, paperclips, hand sanitizer, toys, medications (see the medication section for information on the appropriate way to send medications), weapons (even toy), any item that would be prohibited by a child's age, or any item that is deemed disruptive by a professional staff member.

Backpacks

Standard size backpacks are permitted. **Backpacks with lights, age inappropriate embellishments or photos, or those that cause a distraction are prohibited on campus.** Backpacks with wheels are not prohibited, but the wheels may not be utilized on campus.

Phones and Electronics.

Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, phones, smart watches, tablets, fitness trackers, game devices, headphones, keyboards, ereaders or any item that can access the internet. ***Such may not be utilized on the HCST campus.*** Please note: Only the Principal or Chief Education Officer have the authority to set aside this provision. Any electronic device brought to school must be signed in upon arrival and signed out upon departure. ***Use of a phone or any electronic device on campus will result in an office referral for discipline.***

Calendar

Horizon Charter school has its own calendar and does NOT follow the calendar for Hillsborough County Public Schools! Our Calendar is posted on our website at www.horizoncharter.org and is posted in Class Dojo. Students who are absent on days when Horizon Charter is in session and HCPS is not in session will be counted as unexcused. Failure to monitor the school calendar is not a reason for an excused absence.

Special Events, Field Trips, Holidays and Birthdays

HCST hosts a variety of special events throughout the year. Notice of these events will always appear as an announcement in Class Dojo. These include but are not limited to, NJHS, Kindergarten Graduation, Spirit Daze, Fall Festival, visit from Santa, Winter Wonderland, JABiz Town field trip(5th), Seuss Week, fundraisers, performances, evening events, ESOL Nights, etc. Families should monitor their Class Dojo very frequently for notices and announcements. It is the right of each parent to determine whether or not his or her child will participate in any given non-academic event.

Any parent wishing to provide treats for his or her child to celebrate a birthday with classmates are welcome to provide a small individually portioned edible treat. Examples of this might be cookies, cupcakes, doughnuts, etc. These will be offered as a dessert during your child's regularly scheduled lunch period and should be dropped off prior to the start of the student lunch period. **Please do not send any of the following:** flower arrangements, balloons, cakes that must be cut and served, soda, treat bags, or gifts. It is advisable to notify your child's teacher through email of your intention to bring treats prior to the day of the celebration.

Textbooks and Library Books

Electronic versions of most textbooks are available by contacting your child's teacher. Students and Parents are financially responsible for any textbook or library book that is lost or damaged. It is the responsibility of parent the of any

student who borrows a textbook or library book to promptly notify the school if the borrowed book is damaged in any way.

Uniform Policy for Regular School Days

Any change in the uniform policy, even temporary changes for a special event, will be sent out in writing and will not be sent home through student word-of-mouth.

Tops

- Shirt: Golf/Polo Style- Plain Black or Plain White (no personalized logo)
- Shirt: Any shirt sold on our website
- Undershirts: Solid Black, Solid White or Solid Navy Blue

Sweaters or light jackets for indoor wear

- Cardigan: Solid Navy or Solid White
- Any sweater, hoodie or jacket sold on our website.
- Zip-up Sweatshirt: Plain Navy, Plain Black or Plain White.
- Prohibited: any logos or artwork, “pull-over” sweatshirts (except from website), wearing hoods

Bottoms:

- Pants, shorts, skirt or skort: Navy Blue, Black or Khaki
- No jeans
- Dress: Jumper or Polo Dress-Khaki or Navy (K-2 only)
- Hemlines: must extend beyond the fingertips held at the side.
- Leggings: Leggings of black, navy blue or white may be worn under a dress, skirt or shorts only if the dress, skirt or shorts would be acceptable without the addition of the leggings.
- Prohibited at all times: Athletic shorts or pants, “basketball” shorts, leggings worn alone, yoga pants, or jogging pants

Outdoor apparel

- Outdoor apparel may only be worn outside, cannot be worn in the classroom.

Shoes

- Sneakers or “tennis” style shoes: may be worn at any time.
- Heels should be 1.5 inches or less.
- Shoes secured to the feet, in neat and clean condition.
- Prohibited: wheels, flip flops, lights, athletic slides, bedroom shoes

Hair, Headcoverings, Makeup and Jewelry

- No portion of the hair may be a non-natural color.
- Hair must be neat, clean, styled out of the eyes.
- Prohibited: shaved heads, shaved lines, shaved patterns, facial hair, mohawk/fauxhawk, wigs, hats or face coverings (exception would be a mask for health reasons).
- Headcoverings may only be worn for religious reasons with prior notice to administration.
- Hair ornaments and jewelry shall not be distracting, as determined by the classroom teacher.
- Visible body piercings are limited to two ear piercings. Earrings cannot be oversized, gauged, or distracting.
- Makeup must be understated, age-appropriate and non-distracting, as determined by the teacher.
- Visible tattoos, whether permanent or temporary, are not permitted.

Condition of Clothing

- Any item worn by a student must be neat, clean, in good repair, sized to fit, neither overlarge, nor too tight, opaque.
- Shirts must be sufficiently long enough to cover the midriff with arms raised.
- Ripped, distressed, bleached or frayed clothing is prohibited, regardless of whether or not skin is showing.

Uniform Policy for Spirit Daze Days

Spirit Daze are offered for both as an annual purchase and as an individual events. Each Spirit Daze celebrates a different theme and the parameters for participation are included in the permission slip.

Spirit Daze Tops

- Shirt: Golf/Polo Style- Plain Black or Plain White (no personalized logo)
- Shirt: Any shirt sold on our website
- Undershirts: Solid Black, Solid White or Solid Navy Blue
- Shirt: As defined by the Spirit Daze event.
- Prohibited: Shirts that are too low, too tight, contain distracting messages, straps thinner than 3 fingers width, sheer, or any top that the Administration deems to cause a distraction.

Spirit Daze Sweaters or light jackets for indoor wear

- Cardigan: Solid Navy or Solid White
- Any sweater, hoodie or jacket sold on our website.
- Zip-up Sweatshirt: Plain Navy, Plain Black or Plain White.
- Prohibited: any logos or artwork, “pull-over” sweatshirts (except from website), wearing hoods

Spirit Daze Bottoms:

- Pants, shorts, skirt or skort: Navy Blue, Black or Khaki
- No jeans, unless specifically indicated as appropriate in a written announcement.
- Dress: Jumper or Polo Dress-Khaki or Navy (K-2 only)
- Hemlines: must extend beyond the fingertips held at the side.
- Leggings: Legging of black, navy blue or white may be worn under a dress, skirt or shorts only if the dress, skirt or shorts would be acceptable without the addition of the leggings.
- Prohibited at all times: Athletic shorts or pants, “basketball” shorts, leggings worn alone, yoga pants, or jogging pants.
- Bottoms: As defined by Spirit Daze Flyer

Spirit Daze Outdoor apparel

- Outdoor apparel may only be worn outside, cannot be worn in the classroom.

Spirit Daze Shoes

- Sneakers or “tennis” style shoes: may be worn at any time.
- Heels should be 1.5 inch or less.
- Shoes secured to the feet, in neat and clean condition.
- Prohibited: wheels, flip flops, lights, athletic slides, bedroom shoes

Spirit Daze Hair, Headcoverings, Makeup and Jewelry

- No portion of the hair may be a non-natural color.
- Hair must be neat, clean, styled out of the eyes.
- Prohibited: shaved heads, shaved lines, shaved patterns, facial hair, mohawk/fauxhawk, wigs, hats or face coverings (exception would be a mask for health reasons).
- Headcoverings may only be worn for religious reasons with prior notice to administration or if designated as a part of a Spirit Daze event.
- Hair ornaments and jewelry shall not be distracting, as determined by the classroom teacher or if designated as a part of a Spirit Daze event.
- Visible body piercings are limited to two ear piercings. Earrings cannot be oversized, gauged, or distracting.
- Makeup must be understated, age-appropriate and non-distracting, as determined by the teacher.
- Visible tattoos, whether permanent or temporary, are not permitted.

Spirit Daze Condition of Clothing

- Any item worn by a student must be neat, clean, in good repair, sized to fit, neither overlarge, nor too tight, must be opaque.
- Shirts must be sufficiently long enough to cover the midriff with arms raised.
- Ripped, distressed, bleached or frayed clothing is prohibited, regardless of whether or not skin is showing is prohibited.

Picture Day Clothing

Unless otherwise announced, Fall Pictures will be taken in uniform and Spring Pictures may be taken in a non-uniform clothing. Clothing (only) for Spring Picture Day is parent choice but MUST conform to the items below. Note: The only aspect of student appearance that is optional for Spring Picture Day is clothing. All other aspects, ie...grooming, hair, etc. of student appearance are governed by the Uniform Policy.

- Any item worn by a student must be neat, clean, in good repair, sized to fit, neither overlarge, nor too tight, opaque.
- Shirts must be sufficiently long enough to cover the midriff with arms raised.
- Ripped, distressed, bleached or frayed clothing is prohibited, regardless of whether or not skin is showing.
- Prohibited: Shirts that are too low, too tight, contain distracting messages, straps thinner than 3 fingers width, sheer, or any top that the Administration deems to cause a distraction.

Code of Conduct

All persons on campus are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct. Families are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Code of Conduct and ensuring that the student understand, recognize unacceptable behavior, abide by the policies. Families are also responsible for supporting the enforcement of these policies. Families are reminded that privacy laws permit Administration to discuss student discipline only with the legal guardians of that student. A parent is not entitled to information concerning the discipline of any student other than his or her own child.

The Chief Education Officer, Principal or their designee is responsible for determining the level of the offense and the appropriate consequences. The HCST

Governing Board gives the Chief Education Officer and the Principal great latitude in determining the level of the offense and the resulting consequences. Factors considered include, but are not limited to:

- Seriousness of offense
- If the offense is a violation of law, school policy or both
- Premeditation
- Strength of the Evidence
- Cooperation, Remorse or Restitution
- Disciplinary History
- Age or Disability

Actions deemed of a sufficiently serious nature to warrant Expulsion will be referred to the Threat Assessment Committee. In such case the Threat Assessment Committee will follow the most current model for determining further action.

Visitors and Students

All visitors to campus are reminded that there are certain items that can only be brought onto campus under very specific circumstances. The following list of items may only be in the possession of a current law enforcement officer or Certified School Guardian: firearms, mace, knives, pepper spray or any other item considered to be a weapon. Any person or person's belongings on campus may be subject to a search if the Principal or Chief Education Officer has a compelling reason to do so.

All adult visitors must be prepared to promptly and cheerfully provide valid photo identification upon arriving on campus. Any person refusing to provide valid photo identification, or questioning an employee's request for a valid photo identification, will be referred to the Principal or Chief Education Officer and may be banned from returning to campus. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Student Behavior Expectations

It is expected that every student on campus will demonstrate respect to their peers and to the Administration and Staff. As students in a public school each student will:

- Demonstrate kindness, honesty, and tolerance.
- Show respect for the personal beliefs and religion of all persons on campus.
- Practice their religion in ways that does not endanger the physical health , safety or welfare of others
- Ensure that his or her behavior complies with all areas of law and all areas of school policy.

Category	Includes	Consequences
Assault	Threats, Intimidation, Vulgar or Profane language, Inappropriate language, Bomb Threats, Slander, Misrepresenting facts resulting in public libel or slander in any format, retaliation in any form	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat.
Battery	Physical violence against another person in any form, using a weapon or non-weapon as a weapon, knowingly causing harm to any person, retaliation in any form	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat.
Fighting	Mutual Participation in violence	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat..
Attendance Issues	Excessive Absences or Tardies, Truancy, Skipping Class	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat.
Safety Violations	Leaving a room, area or campus without permission from a staff member, false fire alarms, false 911 reports, kidnapping or unauthorized detention, creating a	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law

	disturbance on campus or at any school event, appearing on campus under the influence of a controlled substance, tobacco or vape pen, Any Action that creates an unsafe situation.	Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat.
Insubordination	Disobeying directions given by an adult staff member.	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat.
Dishonesty	Cheating, Plagiarism, Theft, Lying, Withholding vital information,	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat.
Violation of School Rules	Any violation of school policy, any offense which (in the judgment of Administration) is deemed to endanger the safety, security or well-being of any person on campus, Dress Code Violations, disruption of the campus,	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat.
Harassment	Sexual or Non-Sexual, hazing, inappropriate or profane language.	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat.
Bullying	Repeated	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat.
Abuse or Misuse of School Property or Technology	Property Damage, Abuse of Technology, Arson, Vandalism, posting of personal information, contact information or any private information of any staff, student or family of HCST.	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat..
Possession of Contraband	Possession of drugs, alcohol, weapons, bombs, any controlled substance.	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat.

Commission of any Act defined by the State of Florida as a crime.	Criminal Acts	Any or any combination of the following: Student Conference, Parent Conference, Discipline Referral, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, Involvement of Law Enforcement (when deemed appropriate) or Withdrawal of the Seat.
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Sexual Harassment

HCST does not tolerate sexual harassment in any form, from any individual or group, towards any individual or group. Below is a list of examples of sexual harassment. This list is intended only to provide an understanding of how sexual harassment may occur and is not intended to be an exhaustive list of such conduct. Any action determined by Administration to be sexual harassment will be addressed promptly and firmly.

Sexual Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal comments of a sexual nature
- Overt or subtle pressure for sexual activity, to go out with someone, to touch or kiss someone, pressure to allow someone to touch or kiss you, having clothing or one’s person touched in a sexual manner.
- Repeated remarks, gestures, rumors (whether true or untrue), depictions, illustrations, writings, objects or jokes that are about a person’s body, are left for someone to find or that are sexually suggestive in nature that are directed to or about the person or left for someone to find.
- Being “sexually rated”, such as on a scale of 1-10.
- Discussing who a person does or does not “like”, have sexual feelings for or have a relationship with.
- Being called any name that identifies someone’s sexual orientation, ie. gay, lesbian, straight, hetero, homo, etc.
- Messages, graffiti, writings, drawings, that address a person’s sexual preferences or circumstance.
- Having one’s way blocked in a sexual way.

Keeping your hands and keeping personal comments to yourself is an important step in ensuring that no one feels sexually harassed! Think before you act or speak!

What is not Sexual Harassment?

The following are examples of what would NOT be considered sexual harassment. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but is provided for comparison to the Sexual Harassment list above:

- Compliments, expressions of friendship or common socially acceptable comments, ie. You look nice today, I love your hair style, you are my favorite classmate, etc.
- Handshakes, pats on the shoulder, “high fives”, and other expressions of camaraderie.
- Writings, drawings, etc. that express admiration.

Addressing Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment should be addressed and not ignored. Below are the steps to take if you feel that you are being sexually harassed:

- Clearly tell the other person or persons to stop and identify the behavior that needs to be stopped, ie. “Do not hand me a drawing of body parts again!”, “Do not touch me in that way.”
- Report the incident immediately to the nearest adult at school as soon as possible, but before leaving school on the day of the event.
- Report the incident to your parents as soon as possible.
- Avoid being alone with the person who you feel has harassed you. Please get an adult involved to ensure that you are separated from this person.
- Do NOT discuss the situation with other students.

Bullying or Inappropriate Behavior

Bullying: An ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through **repeated** verbal, physical and/or social behavior that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Inappropriate Behavior: Inappropriate behavior means conduct that is unwarranted and is reasonably interpreted to be demeaning or offensive.

Unlike many years ago, bullying has now been defined and addressed in statute. Due to this change, bullying is often confused with inappropriate behavior.

Bullying is repeated in nature and is intentionally designed to take control of or show domination over, another person or persons. **Inappropriate Behavior** is thoughtless, selfish or unkind behavior that makes another person feel uncomfortable or upset.

Both Bullying, and Inappropriate Behavior are unacceptable. However, the remedies for addressing these are somewhat different.

Addressing Bullying

- If you feel that a situation rises to the level of Bullying , this should be reported to school Administration promptly.
- Students will never be directed to “ignore” a Bullying situation, but it is advisable for students to remove themselves from a situation as quickly as possible.
- If a student is outside, or in a situation where he or she can walk away, the student should walk away and go to the nearest adult.
- If a student is in a situation where he or she cannot walk away, students should ask to speak to the adult in charge as soon as possible.

Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism: taking the work or ideas of someone else and passing them off as your own.

Plagiarism includes copying work from a book, internet or any other source and including that in a submitted assignment without citing the work as that of another. This is illegal and will result in a zero on the assignment and a discipline referral.

Cheating is any action taken where a student is submitting work that he or she did not complete on their own or according to the rules of the assignment. This includes, but is not limited to: copying from someone's paper, asking someone else to do your work, submitting anyone's else work as your own, using resources outside of those approved by the teacher to complete any assignment, looking up an answer during a test, using notes on a test that are not allowed, violating any portion of the State testing rules, or any other action that is deemed as submitting work that does not represent your own work.

Grading Scale

Grades K-2		
E	Excellent	3 Quality Points
S	Satisfactory	2 Quality Points
N	Needs Improvement	1 Quality Points
U	Unsatisfactory	0 Quality Points

Grades 3-8			
A	90-100	Outstanding	4 Quality Points
B	80-89	Above Average	3 Quality Points
C	70-79	Average	2 Quality Points
D	60-69	Lowest Acceptable Progress	1 Quality Points
F	0-59	Failure	0 Quality Points
I	Incomplete	*Grades of "I" must be approved by the Principal or CEO.	N/A

Progress Codes	
V	Very Good
S	Satisfactory
I	Improving
N	Needs Improvement

Report Cards

HCST issues Report Cards four time annually, one at the conclusion of each nine week grading period. Report cards provide parents a comprehensive update of student progress, attendance, work indicators and behavior indicators. Report Cards are placed in each student’s Class Dojo Portfolio and are available for parents to review, access and download throughout the school year.

Progress Alerts

Progress Alerts are issued at the midway point of each nine weeks and provide each parent with an interim update of his or her student’s progress. Progress Alerts are placed in each student’s Class Dojo Portfolio and are available for parents to review, access and download throughout the school year.

Action Plan

Should any student score below grade level in any core subject, a conference will be held with the parents of that student. During the conference the teaching team will present to the parent relevant data outlining the area of challenge and team with the parent to construct an Action Plan for addressing the student’s area of need. Action Plans will be reviewed at least quarterly and continued until the student has demonstrated grade level performance in all areas. **Families are reminded that Action Plans when needed by the student, are not optional and are a contractual responsibility. Failure to complete the student’s Action Plan with fidelity may result in withdrawal of the student seat.**

Homework

Students enrolled in K-8 classes should have approximately 10 minutes of homework per grade level. For example: a 3rd grade student homework should not exceed 30 minutes. If a student is bringing home work that is taking longer than the prescribed number of minutes to complete, then the parent should email the child's teacher for assistance. Homework limits do not apply to High School Level courses. Action Plan work is assigned to target deficiencies and will be outside of the 10 minute rule.

Make-up Work

Excused Absence: It is the student's responsibility to request make up work for any excused absence. Generally, the student will have the same number of days that he or she was out to make up the work (ie. Two days excused absence should be made up in two days). However, Teachers are authorized to work with students on the most appropriate time frame for makeup work to be completed.

Unexcused Absence: When an absence is unexcused, the teacher may give the student any materials that he or she missed or administer any assessment that might have been missed at the teacher's discretion. However, students will receive a zero for any work missed due to an unexcused absence. Only the Principal or Chief Education Officer may waive this policy.

Late Work

It is the policy of the school not to accept late work. Students needing additional time must request such from the appropriate teacher prior to the work becoming late.

Field Trips

Only those students exhibiting acceptable behavior are eligible to participate in field trips. Amounts paid for a field trip are non-refundable. Parents having questions regarding a field trip refund due to exceptional circumstance must contact the Principal or Chief Education Officer. No other employee is authorized to discuss a refund, regardless of the circumstances.

Family Financial Policies

- If any check written to HCST is returned, the issuing party shall be responsible for the cost of the check and the current cost of the returned check fee.
- Repeated returned checks will result in a requirement to pay in cash for any services chosen.
- Any student with an unpaid an outstanding balance after the close of the school term shall lose his or her seat for the upcoming year unless satisfactory payment arrangements are made with the Principal or Chief Education Officer and the arrangement completed.
- The parent of any student with an outstanding balance at year end will need to make an appointment to collect his or her child's report card from the Principal or Chief Education Officer.
- The Current Annual Activity fee (\$45.00 for 2023-2024) shall be due prior to the first day of school for all families in order for the student to take his or her seat.

Health Screenings and Medication

- No medications may be sent to school with a student. The parent of any child who needs medication during the school day should contact the Front Office to arrange for completing the proper paperwork for medication to be stored and taken on campus. New forms must be completed each year.
- ***After a meeting to complete the appropriate paperwork***, students may self-carry an inhaler and self-medicate for Diabetes.

- Students may store in the clinic medication for occasional use. Medications must be in the original sealed bottle (over the counter) or in a prescription bottle with the complete pharmacy label.
- The over-the-counter medications must be accompanied by a doctor’s prescription for dosage and any equipment required for administration (measuring cup, measuring spoon, dropper, etc.)
- Students who exhibit any of the following must be picked up from school promptly and are not allowed to return until 24 hours after the symptoms have resolved: vomiting, fever, skin rash, or head lice.
- Students may not be on campus while under the influence of narcotic pain relievers.
- Health Screenings will be offered on campus for K, 1st, 3rd and 6th on a schedule. Parents of students in these grades should monitor school communications for opportunities to opt into or out of these screenings.

Food Services, Snacks and Restrooms

HCST does not participate in the National School Lunch Program. Our students have the option of ordering from a variety of daily vendors and of using the microwaves and refrigerators located in our café. Parents should visit Class Dojo for our most recent schedule of vendors.

Horizon provides for breaks as shown below. Families are encouraged to send a small snack with their child. This snack should not need to be heated, and should be something that you child could finish during a short break. On most days HCST has a small “Snack Cart” with snacks available for purchase. Please see your Class Dojo for more information.

Grades	Morning	Afternoon
K-2	Snack and Restroom	Snack and Restroom
3-5	Snack and Restroom	Restroom Only
6-8	Snack and Restroom	Restroom Only

Enrollment, Attendance and Matriculation

New Applicants

Application for enrollment at Horizon Charter School of Tampa begins by going to the school website, www.horizoncharter.org and following the “Get Started” link.

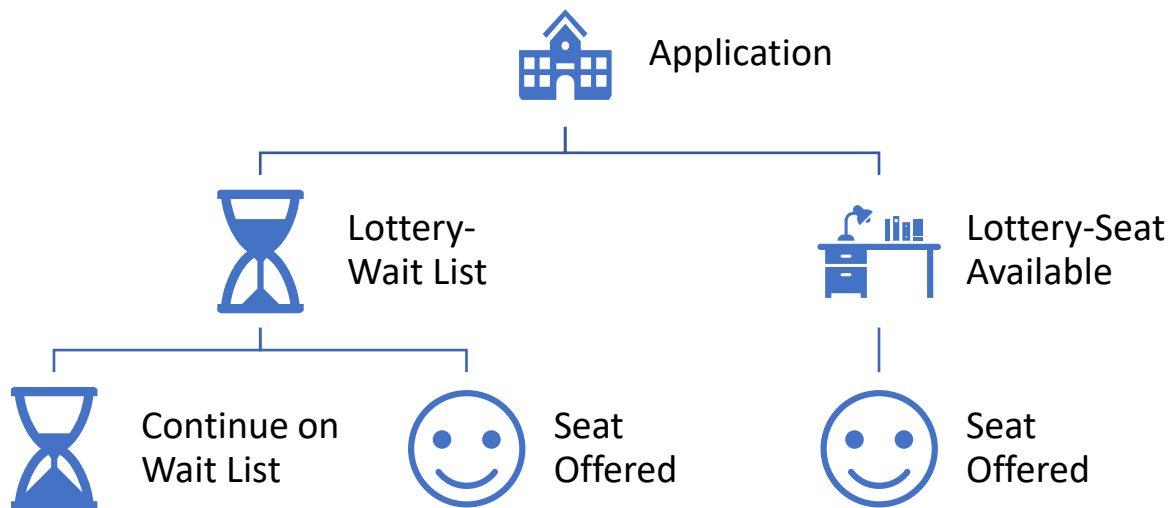
Admissions

Admissions are ongoing throughout the year. In the chart below are some important Admission dates to remember. Due to annual changes in the start of school and holidays, events will happen on or about the dates shown. Please see your Class Dojo for each year’s dates.

Applicant Category	Active Enrollment Dates	1 st Lottery	Parent Contract, Student Emergency Record and Activity Fee Due Dates	Birth Certificate and Physical Due Dates	Immunization Records Due	Student Records
Kindergarten Students	October 15-February 5	February 1	7 Days after acceptance	July 31	7/31	N/A
1 st -8 th Students New to Hillsborough School District	October 15-February 5	February 1	7 Days after acceptance	July 31	7/31	8/30
1 st -8 th Grade Students New to Horizon, but NOT New to Hillsborough District	October 15-February 5	February 1 st	7 Days after acceptance	Will automatically be transferred from HCPS to HCST.	Will automatically be transferred from HCPS to HCST.	Will automatically be transferred from HCPS to HCST.
Returning Horizon Charter Students	November 1-December 15	N/A	July 15	N/A	7/31 (7 th Tdap only)	N/A
Siblings New to Horizon Charter	November 1-December 15	N/A	July 15	July 31	7/31	8/30

Lottery

Ideally, HCST would wish have room for every student who wishes to enroll. However, our enrollment is limited by the size of our building! When there are more students for any given grade level then eligible seats, then a Lottery occurs. The school pulls student applications a random for each available seat. The remaining students remain on the wait list until a seat becomes available. Seating may occur at any time during the year. When a vacancy occurs, that empty seat will be offered to the next person on the waiting list. Periodically, you may be contacted and asked if you wish to remain on our wait list or have your application deleted.



Preferential Seating Categories

By Florida Statute some student categories are entitled to preference in seating. Preference does not guarantee a seat, rather it indicates that the student may be seated ahead of other students in that grade level, regardless of Lottery Number. These categories are: siblings of current students, children of employees or Governing Board members, children of military personnel, and children who have documented custody issues that specify attendance and hardship cases.

Parent/Student Contract

The Parent/Student contract outlines the expectations for students, and families of students, who attend HCST. Signing and abiding by the contract is the condition upon which the seat is offered and is the condition of continued enrollment. Failure to abide by the contract, or stated refusal to abide by the contract, will result in remand of the student back to the school assigned to that student's home address.

Student Records

The school Principal will be the custodian for all student records. Parents, legal guardians and students who are 18 years of age or older:

- have and the right to inspect, review and challenge information contained in the records with reasonable notice.
- May appeal any disagreement to the Chief Educational Officer.
- Are responsible for assisting the school in obtaining records from prior schools.
- Are responsible for providing information that could be useful in making appropriate educational decisions for the student.

Student Placement

- The principal shall be responsible for all student placements.
- Records for incoming students will be reviewed for evidence that the student has demonstrated mastery of the skills necessary to be placed in the requested grade.
- Parents may request that his or her student be transferred to another classroom by making a request in writing directly to the principal. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that he or she receives verification from the principal that the request was received.

- Transfer request does not give a parent a right to choose a specific teacher. If the student cannot be transferred to another classroom, then the school must notify the parent and specify the reason why.
- Any parent wishing to discuss student Acceleration or grade placement may do so by contacting the principal directly to discuss the most current policy and procedure.
- Appeals for grade placement may be made to the Chief Education Officer.
- ESE and ELL status, while imperative for instructional strategies and accommodations, shall not determine placement.
- Florida statute requires that all students earn a promotion to the next grade through demonstration of grade-level skills.

Retentions

- It is important that students retained in grade have a different experience for the retention year. Every effort will be made to provide a retained student an alternative experience. If this is not possible, a parent conference will be held to discuss the issue.
- As retentions are not common, in most cases students advancing to the next grade fill all available spaces. Should it occur that all available spaces are filled, every effort will be made to accommodate a retained student with a seat for the upcoming school term. However, if there is no seat available, then the students matriculating on schedule will be deemed to have prior claim to the seat. Retained students are welcome to remain on the wait list and will be given preference for any seats that come available.

Withdrawals

Parents wishing to withdraw their child should visit or contact the Front Office for a withdrawal form. The withdrawal process includes ensuring that all student materials go home with the child, that all financial obligations to the school are satisfied and that all school materials are returned in acceptable condition.

Matriculation

- Horizon Charter School of Tampa has a formal Pupil Progress Plan (PPP) based on the Florida BEST Standards, as measured by a selection of nationally recognized standardized tests and Quality Points. The PPP is reviewed annually.
- **HCST does NOT follow the Pupil Progression Plan of Hillsborough County Public Schools and HCPS has no jurisdiction over promotion decisions made HCST.**
- Promotion/Retention decisions are based on the PPP and determined by the Matriculation Committee, lead by the principal.
- Contact your child's teacher for the most current Pupil Progression Plan.
- Any parent wishing to appeal a promotion/retention decision should contact the Chief Education Officer to present the documentation for his or her appeal. Note: Appeals must be based on student data and not personal preference.

