

Student Handbook Changes 2026-2027

Attendance Procedures (Page 7)

Old:

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

A student must provide a written excuse signed by a parent/guardian, stating the reason and date of the absence. **An excuse is to be turned in to the office or emailed within three school days of the absence.** [Click here for the Absence Form.](mailto:hcsroffice@harborcreeksd.com) Parents are encouraged to email their child's excuse to hcsroffice@harborcreeksd.com

Dental or doctor appointments should be made on non-school time when possible. The student should bring their request for an early dismissal to the Sr. High office first thing in the morning.

In the case of an extended illness, homework assignments may be requested by emailing the teachers. Many assignments may be available on Schoology.

The student will have one day for each day of absence to complete the work and return it to the teacher.

School work will not be allowed to be made up, when truant or in the case of an unlawful or unexcused absence. Students absent will receive a zero for tests, class work, and homework collected during such absences. (This policy also applies to a class the student skips or leaves without permission.)

Students may not participate in extracurricular activities (including practice) on a day when they have an absence (unless they have a medical excuse, funeral, college visit or court hearing). Students who skipped school or leave the building without permission may not participate in practice and/or games on that day.

In the case of a dance on a Saturday, students must be in school on Friday. Students can not arrive late or leave early on the Friday before a dance. Students with five or more illegal and/or unexcused absences will not be permitted to attend a dance or Prom.

Students arriving after 7:45 should report to the office to receive a late pass. Any student participating in a school related activity must be in attendance no later than 8:00 AM on the day of the activity. The building administrator will consider any extenuating circumstances.

If you arrive at school after:

- At the close of second period it will be considered a ½ day of absence.
- At the close of sixth period it will be considered a full day of absence.
- If you leave for an appointment and return to school within 1 ½ hours or less, then you will NOT be marked as absent for a ½ day. However, if you return to school after 1 ½ hours or more, then you WILL be marked as absent for a ½ day.

Attendance and tardies will be monitored throughout the school year. If a student accrues more than three tardies a semester an after school detention will be issued for each tardy thereafter (unless they have a medical excuse, funeral, college visit, court hearing, or late bus).

If attendance problems become chronic, the school will coordinate a school/family conference to discuss the cause of the child's truancy and develop a mutually agreed upon School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) to resolve truant behavior.

New:

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

A student must provide a written excuse signed by a parent/guardian, stating the reason and date of the absence. **An excuse is to be turned in to the office or emailed within three school days of the absence, or the absence will be marked as illegal.** Excuses must be turned in during the Quarter of the absence in order to be accepted. [Click here for the Absence Form.](#) **Excuses must be submitted in writing and cannot be accepted over the phone.** Parents are encouraged to email their child's excuse to hcsroffice@harborcreeksd.com

Dental or doctor appointments should be made on non-school time when possible. The student should bring their request for an early dismissal to the Sr. High office first thing in the morning. **Early dismissal requests must be submitted in writing and cannot be accepted over the phone.** Parents are encouraged to email their child's early dismissal to hcsroffice@harborcreeksd.com

In the case of an extended illness, homework assignments may be requested by emailing the teachers. Many assignments may be available on Schoology.

The student will have one day for each day of absence to complete the work and return it to the teacher.

School work will not be allowed to be made up, when truant or in the case of an unlawful or unexcused absence. Students will receive a zero for tests, class work, and homework collected during such absences. (This policy also applies to a class the student skips or leaves without permission.)

Students may not participate in extracurricular activities (including practice) on a day when they have an absence (unless they have a **pre-approved** medical excuse, funeral, college visit or court hearing). Students who skipped school or leave the building without permission may not participate in practice and/or games on that day.

In the case of a dance on a Saturday, students must be in school on Friday. Students can not arrive late or leave early on the Friday before a dance. Students with five or more illegal and/or unexcused absences will not be permitted to attend a dance or Prom.

Students not in class by 7:45 will be considered Tardy and should report to the office to receive a Tardy pass. Each student can accrue three tardies per semester. After three tardies, an after school detention will be issued for each tardy thereafter. Students who are chronically tardy and have not attended a class for a minimum of 50% of the time due to such tardiness may not be eligible to earn credit for a course, regardless of academic performance.

Students who are late to school due to a medical excuse, funeral, college visit, court hearing, or late bus should also report to the office to receive a pass, and their attendance will be coded as such.

Any student participating in a school related activity must be in attendance no later than 8:00 AM on the day of the activity. The building administrator will consider any extenuating circumstances.

If you arrive at school after:

- At the close of second period it will be considered a ½ day of absence.
- At the close of sixth period it will be considered a full day of absence.
- If you leave for an appointment and return to school within 1 ½ hours or less, then you will NOT be marked as absent for a ½ day. However, if you return to school after 1 ½ hours or more, then you WILL be marked as absent for a ½ day.

Attendance and tardies will be monitored throughout the school year. If attendance problems become chronic, the school will coordinate a school/family conference to discuss the cause of the child's truancy and develop a mutually agreed upon School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) to resolve truant behavior. According to School Code, students who are habitually truant may not transfer to a cyber charter school during the school year unless a judge rules in favor of such a transfer.

Care of School Property (page 7 or 8):

Old:

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY (Board Policy 224) [Search current Board Policies here.](#)

Students who willfully cause damage to school property shall be subject to disciplinary measures. Students and others who damage or deface school property may be prosecuted and punished under law. Parents/guardians shall be held accountable for the actions of their child.

New:

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY (Board Policy 224) [Search current Board Policies here.](#)

Students who willfully cause damage to school property, including computer devices and other electronic equipment, shall be subject to disciplinary measures. Students and others who damage or deface school property may be prosecuted and punished under law. Parents/guardians shall be held accountable for the actions of their child.

Chromebooks (page 7 or 8):

Old:

CHROMEBOOKS

Every student will be issued a Harbor Creek School District chromebook. For safety reasons, students are not permitted to use their own devices. Students must use a school-issued chromebook during the school day.

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Every student will be issued a Harbor Creek School District chromebook. For safety reasons, students are not permitted to use their own devices. Students must use a school-issued chromebook during the school day.

Chromebooks should only use the Harbor Creek Wi-Fi to connect to the internet while in school. During school hours, students may not use their cell phones to provide a connection to the internet, as this would be a violation of the Electronic Devices Policy and can result in confiscation of the phone/device.

Circumventing the HCSD Wifi on a chromebook in any way is in violation of the Acceptable Use Policy signed by all parents and students, and may result in mandatory Digital Citizenship courses to be completed during Detention hours.

Dual Credit (page 10 -11)

Old:

DUAL CREDIT

Dual Credit is the term given to taking college classes for credit while attending high school. Its goal is to give the student an opportunity to experience and transition to college coursework in a college setting while being supported by Harbor Creek High School to ensure success. High school counselors will talk with any interested students and families individually to help develop schedules and answer any questions or concerns. A student is eligible for dual credit during their junior and/or senior year. Students apply to the college of their choice which includes:

Penn State Behrend
Mercyhurst University
Gannon University

Students must provide their own transportation to and from campus. Students are required to fill out a Dual Credit contract which will be reviewed by the principal and counselor. Once accepted, students then apply to the college of their choice (each school has a different application process). Once the process is finalized, the student's college schedule will be coordinated with their Harbor Creek High School schedule by a counselor and approved by the principal on an individual basis. Course selection, credits, class days/times and travel time must be coordinated. The cost of the course(s), books, lab fees, etc. are the responsibility of the student and their parents. The college will bill students at the beginning of each semester. NOTE: Any failed or dropped courses, books, fees, and summer courses are not reimbursable.

Grades will be recorded on the student's high school transcript in traditional A, B, C format. The weight assigned to these courses as part of the QPA is 1.15 which is the same as an honors level course taken at Harbor Creek High School. Once courses have concluded, credit will be recorded on the Harbor Creek High School transcript. Students typically take one or two courses per semester. Most college classes are 3 credits each. When posting a college class to a Harbor Creek High School transcript, the student will receive 1 credit for the college class. Spring semester college courses must be taken during the same time slot as the fall semester courses. College courses are not eligible to replace a Harbor Creek core subject graduation requirement. Example: A College Composition course will not be used as a replacement for a Harbor Creek English class.

Students who wish to accumulate Dual Enrollment credits during the summer may take a maximum of two credits each summer. Courses should be pre-approved with the Dual Enrollment counselor.

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Grades will be recorded on the student's high school transcript in traditional A, B, C format. The weight assigned to these courses as part of the QPA is 1.15 which is the same as an honors level course taken at Harbor Creek High School. Once courses have concluded, credit will be recorded on the Harbor Creek High School transcript. Students typically take one or two courses per semester. Most college classes are 3 credits each. When posting a college class to a Harbor Creek High School transcript, the student will receive 1 credit for the college class. Spring semester college courses must be taken during the same time slot as the fall semester courses. College courses are not eligible to replace a Harbor Creek core subject graduation requirement. Example: A College Composition course will not be used as a replacement for a Harbor Creek English class.

Dual Credit students will be assigned arrival/departure times based on their Harbor Creek and Dual Credit schedules. All Attendance Policies and Procedures, including Tardies, apply to Dual Credit students within these assigned times.

Students who wish to accumulate Dual Enrollment credits during the summer may take a maximum of two credits each summer. Courses should be pre-approved with the Dual Enrollment counselor.

Electronic Devices (Page 11 or 12):

Old:

ELECTRONIC DEVICES (Board Policy 237) [Search current Board Policies here.](#)

The use of cell phones and any other electronic devices that are able to connect to a phone (earbuds, headphones, etc.) are not permitted from the time a student walks into the school building until dismissal at the end of the day. Phones must be stored in lockers or book bags only. Cell phones should not be visible (ex. in student pockets). Students will be required to turn their cell phones/earbuds/devices into the office if they are found to be in possession of these items during the school day. A parent/guardian will be required to pick up the cell phone at their convenience during normal school hours. Students who refuse to turn in their cell phone will receive a one day out of school suspension.

Students who repeatedly violate cell phone procedures and/or interfere with the learning environment by not complying with procedures may be subject to additional disciplinary action, which may include disorderly conduct charges. Administrative options are not limited to the disciplinary options identified.

Taking video and pictures of faculty, staff and/or other students without their consent during the school day and/or posting on social media is strictly prohibited.

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Students who need to call a parent/guardian during the school day may use the designated office phone. If there is knowledge that a student used a cell phone to contact a parent/guardian, they will be assigned a detention, even if they were not actively observed using the phone.

Students who repeatedly violate cell phone procedures and/or interfere with the learning environment by not complying with procedures may be subject to additional disciplinary action, which may include disorderly conduct charges. Administrative options are not limited to the disciplinary options identified.

Taking video and pictures of faculty, staff and/or other students without their consent during the school day and/or posting on social media is strictly prohibited.

Educational Trips (page 12):

Old:

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS (Board Policy 204) [Search current Board Policies here.](#)

Student may be excused from school attendance to participate in a family educational trip not sponsored by the District if the following conditions are met:

All Educational Trip(s) Request Forms are to be preapproved seven (7) calendar days prior to the first day of absence related to the educational trip. Administration may limit the number and duration of family educational trip(s) for which excused absences may be granted to a student during the school term. Education trips occurring during scheduled state-mandated assessments & final exams are strongly discouraged and may not be approved during these windows. Testing dates change annually; please contact your building principal for scheduled assessment dates. Here is a link for the 25-26 dates: [Keystone Testing Dates](#).

New:

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS (Board Policy 204) [Search current Board Policies here.](#)

Student may be excused from school attendance to participate in a family educational trip not sponsored by the District if the following conditions are met:

All Educational Trip(s) Request Forms are to be preapproved seven (7) calendar days prior to the first day of absence related to the educational trip. Administration may limit the number and duration of family educational trip(s) for which excused absences may be granted to a student during the school term **based on attendance and grades**. Education trips occurring during scheduled state-mandated assessments & final exams are strongly discouraged and may not be approved during these windows. Testing dates change annually; please contact your building principal for scheduled assessment dates. Here is a link for the **26-27** dates: [Keystone Testing Dates](#).

Student Code of Conduct (page 24):

Old:

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT: LEVELS OF BEHAVIOR

The lists below are intended to serve as examples. They are by no means all-inclusive.

Each employee of the school district, regardless of job title or function, has a role to play in the disciplinary process. The adults of our schools must actively accept the responsibility and enforce the rules. It is necessary that parental cooperation, awareness, and support exist in order for the "Code of Student Conduct" to have a significant impact on the learning environment of our schools. Parents should become informed of the Code in order that their children may grow to be productive members of our society.

Any student disciplined by a district employee shall have the right to notice of the infraction and an opportunity to explain his or her actions prior to being disciplined.

Please note discipline is conducted on an individual basis. Every effort is made to be consistent however we understand every student is different and individual students need to be addressed.

Students are required to serve any assigned After School and/or Saturday Detentions during the Quarter that they are assigned. Failure to do so will result in additional consequences.

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The lists below are intended to serve as examples. They are by no means all-inclusive.

Each employee of the school district, regardless of job title or function, has a role to play in the disciplinary process. The adults of our schools must actively accept the responsibility and enforce the rules. It is necessary that parental cooperation, awareness, and support exist in order for the "Code of Student Conduct" to have a significant impact on the learning environment of our schools. Parents should become informed of the Code in order that their children may grow to be productive members of our society.

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Please note discipline is conducted on an individual basis. Every effort is made to be consistent however we understand every student is different and individual students need to be addressed.

Students are required to serve any assigned After School and/or Saturday Detentions during the Quarter that they are assigned. Failure to do so will result in additional consequences. **Students are expected to follow the Electronic Devices Policy during After School and Saturday Detention.**

Transportation (page 30):

Old:

RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS IS A PRIVILEGE. STUDENTS WHO DO NOT RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS WHEN RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS MAY LOSE THE PRIVILEGE.

The use of video and audio recording equipment supports efforts to maintain discipline and to ensure the safety and security of all students, staff, contractors and others being transported on district-owned, operated, or contracted school buses or school vehicles. District provided transportation, including buses and vans, may be equipped with both audio and video recording devices.

Harbor Creek School District student transportation services are provided by Student Transportation-America 814-897-2100, Ext. 1242.

Any student that is requesting to ride a bus different from the one assigned to them, must have a note from their parent and should include the student's name, address, and the person with whom they are traveling. That information will be given to the high school office staff who will then issue a bus pass that can be presented to a bus driver.

New:

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Use of Bicycles (page 31)

Old:

USE OF BICYCLES AND MOTOR VEHICLES (Board Policy 223) [Search current Board Policies here.](#)

The Board regards the use of bicycles and licensed motor vehicles for travel to and from school by students as an assumption of responsibility by parents/guardians and students. The Board shall permit the use of bicycles by students in accordance with district rules, provided that students have been granted permission by the building principal and have obtained parental permission to ride a bicycle to school.

New:

USE OF BICYCLES AND MOTOR VEHICLES (Board Policy 223) [Search current Board Policies here.](#)

The Board regards the use of bicycles and licensed motor vehicles for travel to and from school by students as an assumption of responsibility by parents/guardians and students. The Board shall permit the use of bicycles by students in accordance with district rules, provided that students have been granted permission by the building principal and have obtained parental permission to ride a bicycle to school. Reckless driving, not observing traffic signs, and other infractions may result in the revocation of these privileges.