

ALEXANDER HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2015-2016

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This agenda belongs to:

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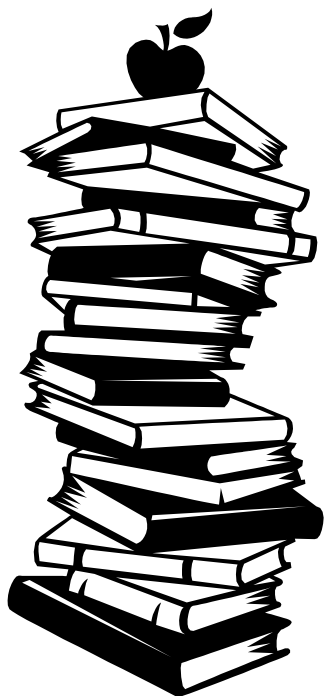
ADDRESS _____

CITY/TOWN _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____

STUDENT NO. _____

Welcome to Alexander Hamilton Middle School!



The faculty, administration, and staff extend greetings and best wishes to you for a successful school year. We urge you and your parents to become well acquainted with the school policies contained in this agenda.

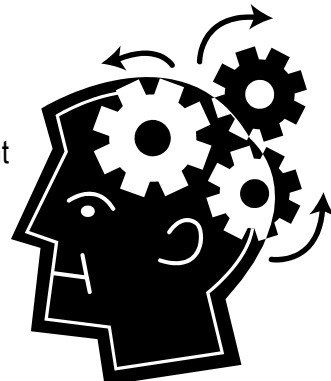
The policies and procedures are the result of the concerted effort of a committee of students, parents, faculty, and administration. The information has been carefully prepared and presented so that it will be of great value in helping you to become an integral member of the Hamilton community.

Since its founding in 1919, Hamilton has maintained a reputation for excellence. Our school welcomes you, and we hope that you will always be conscious of Hamilton's traditions and requirements. May you always have the spirit to do what will make both you and the school outstanding.



**At Hamilton Middle School, we
strive to strengthen the knowledge,
strengthen the character, strengthen
the future!**

It is the policy of Alexander Hamilton Middle School, part of the Houston Independent School District, not to discriminate on the basis of age, color, handicap or disability, ancestry, national origin, race, religion, sex, or political affiliation in its educational programs and activities.



Learning Communities

Hamilton is organized into grade level clusters in order to better meet the needs of individual students. Students within a learning community share the same group of teachers for core academic areas. Teachers in each community have a common planning period which will allow for conferences with parents and students.

8 Period Block Schedule

Hamilton Middle School operates on a modified block schedule. This means that students attend each of their classes on a rotating basis. Every Monday and Wednesday students will attend periods 1-4. Every Tuesday and Thursday students will attend periods 5-8. On Friday, students will attend periods 1-8. The schedule includes an enrichment/intervention period that students will attend 4 days out of the week. Students will attend homeroom every Monday through Friday. Breakfast is provided at no cost to all students and will be served in homeroom each morning from 8:10 a.m. to 8:25 a.m. Additionally, important learning activities will also occur in homeroom each day. Student attendance in homeroom is mandatory.

Students Leaving Campus During School Day

Students will only be released to the *parent/guardian/adult* listed on the enrollment card. Identification must be presented. Please ensure that your enrollment card is updated each year with the proper contacts, phone numbers, and address to ensure that you or someone that you designate can easily pick up your child in the event of an emergency. This policy is for the safety of all students.
NOTE: The latest a student may be released early is 3:30 p.m. After that time, students must remain in class until school dismissal at 3:45 p.m.

Hamilton Middle School
2015-2016
Bell Schedule: Monday – Thursday

8:10	Students Enter the Building
8:15 - 8:40	Homeroom
8:45 – 10:05*	1 st /5 th Period
10:10 – 11:30	2 nd /6 th Period

***OFFICIAL ADA TIME IS 10:00**

First Lunch	Second Lunch	Third Lunch
11:35 – 12:05 Lunch	11:35 – 12:10 3 rd /7 th Period	11:35 – 12:55 3 rd /7 th Period
12:10 – 1:30 3 rd /7 th Period	12:10 – 12:40 Lunch	1:00 – 1:30 Lunch
	12:45 - 1:30 3 rd /7 th Period	
1:35 – 2:20	Enrichment/Intervention	
2:25 – 3:45	4 th /8 th Period	
3:45	Student Dismissal	

Bell Schedule: Friday

8:10	Students Enter the Building
8:15 - 8:35	Homeroom
8:40 – 9:25	1st Period
9:30 – 10:15*	2 nd Period
10:20 -11:05	3 rd Period

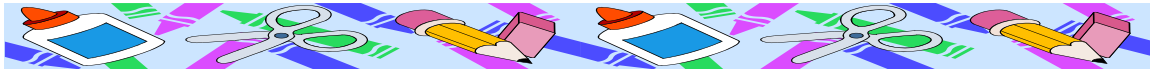
***OFFICIAL ADA TIME IS 10:00**

First Lunch	Second Lunch	Third Lunch
11:05 – 11:35 Lunch	11:10 – 11:55 4 th Period	11:10 – 11:55 4 th Period
11:40 – 12:25 4 th Period	11:55 – 12:25 Lunch	12:00 – 12:45 5 th Period
12:30 – 1:15 5 th Period	12:30 - 1:15 5 th Period	12:45 – 1:15 Lunch
1:20 – 2:05	6 th Period	
2:10 – 2:55	7 th Period	
3:00 – 3:45	8 th Period	
3:45	Student Dismissal	

Students will be released at 1:30 p.m. on Early Dismissal Days.

Vanguard Program

Hamilton's Vanguard program is a thriving learning community nestled within the historic Houston Heights which offers an enriched curriculum specifically designed for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade gifted and talented students. Your child will be challenged in a variety of stimulating subjects that promote his/her natural capacity for critical analysis and creative problem-solving. Your child will take part in a well-rounded education where our top-rated academic program is balanced with our outstanding fine-arts and elective programs. Hamilton offers many opportunities for leadership and character education that extend beyond the classroom and into the surrounding community through the Texas Performance Standards Projects Curriculum.



Beyond the Classroom

- Academic Competition
 - Art Competitions
 - Band – UIL Concert & Sight-reading and Solo & Ensemble competitions
 - Name That Book
 - Choir
 - Communities in School (CIS)
 - Kick Start Karate
 - Competitive Sports (football, track, basketball, cross country, baseball, softball, swimming, volley ball, soccer, wrestling)
 - Dance
 - Duke University Talent Search
 - Foreign Language
 - Guitar
 - Habitat for Hamilton
 - AVID
 - Multimedia
 - National Junior Honor Society
 - Odyssey of the Mind
 - Robotics
 - Spelling Bee
 - Science Fair
 - CSTEM
 - Speech/Debate
 - Theatre Arts
 - UIL competitions
 - Yearbook
 - Writers in the School
 - Dare to Dream
 - Coding Club
 - Photography
 - Peer Leadership
- And much more...

Academics

Report Cards and Progress Reports will be distributed shortly after the close of the six-week grading period. (*Refer to 2015-2016 Academic Calendar on back cover*). Progress reports will be sent to all parents around the middle of each six-week period and at other times when necessary. Parents and students are encouraged to sign up for PS Connect to monitor student grades and attendance.

Pre-AP Courses are offered to engage students intellectually with the rigor of higher level learning. Participation in these courses develops students' skills and provides opportunities to acquire knowledge while simultaneously challenging students to expand their thinking.

Homework is a necessary part of each student's educational program. Each student is expected to use some time for home study in addition to scheduled class instruction to support academic excellence. Some assignments are long-range in nature and require planned study time for their completion. Planned study eliminates the situation of spending too much time to complete an assignment the day before it is due. When students do not submit assignments, they may be assigned to ZAP (Zeros Aren't Permitted) during lunch until assignments are complete.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are the objectives that each teacher will teach for their subject area. Teachers will post the learning objective for each day, along with a class and homework assignments on the board each day. Students will record this information daily in their agenda. Parents can review their students agenda daily to determine what students should be learning and what assignments students have.

Agenda Checks will be made randomly by teachers and administrators. If a student loses his/her agenda, replacements are available in the dean's office for \$5.00. A Xerox copy is available for \$2.00.

Parent Conferences Parents may make appointments with teachers, deans, or the principal by calling the school office at 713-802-4725. Teachers have designated conference periods so that instruction is not interrupted. Teachers must confirm with the parent(s) the date and time of the parent conference. **For security reasons, all visitors must sign in at the receptionist's station upon entering the building and receive a visitor's badge. Parents will then report to the appropriate grade level office and be escorted to the classroom for the conference.**

Tutorials The staff at Hamilton is dedicated to helping students be successful. Teachers may set up tutorials to work with students. Letters will be sent home to inform parents of dates and times for tutorials.

Physical Education Classes For health and safety, each student is required to dress appropriately in regulation gym clothing for physical education class. Required dress for physical education class includes the following items of clothing:

1. The Hamilton Middle School PE uniform
2. Rubber-soled sport or tennis shoes
3. Appropriate undergarments

All parts of the gym uniform must be marked with the student's name for identification. Students should have a combination lock for their gym locker. Any valuables should be kept inside the locker. Students are not allowed to share lockers and should report any sharing to their PE coaches.

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for a student to be academically successful. Studies prove a definite correlation between student learning and regular attendance.

Compulsory Attendance: Students must attend at least **90%** of classes each semester. Students who exceed the absence limit will be required to attend summer school and may be denied course credit and may petition the School Attendance Committee for consideration.

Absence from School: When a student is absent, he/she must give a written excuse from his/her parent or guardian, stating the reason for the absence, to the attendance clerk in room 207. **Only 3 handwritten notes will be accepted. After 3 handwritten notes have been submitted, doctor's notes must be submitted for an absence to be excused.** Excused absences are only allowed for the following:

1. Illness of the student.
2. Illness or death in the student's immediate family.
3. Participation in legitimate school activities with the permission of the principal.
4. Emergencies or extenuating circumstances as recognized by the principal or her designee.

The student will be given **three days** to bring a written excuse from the parent/guardian or a doctor's note for an absence. **After three days,**

the absence becomes unexcused. Students with 3 or more unexcused absences will be required to make up instruction missed on Saturdays and after school. Failure to make up instructional time missed can lead to further disciplinary consequences and well as retention is the grade level the following year.

Make-up work Students who have excused or unexcused absences will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up missed work. **Students, parents, and teachers should work together to ensure students master missed instructional objectives and assure that written work is made up and submitted to the teacher in a timely manner.**

Tardiness to class A student is counted tardy if he/she is not in the classroom when the tardy bell rings. The teacher keeps an accurate record of tardiness. Students who continue to arrive late to class will be subject to the rules in the HISD student code of conduct.

Withdrawals Students who are withdrawing from Hamilton Middle School to go to another school must report to the appropriate dean's office. The student must be accompanied by the parent or guardian who enrolled the student. All withdrawing students must provide information about the school in which they will be enrolling after they leave Hamilton.

Student Behavior

Student Code of Conduct Teaching and learning happen best in a classroom where good order is maintained. Students must adhere to the HISD Code of Student Conduct, not only for their own benefit, but for the benefit of others as well. All major and minor offenses and their consequences are fully described in the Code of Student Conduct. **Receipt of the signature page from the Code of Student Conduct indicates it has been read and will be followed.** The signature forms will be kept on file. If you have any questions regarding the Student Code of Conduct, please feel free to call the dean's office.

Secondary Conduct Average:

Teachers assess student conduct as follows:

E	Excellent citizenship
S	Satisfactory behavior, cooperates readily
P	Poor behavior, below average
U	Unsatisfactory behavior, needs drastic improvement

Detention School-wide detention is held from **3:50 PM to 4:50 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays and from 8:00 AM to 11:30 AM on assigned Saturdays.** The student must bring paper, a pencil, and something to study. Students causing problems or not following instructions in detention will be sent home and referred to the dean's office for disciplinary action. Students must arrive to detention on time, or they will not be allowed to enter. **Failure to attend an assigned detention without a will result in further disciplinary consequences.** Students may be assigned **school-wide detention** by any teacher for tardiness. A teacher/cluster may also assign **detention in his/her classroom** as a disciplinary consequence on any given day as long as he or she gives the parent 24-hour notice. It is the student's responsibility to give this notice to his/her parent or guardian. Saturday detention is assigned by grade level administrators.

Cafeteria Students may choose to eat from the cafeteria or bring a sack lunch. Students needing to use the restroom during their assigned lunch period should use only the first floor restrooms. The second and third floors are off limits during lunch periods. The school cafeteria is maintained as a vital part of the health program of the school. To encourage good nutrition, a well-balanced lunch is offered at a reasonable price. The lunchroom management and your fellow students will appreciate your cooperation in the following:

- Deposit all lunch litter in wastebaskets immediately after you are finished eating.
- Leave the tables and floors in a clean condition for others.
- **Do not remove food or drink from the cafeteria. Eating in the building or on the school grounds anywhere except the cafeteria is strictly prohibited.**
- While in the lunch line, do not cut in front of others or allow others to cut in front of you.
- Running to or from lunch is prohibited.

Lunch Detention Students who fail to abide by the cafeteria guidelines or who commit other minor discipline infractions are subject to being assigned cafeteria duty. This involves sitting at the cafeteria duty table to eat lunch silently.

Halls Students are not permitted in the halls during classes without a hall pass. During passing times, always stay to the right to facilitate the flow of traffic. Passing time is five minutes between periods. Students may go to their lockers and use the restroom during the passing period.

Smoking Students are not permitted to use or possess tobacco/tobacco products including smokeless cigarettes, e-cigarettes, any other nicotine delivery device or any substance for consumption containing nicotine.

Selling Any sales or fund-raising at Hamilton Middle School must have written administrative approval. Selling initiated by individual students is prohibited.

Gum-chewing Careless disposal of gum in drinking fountains, furniture, and floors causes sanitation and cleaning problems and costly repair. Therefore, gum chewing is not permitted. The eating of candy and chewing of toothpicks, paper, etc. is also prohibited.

Personal property iPods, MP3's, portable radios, CD players, cameras, electronic games, markers, large sums of money, basketballs, soccer balls, footballs and other such personal property are not to be brought to school. Many problems arise concerning articles of this nature and **the school will not assume responsibility for them.** If such personal property is brought to the school, the property will be taken from the student and held in the dean's office until the parent comes to collect the item. Also note that in the Student Code of Conduct it states, "Possession of iPods, MP3 players, personal radios, or music devices at school" is a level II act of misconduct, and the decisions regarding such items are left up to the campus level. **Teachers and administrators will no longer conduct investigations with regard to lost or stolen items that should not have been brought to school.**

Cell phones Students are permitted to bring cell phones to school for emergency purposes only. All cell phones must be **turned off** and kept **out of sight** from the time they arrive on campus until the end of the school day (this includes ear-buds). If a student fails to abide by these guidelines, the cell phone will be confiscated and held until a parent comes to collect the phone. **Following HISD policy, a fee of \$15 will be charged for the return of a confiscated cell phone.**

Bring Your Own Device Houston ISD offers a filtered Houston ISD public Wi-Fi on all campuses. Hamilton students may bring a personal device for educational purposes (laptop, netbook, cell phone, tablet, etc.) to campus to be utilized in the classroom at the discretion of the teacher. Students are expected to connect to the filtered Houston ISD Public Wi-Fi to access online resources.

Responsibility for Devices

- The technology devices students bring to school are their sole responsibility.
- The campus or district assumes no responsibility for personal devices if they are lost, loaned, damaged, or stolen and only limited time or resources will be spent trying to locate stolen or lost items.
- Students are expected to exhibit digital responsibility and follow the Acceptable Use Policy while using personal or District-owned technology.
- The Acceptable Use Policy may be found on Houstonisd.org.
- Personal devices may be subject to investigation in accordance with District policy.
- Students are to keep their devices secure at all times and not loan them to others.
- Students must keep devices off at all times except when instructed by a teacher that it is permissible to use devices for instructional purposes.

Student Dress Code 2015-2016

The Hamilton Middle School dress code for students is a result of the efforts of a committee composed of students, parents, teachers, counselors and the administrative staff. It is our belief that school pride is developed not only by attaining honor in scholastic accomplishments and extra-curricular activities but also by the way students maintain high standards of behavior as reflected in dress and grooming.

Hamilton Middle School 2015-2016 Dress Code Policy

Shirts/Sweatshirts

- Must be suitably sized short/long sleeved polo styled (with collar).
- Must be solid colored white/grey/navy blue. Patterns, graphics or logos are not permitted.
- Shirt/sweatshirts sold at Hamilton with school logo may be worn.
- **Shirts must be tucked in while on campus.**
- Club/organization shirts may be worn on any day.

Undershirts

- Must be suitably sized and worn tucked in.
- **Must be white only.** Patterns, graphics or logos are not permitted.

Pants / Shorts / Skirts

- Must be solid colored khaki (tan or navy blue). Patterns, graphics or logos are not permitted.
- Pants must be worn around waistline. “Sagging” is not permitted. Students who continue to wear their pants inappropriately will have pants belted/pinned/or cinched so that they fit appropriately.
- Skirt and short length must be no shorter than four fingers above the knee.
- Oversized, undersized, torn or ripped pants/shorts are not permitted at any times.
- Pant legs are not to be rolled up.
- “Joggers” are not permitted.

Shoes

- Must have a hard sole and back.
- Open-toed shoes, house shoes, slippers, flip-flops, sandals, heels, and platforms are not permitted.

Jackets/Outerwear

- Must be solid colored white/grey/navy blue. Patterns, graphics or logos are not permitted.
- Jackets and sweaters that meet the dress code may be worn during the school day. Hoods may not be worn in the building.
- Any jackets or sweaters that do not meet these criteria must be stored in the student’s locker during the school day.

Hats and accessories

- Hats, caps, bandanas, hair wraps, combs, picks, costume wear, sunglasses, etc. are not permitted on campus unless approved by the principal.

Miscellaneous

- Students may not draw words, symbols, designs, or the like on exposed skin.
- Any exposed tattoos that are deemed inappropriate by administration must be covered.
- Earrings are the only piercings permitted. No spikes, loops over ½ inch or gauges permitted.
- Teeth grills are not permitted.
- Hair must be neat with no shaved words/symbols or designs and of a natural color. Mohawks/faux-hawks are not permitted.

Non-Waiver of Dress Code: A note from a parent cannot be used to excuse deviation from the AHMS dress code. *Clothing, jewelry or adornments deemed by administration to be a distraction to the learning environment is prohibited.*

ID Badges

In order to help ensure a safe learning environment for students and staff, all students are required to wear ID badges. The following policies apply:

- All students must wear ID Badges on a lanyard around their neck at all times. No exceptions.
 - Students who lose their badge must pay \$5.00 for a replacement badge.
 - Students who forget their badge at home must purchase a temporary badge in the cafeteria before school for \$1.00.
 - After three (3) temporary badges, students will be required to replace lost ID badge for a fee of \$5.00.
- Students who are repeatedly in violation of the school ID badge policy may face more severe disciplinary action in accordance with the HISD code of conduct.
 - ID badges are used to purchase lunches and to check out library books. Students without an ID badge will report to the end of the lunch line.

Backpacks: Only clear, see-through or mesh backpacks are permitted to ensure campus safety. Backpacks must be placed in a locker after homeroom and will not be permitted in classrooms for the rest of the school day. Students may go to their lockers during the passing period. Sharing of lockers is not permitted.

Dress Code Violation Procedures

A simple correction, such as tucking in one's shirt, is to be done immediately. If a student is not wearing the appropriate shirt or pants, the school will call the student's home and a parent or guardian will need to bring appropriate clothing. Frequent violations of the Student Dress Code could lead to more serious consequences.

An acknowledgement of receipt and willingness to comply with the dress code will be sent home to be signed by both the student and the parent and returned to the homeroom teacher. (The

homeroom teacher will provide copies of the dress code policies and the acknowledgement form for each student.)

The administration of Hamilton Middle School reserves the right to make the final decision regarding the appropriateness of clothing and/or accessories.

Miscellaneous

Morning Procedures: Students should be dropped off after 7:30 and should report to the cafeteria. Once a student arrives onto campus, they must remain on campus. At 7:45, weather permitting, students will be allowed to play on the field. Students may walk the track, play basketball, soccer, and flag football. Students will remain outside or in the cafeteria until time to enter the building at 8:05. Students will report directly to homeroom. **Please note that administrators are not on duty until 7:30 A.M.**

Student Dismissal Students are dismissed from school at 3:45. Parents picking up students are to do so either in the front on 20th Street or the back on 22nd Street. Parents should circle the block until their students comes out to meet them. Local businesses such as CVS, McDonalds, Kroger, Heights Antiques on Yale, Yale Street Grill et.al. will not allow parents to park in their lots to wait for students. Students are supervised until 4:15 p.m. by campus administrators. **It is important that all students are picked up by 4:15 p.m.** Neighboring businesses **do not allow** students to wait for their parents at their businesses. In addition, other customers may create problems for students. **The safest place for students to be picked up is in the front or the back of the school. Students that remain on campus at 4:15 will be taken to the school library for Homework Hotspot where they will work on homework supervised by a staff member until picked up by a parent.**

After School Activities: Students participating in after school activities should report directly to

their designated location. **Students that leave campus will not be allowed to return without a parent. This includes students who go to McDonalds or other local businesses.**

School Bus Transportation At the beginning of the school year, the HISD transportation department furnishes Hamilton Middle School with copies of bus routes. The school will post copies of all schedules on a bulletin board on the second floor, near offices 210 and 216. It is the responsibility of the parents/students to look up the route number, bus number, pick-up point, and time schedule for their child. School bus transportation is not mandatory by law. Transportation is rendered as an auxiliary service by the local board. Good student behavior on the school bus is important for the safety and wellbeing of all passengers. Riding the school bus is a privilege that may be enjoyed as long as established rules and regulations are followed. **A student's ride may be discontinued at any time for disciplinary reasons.** The school schedules all buses to games or fieldtrips and each bus is under the direction of a faculty member.

Lockers You are assigned a combination for your regular school locker. Each student is required to bring one quality combination lock for the PE locker which is assigned by your physical education teacher. Keyed locks are not permitted. Be sure to lock up all valuables. **Lockers are never to be shared with another student.** It is very important for security purposes that you not give your combination to any other student.

Bicycles are to be parked in bike racks immediately upon arrival at school. All bicycles should be secured with a lock. The school is not responsible for theft or vandalism.

Skateboards Students are not allowed to ride their skateboards on campus. Skateboards should be left with a dean or in a classroom upon entry into the building.

Textbooks Students will be issued textbooks at beginning of the year. In each book, write in ink your name, your teacher's name, and the semester and year issued. Textbooks are the property of the State of Texas and if lost, must be paid for by the student to whom the book is issued. Students are required to bring their textbooks to class on a daily basis unless otherwise directed by the classroom teacher.

Lost and Found Frequent checks on lost articles should be made in the library. Articles not claimed by the last day of school will be donated to a charitable organization.

Health Care at School The goal of the Hamilton Health Clinic is to keep students healthy and IN CLASS. Parents can help by making sure students go to bed at a decent time and eat a wholesome, healthy breakfast, and by providing current phone numbers for emergency situations. The school nurse will contact parents when a student has a fever, is vomiting, or if the nurse thinks it is necessary for the student to return home or see a physician. The nurse maintains a list of free or low-cost clinics.

Immunizations All students must have current and updated immunizations on file in the nurse's office, as required by law. It is the responsibility of the student and parent to provide the school with an accurate immunization record. **A student may not be allowed to attend school without these STATE-MANDATED immunizations.** Exclusions from compliance are allowable on an individual basis for medical conditions or religious conflicts. Students falling into any of

these two categories **MUST** submit affidavits as specified by law.

Delinquent Immunization Notices Throughout the school year, you may receive notices of delinquent immunizations. These will need to be updated as soon as possible and reported to the school nurse. Students will receive two (2) notices in homeroom, and a third notice will be sent by US mail. A recommendation will be given to the principal that the student not be allowed to return to school until the information is updated. If parents are not able to take time from work to have immunizations, please contact the nurse for possible options for obtaining the immunizations during the school day.

Medication at School All students bringing medication **MUST** take it directly to the school nurse in the school clinic. Medication can only be given if the HISD Medication Policy form is filled out by a physician and signed by a parent. This **MUST** be on file before any medication can be given at school. This includes **ALL** prescription medication, including inhalers for asthma and **ALL** non-prescription medication including, but not limited to cough medicine and pain relievers. Medication shall be administered only by employees designated by the principal. Please see the nurse for any questions or to receive the HISD Medication Policy form.

School Organizations and Activities

Hamilton offers a wide variety of organizations and activities for students outside of academics. Some organizations may have academic and/or conduct requirements. UIL-sanctioned activities, athletics, and extracurricular activities are "no pass=no play."

My Schedule

Homeroom _____

1st Period _____

2nd Period _____

3rd Period _____

4th Period _____

5th Period _____

6th Period _____

7th Period _____

8th Period _____

FLEX _____