

## SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 2018-2019

*Parents, please read and be aware of all policies and procedures explained in this planner, then sign the form at the back, acknowledging having read the handbook, and return to your child's teacher.*

**SCHOOL HOURS: Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.**

7:00 a.m.	Early-arriving students report to the cafeteria. Breakfast service in the cafeteria begins. Breakfast is free to all students. <b>No student will be admitted into the building before 7:00 a.m.</b>
7:25 a.m.	Students report to class. Those already in the cafeteria will be escorted by staff to their classrooms.
7:30 a.m.	Tardy Bell rings. School day begins. Any student entering the classroom after 7:30 a.m. is considered tardy.
2:50 p.m.	Dismissal Bell rings.
3:05 p.m.	Student supervision ends.

**PLEASE NOTE: IN THE INTEREST OF STUDENT AND STAFF MEMBER SAFETY AND BUILDING SECURITY, PARENTS WILL NO LONGER BE ALLOWED TO WALK STUDENTS INTO THE BUILDING FOR DROPOFF DURING MORNING ARRIVAL TIMES.**

**MORNING ARRIVAL:** Students must be dropped off at one of the following locations:

- Curbside drop-off spot (for car riders) at the Florence St.-Merrill St. bend near the Travis back porch
- The exterior rear doors on the back porch entering the cafeteria
- The exterior front doors on the front porch off Beauchamp St.
- The exterior side doors off the visitor parking lot

Families are invited to congregate in the SPARK Park prior to 7:30 a.m. with the understanding that there is no student supervision by Travis staff anywhere outside the building. Students utilizing the playground must enter the building through the exterior rear doors on the back porch entering the cafeteria.

At 7:25 a.m., students in the cafeteria and multipurpose room are led by staff to classrooms. Teachers are at the door to greet and connect with students.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- Prior to 7:30 a.m., only office visitors or parents/guests with a scheduled appointment will be admitted into the building.
- After 7:30 a.m., parents or guests must check in at the front desk and have a visitor badge to proceed into the classroom areas – no exceptions.
- During the first week of school, parents may walk students to class after the lines from the cafeteria have been moved to grade level hallways. After August 31, 2018, all students are expected to walk to their classrooms without parents.

**CHECKING A STUDENT OUT OF SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY:** Parents are required to check out students through the office. Students will only be released from school to a parent, guardian, or authorized designee. An authorized designee is someone who has your written permission on the "Releasing Students During School Hours" form. You will be required to show your ID and specify the reason for early departure. Families with court documents that stipulate specific terms and conditions of student release from school must file such documentation with the office. Early release of students is discouraged as instruction is

missed and the classroom routine is disrupted. It should be rare situations that cause a student to be taken out of class early. If there is an emergency, please speak with an administrator. Students will be called to the office if parents need to speak to them. Parents will not go the classroom. We follow dictates of the courts in allowing parental visits by non-custodial parents.

**ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES:** Attendance will be taken at **9:00 a.m.** each school day. Your child **must be present** at this time in order to be counted present for the day. A child arriving to school after 9:00 a.m. will be counted absent for the day, the only exception made for those presenting official documentation of a visit made that same day to a doctor, dentist, or other medical/clinical professional.

***Houston ISD emphasizes that attendance is a key element that supports student achievement. Texas Compulsory Attendance law states that parents/guardians are held accountable for their child's attendance. All absences – excused or unexcused – are considered when determining grade level promotion/retention status, as well as transfer renewal status.***

Factors for deeming an absence as **excused** include, but are not limited to:

- Personal illness
- Weather
- Quarantine
- Serious illness of family member
- Funeral of a family member
- Court-related activities
- Religious holidays\*
- Student's health-related services
- School sponsored or sanctioned trips
- Others as defined by principal

\* Student must present an official statement of the scheduled time of the holiday prior to the absence.

**Sickness and Absences:** In general, children are too sick to come to school when they are contagious and/or their symptoms are serious enough to prevent them from focusing on the tasks they need to do there.

Use this checklist to determine whether to keep your child home from school:

- Does your child have a fever of 100° or higher?
- Has your child vomited and/or had diarrhea two or more times in a 24-hour period?
- Are your child's eyes crusty, bright red, and/or discharging yellow or green fluid (conjunctivitis/pink eye)?
- If your child complains of a sore throat, is it accompanied by fever, headache, stomachache, or swollen glands?
- If your child complains of a stomachache, is it accompanied by fever, vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, sharp pain, and/or hard belly?
- Does your child have a persistent, phlegmy cough?
- Does your child have lice (white, translucent eggs the size of a pinpoint on the hair or insects on the scalp)?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, please keep your child home from school and consider seeking medical attention. Your child could have a serious or contagious illness. Keep your child home until he or she has been symptom free for at least 24 hours or until the doctor indicates that he or she can return to school.

If children have a cold, headache, or stomachache that is not accompanied by fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, they can probably come to school.

If children have a rash, it could be contagious. Please seek medical advice before allowing your child to come to school.

Earaches are not contagious. Children can come to school as long as they can concentrate on their work.

Once your child has been treated for lice, he or she can return to school.

An absence is considered **unexcused** if a written note is not received within three (3) days of a student's return. Absences unrelated to the factors stated above or those taken for family trips or the like are deemed **unexcused**. The Houston Independent School District deems a student with three (3) or more unexcused absences in a four-week period to be **truant**. In this case, or when a student surpasses eight (8) total absences (either excused, unexcused, or a combination), the school will determine on a case-by-case basis – identifying individual circumstances contributing to absences – the need for sending home a truancy warning letter. Truancy cases may be investigated by an HISD Attendance Officer.

When a student has excused absences, the teacher will prepare make-up work which the student is responsible for completing and handing in. Students will have the number of days equal to the number of days absent to complete the work. For example, a student absent for two days will have two days to complete make-up work.

**PERFECT ATTENDANCE:** Students with Perfect Attendance during a nine-week grading period or for the entire school year will be recognized. To be eligible for Perfect Attendance recognition, a student may have no more than two (2) tardies in a nine-week grading period and no more than eight (8) tardies for the school year.

**TARDY POLICY:** Being at school on time is critical. Students who are late can miss out on important directions and instruction and interrupt the classroom flow when they arrive. Students are considered tardy if they are not in class when the 7:30 a.m. bell rings. Students with 4 or more tardies will receive a truancy warning letter. Transfer students with excessive tardies during the school year are subject to non-renewal of the transfer.

**AFTERNOON DISMISSAL:** Students are dismissed at 2:50 p.m. from various locations.

**PLEASE NOTE: IN THE INTEREST OF STUDENT AND STAFF MEMBER SAFETY AND BUILDING SECURITY, PARENTS WILL NO LONGER BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE BUILDING TO PICK UP STUDENTS DURING AFTERNOON DISMISSAL TIMES.**

- Car riders are picked up at the back of the school on Florence Street (in a separate area from the bus pick-up/drop-off zone). The car rider line queues up along Florence Street heading in a northerly direction toward the school. Cars are required to enter the line from the Bayland Avenue intersection with Florence. Lining up on Highland Street or Omar Street and turning onto Florence is prohibited by law during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal times.
- Walkers are dismissed at 2:50 p.m. A student is a "walker" only if he/she is walking home on his/her own. Parents must sign a release form that authorizes the student to walk home and acknowledges that students dismissed as walkers are not supervised by Travis staff anywhere on campus after regular school hours, including the Travis SPARK Park.

- Parent pick-up (for parents picking up their child on foot):
  - Kindergarten – Exterior classroom doors
  - 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grades – Exterior hallway doors
  - 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grades – Exterior cafeteria doors

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- Only office visitors or parents/guests with a scheduled appointment will be admitted into the building during the afternoon dismissal process.
- Parents picking up a child on foot are not permitted to park cars on Florence Street.
- The school parking lot adjacent to Beauchamp Street is a visitor lot. The exterior doors off that parking lot are equipped with a buzz-in entry system for visitor access to the foyer.

**DRIVING, PARKING, AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY:** Please obey posted signs and driving laws and exercise good safety practices when dropping off and picking up students in the mornings and afternoons. Please follow these rules:

- Do not use a cell phone while driving in the school area. Distracted driving presents a danger to car riders and pedestrians alike.
- Adhere to the school speed zone limit of 20 mph.
- Do not pull out of the Florence Street car rider line early or go around the line as this presents a safety hazard. Students should remain in the car until reaching the back-porch curb.
- Cars parking or standing within 30 feet of crosswalks is prohibited by law.
- Cars should not block intersections at any time.
- Do not make U-turns on streets around the school during heavily congested times.
- Do stop while school buses are stopped to load and unload students.
- When dropping off or picking up students, stop your car on the right-hand side of the street and have your children get in and out of the car on the curbside.
- When crossing the street, students should cross with the crossing guard at the crosswalk.
- Do not park your car in areas marked “No Parking”. It poses a safety risk to students and police give tickets in these areas.

**PARENTAL CHANGE OF STUDENT DISMISSAL PLAN:** As an extra safety precaution, any changes requested to a student’s afternoon dismissal plan must be communicated directly to the Travis Elementary office. An email to your child’s teacher is encouraged, but will not suffice as the only means of communicating a dismissal change. The office will require that a parent communicating a dismissal change over the phone must provide the driver’s license number that is written on the student’s enrollment form on file with the school. To inform your child of a change in his/her dismissal plans, please notify the office by 1:30 p.m., and the message will be relayed to your child’s teacher.

**WITHDRAWING A STUDENT:** Please call the office **at least one day in advance** of withdrawing a student from school. Bring the forwarding address and phone number if available. You must provide the name and district of the school your child is going to attend next. Records will be sent to the new school.

**SCHOOL CLOSURE/INCLEMENT WEATHER:** Should school need to be closed or canceled due to inclement weather or other emergencies, parents will receive the information through HISD’s telephone and e-mail notification system, School Messenger. This information is also announced on radio and television stations and posted on the district website.

**COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL:** Letters, flyers, and informational items are sent out weekly in Tuesday Folders, however, please check your child’s backpack daily for important notes sent home by the teacher or office. Students in grades 2-5 have a daily planner, which will be used to record

homework, projects, and important dates. Parents are expected to monitor this planner daily to help your child stay organized and prepared.

E-mail is an excellent way to communicate with your child's teacher. Please keep these messages brief and allow up to 48 hours for a response. Always address concerns with the teacher first before contacting an administrator.

**CONFERENCES WITH TEACHERS:** Parents may call the office to leave a message requesting a face-to-face or telephone conference with the teacher. We encourage every parent to have a formal parent-teacher conference in the first semester and to stay well informed of your child's progress throughout the year.

**REQUEST FOR RECORDS:** Parents may request records from the school. Requests should be made in the office and the parent should allow 48 hours for the school to respond.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER:** In order for the school to handle emergencies, maintain communication, and keep records current, please notify the school office immediately of address or telephone number changes. We will update information in our call-out system as well. Due to the check-out policy, please keep emergency information current.

**GRADING POLICY:** Grades should accurately reflect the progress of the student and mastery of grade level skills. Teachers are required to post grades within two weeks of the assignment. Graded work will be sent home for parent review on a regular basis. Grades earned in student notebooks can be viewed upon request. For students in Kindergarten, subjects are marked according to the scale listed on the report card. For students in Grades 1-5, report card averages in each of the core academic subjects (Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies) shall be based on the following weights:

- Test and project grades are recorded into the grade book twice.
- Classwork grades are recorded into the grade book once.

**Reassessment:** Grades earned on a test below a 70% automatically qualify for reassessment. Graded assessments will be sent home no later than the second Tuesday following the date of the assessments and the student and parent will be notified in advance of the date for the retesting. Students will be given one opportunity to retest and will receive the average of the original and retest grade with a maximum of a 70%. Reassessment methods include, but are not limited to:

1. Observation
2. Oral questioning
3. Additional assignments
4. Correcting tests under supervision of teacher
5. Retesting using alternate version of exam

**Homework:** Students are expected to read a minimum of 20 minutes every night, per Houston ISD policy. Additional homework options provided by the classroom teacher can be completed at the discretion and convenience of the parent(s)/family and are not factored into student averages. (Students participating in the Kidventure after-school program are expected to work on homework options during designated academic time blocks.)

#### **Essential Understandings Regarding Homework**

- The Teacher will:
  - Foster a growth mindset in students, conveying the importance of hard work and practice in developing skills.

- Provide access to and communicate supplementary homework activities to families that review concepts covered in class.
- Communicate student progress/academic concerns to parents and recommend (not require) any specific homework activities that may further support individual student learning needs/growth areas.
- The Student will:
  - Develop a growth mindset, work hard in class, and complete homework assignments when directed to by parents.
  - Follow classroom procedures for recording homework options and share those options with parents. (Students participating in the Kidventure after school program are expected to work on homework options during designated academic time blocks.)
  - Study and practice concepts as needed prior to tests.
- The Parent will:
  - Encourage a growth mindset in their child and convey the importance of hard work and taking responsibility to practice concepts as needed.
  - Direct student to complete homework at parental discretion and family convenience.
  - Communicate with the teacher if wanting additional homework options or more information on skills/concepts for their students to practice at home.

**Make-up Work:** Students who have an excused absence from school will have the same number of days to make up work provided by the teacher. In other words, a student who was absent for two days will have two days to turn in make-up work once he/she returns to school.

**Modifying Work:** Some students have allowable accommodations/modifications, per Special Education IEPs. (Section 504 students are allowed accommodations only.) Teachers should clearly communicate with parents on this topic.

**Projects:** Projects or Project Based Learning activities assigned by the teacher may be done both at home and at school, with the teacher defining the standards and the work expectations with a list of requirements or a grading rubric. Parents are asked to facilitate, but the work itself should be completed by the student. Rubrics should award points for projects that are turned in on time and include point deductions for work or projects turned in late.

**PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS:** Progress reports are sent following the fifth week of the grading period to all students in Grades 1-5. Report cards are sent home at the end of the nine-weeks grading period.

<b>CRITERIA FOR GRADING ACADEMIC SUBJECTS</b>	
<b>GRADE</b>	<b>CRITERIA</b>
90-100	Excellent quality of work; thorough mastery of subject.
80-89	Good quality of work; above average with consistent effort.
75-79	Satisfactory quality of work; average achievement.
70-74	Below expected quality of work; below average achievement; significant support required from teacher in order to complete work.
Below 70	Unsatisfactory quality of work; not passing.

**DRESS CODE:** Travis does not have a set uniform. Any dress or part of student appearance that is deemed a distraction to the learning environment is prohibited. If a student is in violation of dress code, parents will be called and asked to bring a change of clothes to school.

- Garments with pictures and/or messages should be in good taste and appropriate for elementary students to see and read. No alcohol/tobacco related text; no inappropriate messages. No printed messages on rear end. Garments should be age-appropriate.
- Garments that allow display of bare skin on the torso or back should not be worn. Shirts and tops should cover the abdomen when arms are stretched.
- Undergarments should not be visible.
- Shorts or skirts should be at an appropriate length. (A good way to spot-check is to see that the shorts or skirts extend at least as far as the end of the middle finger when the child's hand is extended down by his/her side.)
- Shoes should be appropriate for strenuous activities. Closed-toe shoes are required for P.E. No tennis shoes with rollers are allowed at school.

**PREPAYING FOR LUNCHES:** The cafeteria manager will accept prepayment for lunches from 7:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Cash only and exact change is required. In addition, there are envelopes at the front desk that parents may use to prepay for lunches. Parents may also pay online with a debit or credit card at [www.parentonline.net](http://www.parentonline.net). We encourage parents to use one of these three methods rather than sending money to school with your child daily.

**LATE LUNCHES/LATE ITEMS:** Lunches brought to school by parents may be dropped off at the office or at the student pickup table in the foyer. This protects instructional time from interruptions. Delivery of late lunches to the front desk should be rare. Students are responsible for arriving at school with their lunch, library books, backpack, and materials needed for the classroom.

**CAFETERIA RULES:**

- We speak in inside voices.
- We use appropriate table manners.
- We stay seated during mealtimes.
- We clean up after ourselves.

No glass containers are allowed at school. These will be picked up by cafeteria monitors.

Parents are always welcome to visit for lunch in the cafeteria, but may not take students outside the cafeteria during this time. Parents may not share outside food with any students other than their own child. Please secure a visitor's badge from the office before joining your child for lunch.

**CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** Students must turn off cell phones during the day and keep them stored in backpacks. If a cell phone is turned on or is visible, it will be picked up and turned in to the office where the parent must retrieve it. Other electronic devices, including iPods, should be left at home. The school cannot be held responsible for loss of such items. These will also be turned into the office for parent retrieval.

**DISCIPLINE:** In all classrooms, teachers establish, review, and post the rules of conduct expected. Minor infractions are handled by the teacher. These and repeated instances of disrespectful or disruptive student behaviors will be communicated to parents by the teacher. Students are afforded consistent, fair, and predictable standards of conduct management, responses and interventions. Repeated infractions or discipline matters of a more serious nature are handled in the office and the teacher will complete a discipline referral. Families receive the Houston ISD Code of Student Conduct Handbook. (Copies are also

available online at <http://www.houstonisd.org>.) Consequences for misbehavior are assigned based on the level of the infraction. During disciplinary actions, we work to protect the classroom from disruptions, correct the behavior, protect the dignity of the student, and partner with parents to make responses meaningful and appropriate.

**BULLYING:** Repeated instances of student behavior that makes a classmate feel physically or emotionally unsafe or compromises another person's comfort or desire to learn at Travis Elementary School is not acceptable. A full explanation of what constitutes bullying can be found in the HISD Code of Student Conduct. Reported instances of bullying will be communicated to parents of any affected students. Positive interventions such as counseling, mediation, and conflict resolution steps to address instances of bullying are always preferred, however, violators are subject to disciplinary actions as outlined under Level 3 of the Code of Student Conduct.

**LIBRARY BOOKS:** Students visit the library regularly at assigned times and are encouraged to visit (with a parent) during library hours before or after school. Books must be returned to school within seven days of being checked out in order to check out other books. In the case of a lost library book, please check with the librarian to find out the cost of the book. Payments can be made at the office. Money paid for lost books will be refunded if the book is found.

**HEALTH SERVICES:** In the event of illness or injury during the school day, clinic services are provided by the school nurse or office staff. If it is determined that a student is too ill to remain at school, the parent or emergency person designated on the *"Releasing Students During School Hours Form"* will be contacted to make arrangements for the student to be picked up. You will be asked to show your ID before the student is released.

**MEDICATIONS:** Students may not carry medication or have it in the classroom. Medication to be administered to a student by the school nurse must be accompanied by instructions and signed by a physician or dentist (licensed to practice in the United States). The prescribing physician or dentist completes the HISD form "Policies Governing Administering Medication During School Hours" and it is returned to the school office. No fax copies are accepted. The medication must be in the original container and appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician. No medication can be given without this documentation.

**HEALTH FITNESS EXEMPTION:** A note from the parent stating the nature of a child's illness or injury will be sufficient to exempt a child from strenuous physical activity for that day. Prolonged exemption should be communicated through a doctor's note.

**VOLUNTEERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS (VIPS):** Travis has a history of strong parent and community support through volunteerism. Volunteers are active at Travis as tutors, mentors, field trip chaperones, office helpers, and through many PTA functions. Look for opportunities to sign up in the fall, as well as throughout the year with the PTA. All volunteers must register with the VIPS Program online (<http://www.houstonisd.org/Page/126421>) and those who work directly with children are required to have a background check. Please visit the office for more details on this process, which can take up to two weeks to complete.

**FIELD TRIPS:** Field trips are planned by school staff as extended learning activities to classroom study. Permission slips will be sent home by the teacher to be signed and returned. All signed permission slips (and required fees, if applicable) must be returned to the teacher at least two (2) days prior to the date of the trip. No student will be permitted to go on a trip without written permission on the appropriate form. The school reserves the right to deny a child's participation in a field trip if his/her conduct at school ('P' or 'U' on report card or recent behaviors communicated to a parent) does not merit this privilege. For field

trips requiring transportation by bus, students must ride the bus to and from the site unless receiving school approval beforehand due to extenuating circumstances.

**Chaperones:** Teachers are often required to limit the number of parent chaperones that can attend certain field trips. Teachers will notify those parents who will attend the field trip as a chaperone. Chaperones must provide their own transportation to and from field trip sites. Other parents are asked not to attend the event so that teachers can focus on the instruction that is a part of the study. Students attend field trips under the direction of the teacher. Please do not ask your child or another child to leave the area being overseen by the teacher. **No parent may attend any field trip unless he/she has a VIPS Volunteer clearance.** Parent chaperones who attend field trips are under the direction of the teachers and are expected to help whenever necessary. Siblings may not attend any field trip, unless it is a “family field trip” such as campout weekends.

**BIRTHDAYS:** Birthdays are recognized during morning announcements. Flowers, balloons, etc. will not be delivered to the classrooms as this disrupts instruction. Please save these items for celebrations at home. Please do not hand out party invitations at school unless all children in the class are to receive one. Parents are welcome to send birthday cupcakes or cookies (limit 1 per student) to be shared by all students in the class, but are not allowed to interrupt instructional time to drop off these items or to supervise this activity. The classroom teacher will determine a time after the students’ lunch period for sharing these items. Teachers have full discretion to communicate and enforce food allergy policies in the classroom to ensure student safety.

**FOODS OF MINIMAL NUTRITIONAL VALUE (FMNV):** The Texas Department of Agriculture prohibits schools from serving or making available to students foods with minimal nutritional value. These include sodas, candies, and other sweets. We are permitted to serve these foods ONLY on three days. These three days will be:

- Winter Class Celebrations
- Valentine’s Day
- End of Year Class Celebrations