

**2020-2021 STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK
OAK FOREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

1401 West 43rd Street
Houston, Texas 77018
713-613-2536



Andrew Casler, Principal
Rachel Folse, Assistant Principal
Carrie Botello, Vanguard Coordinator
David Church, Teacher Specialist

Every child, every chance, every day.

Oak Forest Elementary Students Are
EMPOWERed

E ffort

M otivation

P erseverance

O wnership

W isdom

E mpathy

R espect

*Being empowered for success begins
with effort and is founded upon respect.*

Dear Oak Forest Parents and Students,

This handbook is published so that you may have a reference with information about the daily operations of the school. Please read and use this reference throughout the school year. In addition to the handbook, please read the **HISD Code of Student Conduct Handbook**. In our first day forms, we have signature pages for both parents and students that both handbooks' rules and vision will be upheld.

We are very proud of our outstanding teachers, instructional programs, and supportive community. We are ecstatic to have you with us at Oak Forest Elementary and look forward to a wonderful school year!

Sincerely,

Andrew Casler, Principal acasler@houstonisd.org

Rachel Folse, Assistant Principal rfolse@houstonisd.org

(Supervision of grades 4-5, English Language Learners, Testing, and Safety)

Carrie Botello, Vanguard Coordinator cbotell1@houstonisd.org

(Supervision of grades K-1, Gifted and Talented Program, Intervention Assistance Team, and 504 Coordinator)

David Church, Teacher Specialist dchurch@houstonisd.org

(Supervision of grades 2-3, and Special Education Coordinator)

MISSION STATEMENT:

Incorporate habit of mind via Empower awards

As a cooperative body of parents and educators, we will provide a nurturing atmosphere which produces lifelong learners who are prepared academically and socially to make responsible contributions as they strive to reach their maximum potential.

School Mascot: Bobcats

School Colors: Green and White

APPOINTMENTS

We encourage you to schedule your child's doctor and dental appointments around school hours. If this is not possible, you must come to the main office to sign out your child in order for your child to be released. **Your name must appear on the enrollment card.**

Present a picture I.D. If your child is cleared by the doctor/dentist to return the same day to school, present the doctor/dental note upon return. Your child will not be marked absent.

Students will not be checked out from class after 2:30 p.m. as teachers are preparing them for dismissal. If students are checked out for an appointment, a doctor's note must be provided when they return. Students will only be checked out to adults who are listed on the enrollment form. Students that leave campus before dismissal will not be called to wait in the front office before their parent/guardian arrives. This is not only a safety issue but also results in loss of instructional time. If an emergency requires that your child be released to someone else, **you must provide written notice**. Students will not be released to anyone under the age of 18.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS (Subject to Change)

Students should arrive at school no earlier than 7:00 a.m. Students should report to the following rooms:

Kinder-1st: Cafeteria

2nd – 4th: Multi-Purpose Room

5th: Cafeteria Hallway

The first bell will ring at 7:30 a.m. Students are considered tardy at 7:35 a.m. Tardy slips are issued by the front office staff. A conference is required with you if your child has excessive (five) tardies or absences. **Further action may be taken if tardiness or unexcused absences continue after the conference.**

For student safety, students arriving after 7:35 a.m. MUST be walked in and signed into the main office by a parent or guardian.

We understand that events will occur which may require a parent to be late for pick up. Please call the office to inform us of your arrangements. If you are unable to pick up your child/children on time, **please make after-school child care arrangements. SAFETY** is our number one priority. If your student is left after 3:10 p.m., he/she may be sent to After 3 for a fee.

During arrival and dismissal, rain, sleet or snow, please pull ***all the way to the end of the car lane***. This speeds up the flow of traffic. Additionally, for safety reasons, please do not pull around other cars.

Cars exiting on to Oak Forest Drive must make a right onto the street at all times. Students should be let out of their car at the curb in the parking lot. Students should not exit their vehicles on ***43rd Street or on Oak Forest Drive***.

If you need to exit your car to let out your child, please park and walk him/her across the car lane in order to keep you safe and help the flow of traffic moving in the mornings.

The back driveway off of Lamonte is for 2nd – 5th grade students drop off and pickup only. Students in grades K – 1st should be dropped off at the front of the building and picked up by the multipurpose room, even if they have an older sibling. Older siblings will join their younger siblings in the afternoons for dismissal from the multipurpose room or walker line.

ATTENDANCE & TARDIES

Daily attendance is taken by the classroom teacher at the official attendance time of 9:30 a.m. Students who are not in school at 9:30 a.m. are marked absent. **If students attend school for part of the day and leaves for an appointment with a medical professional, they can be considered present if students return with a doctor's note.** Students are expected to attend school on a regular basis. Failure of a student to attend when he or she is able to do so may jeopardize promotion to the next grade. **A written explanation, including dates of absences, should be sent to your child's teacher upon return to school.** Excessive unexcused absences will result in a referral to the district attendance specialist.

Students arriving after 7:35 a.m. **MUST** be walked in and signed into the main office by a parent or guardian.

Family vacations and midyear trips are unexcused. Please plan your family vacations/trips around the 2020-2021 school calendar.

Research shows that loss of more than four days of school could greatly impact social and academic achievement.

BACK PACKS

Rolling backpacks are not permissible as they are a safety hazard. If your child sustains an injury and has a doctor's note and needs a rolling backpack, please contact the assistant principal.

BUS CONDUCT

Specific student behavior expectations are established for the safe and efficient operation of the school district transportation system. Transportation is considered an extension of the regular school program and students who violate behavior expectations while riding a bus are subject to suspension from riding the bus and/or other consequences established for misbehavior while students are on the school premises

CAFETERIA GUIDELINES

In addition to our Core Values, the following cafeteria guidelines are in place:

- ❖ Do not share food due to allergies (known and unknown)
- ❖ Soft drinks are not allowed
- ❖ Go through the lunch line only once
- ❖ Ask permission to leave your seat

Each week two students from each class will be assigned the job of cafeteria monitor. It will be their job to make sure that their tables and the floor under their tables are clean. It is their responsibility to sweep so that the tables are ready for the next class.

If a child makes poor choices in the cafeteria his/her teacher will administer the same consequences that are applicable in the classroom. Poor choices in the cafeteria will be reflected on students' conduct sheets.

CALENDAR

Please refer to the 2020-2021 HISD Academic Calendar for important dates such as holidays and report card dates. Please set up a Living Tree account to ensure you receive valuable school information.

CARPOOL CAR TAGS

All students will receive a carpool tag. Parents must place this tag on the rearview mirror to expedite the carpool process. Students will not be released from the carpool lane or the walker line without a car tag. If you need additional tags, please come to the front office with your ID and we will provide you with another tag.

CORE VALUES

Our goal is to work collaboratively to create an atmosphere conducive for learning through empowering students to embrace our CORE VALUES and utilize them throughout their lifetime. Please refer to the EMPOWER Values at the beginning of the handbook. In using our Core Values, children will demonstrate self-discipline strategies that adhere to the guidelines in the HISD **Code of Student Conduct Handbook**. The handbook contains five levels of misconduct and five levels of appropriate disciplinary responses. Parents should discuss the handbook with their child/children.

The **STUDENT - PARENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT in the Code of Student Conduct Handbook** form needs to be signed and returned so it can be placed in the student's permanent record folder.

DISCIPLINE

Our mission at OFE is to be proactive with discipline through instilling an understanding and desire in our students to exhibit the EMPOWER Values. Campus wide and in the classrooms, we recognize students for their efforts to become better citizens through demonstrating these values through their actions. Using these values at home will strengthen student understanding and incorporation of shared values. Occasionally, when a student makes poor choices our staff has them identify what EMPOWER value they failed to exhibit and how in the future they could use that value to make better choices. If a student continues to make poor choices the following consequences are followed by the classroom teacher:

- Level 1: Class Verbal Reminder**
- Level 2: Nonverbal Cues**
- Level 3: Student Specific Reminder/Modification**
- Level 4: Private Conference**
- Level 5: Time Away (in- or out-of-class)**
- Level 6: Parent Conference**
- Level 7: Administration/referral**

In the event a student has made an extremely poor choice, (violent threat/fighting) staff may send the student directly to the office without carrying out levels 1-6. Threatening to physically harm or kill another student either verbally, written or through actions is a serious violation of the HISD Code of Conduct. Teachers and administration will investigate the intent and seriousness of the violation before deciding on a consequence. All consequences are measured based upon the intent. In grades Kindergarten - second grade, lunch and recess in the office is the first level of consequence for threatening to harm another student. In grades third-fifth the consequence could range up to a suspension.

Students are encouraged to use the following techniques when faced with a problem:

- **Ask the person to stop**
- **Ignore**
- **Walk Away**
- **If the problem continues, ask an adult how to help you solve it.**

We ask that you join us in using the EMPOWER value words at home during your own dialogues about good and bad choices.

DRESS CODE

Please refer to Appendix C.

Free Dress – Occasionally, free dress days will be designated. Any article of clothing that displays alcohol, drug slogans, or other suggestive and inappropriate designs including, but not limited to, those that promote (suggest) violence, or anti-social behavior will not be allowed. If students wear shirts or dresses that are less than two inches in diameter on the sleeve (sundresses and tank tops), then a sweater or jacket should be worn over it. Shoes over one inch in the heel may not be worn.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

Cellular devices (phones, watches, tablets) for students are to be kept in backpacks and turned off during the school's instructional hours (7:30 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.) and while students are on the school's grounds (dismissal, tutorials, after school functions, etc).

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION SHEET

An enrollment information sheet for each student must be on file in the office. If there is a need to contact you during the day, school personnel will use the telephone numbers listed. **If there is a change of address or telephone number during the school year, please notify the school office.** It is very important for the safety of our students that the parent's home, business and emergency numbers are kept current during the school year.

FIELD TRIPS

Each student must return a written field trip permission slip signed by the parent or guardian. **Notes and telephone calls will not be accepted as a form of permission to attend a field trip.** Field trip permission slips are due at least 48 hours before the field trip. **All chaperones must be cleared through the VIPS process at the beginning of the school year.** See the VIPS section. Siblings will not be permitted to attend field trips due to the supervisory responsibility of each chaperone.

As representatives of Oak Forest Elementary, students should exhibit our Core Values on all field trips. Students who continually make poor choices will require a parental chaperone to attend field trips with them to ensure the safety of all students.

FOOD PROGRAM

Breakfast is free for all students and will be served in the classroom. Students may purchase their lunch at school or bring one from home. Those who bring a lunch may purchase milk or an a la carte item. Money may be placed on the lunch card via the internet by accessing the parent online link on the HISD web site at www.houstonisd.org or by paying for the lunch card in the cafeteria on **Monday** mornings for one week, two weeks, etc. Only cash will be accepted in the cafeteria. Students who have forgotten their lunch will be provided a lunch by the cafeteria.

If a parent drops off a lunch for a student, the parent will need to sign in and deliver it to the cafeteria.

FORGOTTEN ITEMS

Occasionally, as students exit their cars in the morning, they realize that they have forgotten an item (backpack, instrument, etc). You may leave those items with the front office and they will be placed in the teacher's box. You will need to email the teacher to let them know the items are in their box. We can not guarantee that the student will receive the item the same day. Please help us foster ownership by making sure students are responsible for their own belongings.

FORMS

The following forms must be on file in the office for your child/children:

- ❖ Enrollment Information/Rainy Day Procedure Sheet
- ❖ Internet & Email User Agreement and Parent Permission
- ❖ Media Release
- ❖ Student Assistance Questionnaire
- ❖ Code of Conduct Signature Page
- ❖ Student/Parent Handbook Signature Page
- ❖ EMPOWER agreement

GRADING AND HOMEWORK

Please refer to Appendix C.

HEALTH

Illnesses and Accidents:

If your child becomes ill or is involved in an accident, school personnel will contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will call the emergency contact name. Please remember, students with fever or a communicable disease cannot remain at school. Students must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Please send a complete change of clothing for all Kindergarten students in the event they need a change of clothing.

Illness

Please keep your child home if he/she has a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained rash, or possible pink eye the night before or the morning of school. Most fevers drop in the morning but will rise again during the day. For this reason, we ask you to keep your child home until he/she has been free of fever for twenty-four hours. If your child has a contagious disease, usually he/she must stay home for at least twenty-four hours on appropriate medication treatment. Please call the school to notify us of your child's illness.

Medication

H.I.S.D. policy reads: "School personnel will not administer medical treatment or medication including over the counter drugs." If your child is on a short-term medication, please schedule the dosage so that the child receives a morning dose and the remaining doses when he/she returns home. Students on a long-term medication will receive the medication only if a physician has stated in writing that the student should have a certain medication during school hours. The official form, which is available from the nurse, must be signed and on file before any long-term medication can be given during the school year. Students that may require an emergency medication such as an inhaler for asthma or and Epi Pen for an allergic reaction are also required to have updated medical paperwork yearly. Please see the nurse for the approved forms.

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Communicating with Teachers:

To ensure there is maximum instructional time, OFE maintains a no interruptions policy within each classroom. We encourage consistent communication with parents and staff. Whenever possible, please use email to communicate with your child's teacher. Each teacher has several planning times throughout the week for parent-teacher conferences if you would like to meet in

person with staff. Parents that come in and request to be allowed to speak with their child's teacher without a scheduled conference will have a message sent to the teacher so that he/she may telephone them to schedule a conference.

Changes to your child's dismissal plan should be made in advance and submitted to the classroom teacher in writing. In case of a last-minute change due to an emergency, please notify the main office.

LIBRARY

Books may be checked out and taken home to read or study. **Students must be responsible for the care of the books.** A fee will be charged for lost and/or damaged books. Parents may check out up to five books for their child.

LIVING TREE & THE HUB

The Living Tree site is a parent information site about what is going on in classrooms, the school and district. It permits photos of students who have a signed media release. Posts are submitted by administrators, teachers, PTA board and occasionally, teachers will give their homeroom parent administrative access to their accounts to assist with classroom posts. The HUB is a student platform for students and parents to access curriculum and assignments. Students can send their teachers messages. If you have specific questions about assignments, or anything please send them to your teacher's HISD email account.

It is our policy that parents are not creating posts or sending comments on either platform so they remain functional for the school. Failure to follow this policy can lead to removal from the platforms. Thank you for understanding and upholding the vision of the school.

LOST AND FOUND

The "Lost and Found" area is in the back atrium. **Please label all items with your child's first and last name.** Students should keep valuable items at home. The school is not responsible for lost or broken items. In December, March, and June of each year, all unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity.

PEDESTRIAN REGULATIONS

HISD places a crossing guard at the corner of Oak Forest Street and 43rd Street and at LaMonte and Oak Forest from 6:45 a.m. - 7:45 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. to supervise our students. Children must cross at one of the supervised areas. **No child will be allowed to cross the street in the middle of the block. Please model pedestrian laws to all of our children.**

RECESS

Oak Forest students will participate in physical activity for approximately thirty minutes daily. Physical Education, Yoga and Music are all classes that include physical activity and are included toward the state required 135 minutes a week of physical activity. At the teacher's discretion, if the 135 minutes are going to be met that week, recess may not be held on days that include one of the three classes mentioned, or if the school has an extracurricular event (performance, Fun Run, etc.).

TELEPHONE USE

The school telephone is a business telephone. Students may use the telephone in emergency situations only. The student must have a pass from the teacher and the office staff must give permission for the use of the phone.

TEXTBOOKS

Students will be issued textbooks. Students should carefully check each book. If damaged pages are found, the student should report the information to the teacher. Students are responsible for the care of the books. If the book is lost, the student **must** pay the cost for replacement.

VOLUNTEERING/VISITING THE SCHOOL

We encourage parents and the community to visit our school. Please contact the office if you are interested in becoming a volunteer. Your time and interest will make a difference in our students. **When you are visiting the school, you must show a valid ID and sign in at the office and wear the visitor's pass that will be given to you. This policy includes HISD employees who are parents.** Please give your badge to the receptionist upon leaving the building. We appreciate you following this policy for the protection and safety of all of the students at Oak Forest.

All volunteers must register for the Volunteer in Public Schools (VIPS) Program and pass a background check at the beginning of each year. This is a three-step process. First, you will need to register at www.houstonisd.org under the VIPs link. Secondly, you must present a valid picture ID to the clerk in the main office to finalize the process. Thirdly, you will need to call the clerk to ensure the VIPS information was finalized.

Our VIPS program serves to keep our students safe in two ways. The first is that all chaperones for field trips must be VIPS registered. **You will not be allowed to attend field trips as a chaperone if you do not have a VIPS clearance. Background checks may require up to four weeks for clearance. If you plan to attend field trips, please register promptly. This process must be completed at the onset of each year.**

The second purpose for our VIPS programs is to ensure our volunteers in the classroom have passed a background check. If you plan to volunteer for our staff consistently (three or more times) you will need to be VIPS registered.

When visiting the school, remember to always sign into the main office and always wear your visitor's pass. It is imperative that you let the main office know where you will be visiting. As a safety precaution, we must know where all visitors are. Parents who violate or visitation rules will be asked to meet with administration.

APPENDIX A

Virtual Learning

ATTENDANCE

The district wide attendance policy is that attendance will be posted at 2:30 p.m. If your child completes the day's assignment before midnight that day, the absence will be removed. It is our hope that your child will be available between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. for whole and small group instruction, and then after 12:30 p.m. if they have an ancillary class scheduled. We know that during virtual learning this is not always feasible, so communicating that to your teacher at the onset of learning or if there is a change in the home will limit attempts to contact you during those times.

COMMUNICATION

Please contact your teacher and any other staff member by using their HISD email. If you prefer to set up a return virtual or telephone call, please let that staff member know in your email. All email address may be found on our webpage link

<https://www.houstonisd.org/oakforestes>

GRADING

During virtual and hybrid learning the following grading guidelines will be in effect.

All subject areas will be based on one grade per week.

The following is a guideline for what specific grades reflect in terms of student ability:

A- to A+	90-100	Student has a firm grasp of the concepts that were taught in that subject.
B- to B+	80-90	The student has the ability to show mastery for the majority of the required concepts taught in that subject. Additional practice may still be needed for certain skills to be retained.
C- to C+	75-79	The student has the ability to show mastery for at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the required concepts taught in that subject. Re-teaching of multiple skills is most likely still needed.
D- to D+	70-74	The student is still struggling with a significant amount of concepts. Re-teaching of multiple skills is still needed.
F	Below 70	The student is unable to master required concepts taught in that subject. Student is in need of targeted intervention to support learning of these skills.
	61	Assignment turned in but minimal effort put forth
	60	No assignment turned in

Late work and Second Submissions: The highest grade students may receive after resubmission is a 70. For example, if your original assignment was a 61 and your resubmission was an 100 you would not receive the average of these, 80.5, but a 70 due to it being a resubmission. Another example would be if you had a 61 on an original assignment and a 75 on the resubmission you would not receive a 68 but instead a 70 due to demonstration of understanding of the required subject. The intent of the grade is to how demonstration of knowledge.

Progress Reports - Progress reports are sent home the fourth week of each six week reporting period. Please utilize these reports to discuss your child's academic strengths and weaknesses with them and create learning goals for areas that need remediation.

Homework

There will be no homework.

Guidelines:

- ❖ Students may make up assignments missed due to excused absences.
- ❖ Teachers are not expected to provide assignments in advance for absences of any type.

The Teachers' Role

- ❖ Communicate classroom policies and procedures to students and parents in September.
- ❖ Communicate due dates and directions for completing each assignment to students.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for students to ask questions and receive clarification of expectations when the assignment is given.
- ❖ Review and provide feedback to students. This feedback may include self-evaluation and/or tracking of progress, peer feedback, or teacher comments.

The Students' Role

- ❖ Make sure you understand the work when the teacher assigns it.
- ❖ Ask for help when needed.
- ❖ Complete the assigned work neatly and hand in assignments on time.
- ❖ Review work with parents if feasible.

The Parents' Role

To help children be successful with work at home, parents should:

- ❖ Create a place that supports studying. Most children do best in quiet, well-lit environments.
- ❖ Set aside a specific time to do work each day. Family routines have been linked to higher achievement.
- ❖ Make sure children have the supplies they need to complete assignments.
- ❖ Let teachers know if assignments are too difficult or unclear.
- ❖ Monitor assignment completion through the use of student planners or Parent Student Connect.

Uniform:

For the 2020-2021 school year the district has waived the uniform policy. If your child is not going to wear a uniform either during virtual or in person school, please adhere to the free dress day policy.

- Clothing must include either a dress or shirt and bottoms (skirt, shorts, pants or jeans).
- Any article of clothing that displays alcohol, drug slogans, or other suggestive and inappropriate designs including, but not limited to, those that promote (suggest) violence, or anti-social behavior will not be allowed.
- Shirts or dresses that are less than two inches in diameter on the sleeve (sundresses and tank tops), should be worn with a sweater or jacket.
- Shoes over one inch in the heel may not be worn.
- Leggings are not a stand alone clothing item. They must be worn under skirts, shorts or shirts that reach the mid-thigh.
- Pajamas are fun but may only be worn to class on teacher specified fun days.

APPENDIX B

Dress Code

It is our belief that the Uniform/Dress Code Policy helps to maintain a positive learning climate, where distractions are minimized and appropriate focus on learning is maintained. For the 2020-2021 school year the district has waived the uniform policy. If your child is not going to wear a uniform either during virtual or in person school, please adhere to the free dress day policy.

Free Dress:

- Any article of clothing that displays alcohol, drug slogans, or other suggestive and inappropriate designs including, but not limited to, those that promote (suggest) violence, or anti-social behavior will not be allowed.
- Shirts or dresses that are less than two inches in diameter on the sleeve (sundresses and tank tops), should be worn with a sweater or jacket.
- Shoes over one inch in the heel may not be worn.
- Leggings are not a stand alone clothing item. They must be worn under skirts, shorts or shirts that reach the mid-thigh.

Uniforms:

- Shirt - white uniform blouse, oxford, polo in navy, hunter green, or white
- Jumper/Dress - khaki or navy
- Skirt - khaki or navy
- Shorts - khaki or navy, uniform style (must be mid-thigh or longer)
- Slacks - khaki or navy
- Socks or tights
- Tennis shoes or other closed toe shoes that are safe for the playground and P.E.
- Leggings are not a stand-alone item. They may be worn under skirts or shorts.

Spirit Days, Field Trips, & More

- All grade levels order t-shirts to be worn on all field trips.
- Spirit shirts (college or sports) or Oak Forest spirit shirts may be worn on Wednesdays and Fridays with jeans.
- Students are permitted to have a sweatshirt or jacket at school in case a particular area of the school is cold.

APPENDIX C

GRADING AND HOMEWORK GUIDELINES FOR ENTIRE SCHOOL IN PERSON SESSION

Grading

At Oak Forest Elementary we believe that the primary purpose for grades is to provide information and feedback to students and parents. Furthermore, grades should accurately reflect the student's ability to master the grade level standards. Teachers assess student learning in a variety of ways. Grades are based on multiple measures over time such as daily assignments, tests, projects, reports, teacher observation, and participation.

The following is a guideline for what specific grades reflect in terms of student ability:

A- to A+	90-100	Student has a firm grasp of the concepts that were taught in that subject.
B- to B+	80-90	The student has the ability to show mastery for the majority of the required concepts taught in that subject. Additional practice may still be needed for certain skills to be retained.
C- to C+	75-79	The student has the ability to show mastery for at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the required concepts taught in that subject. Re-teaching of multiple skills is most likely still needed.
D- to D+	70-74	The student is still struggling with a significant amount of concepts. Re-teaching of multiple skills is still needed.
F	Below 70	The student is unable to master required concepts taught in that subject. Student is need of targeted intervention to support learning of these skills.

Progress Reports - Progress reports are sent home the **fourth week of each six** week reporting period. Please utilize these reports to discuss your child's academic strengths and weaknesses with them and create learning goals for areas that need remediation.

Homework

There are three types of homework, extension of skill based practice, interventions and reflection activities of weekly learning.

Purpose of Homework:

- ❖ Develop initiative, responsibility, and organizational skills.
- ❖ Extend learning and provide practice in applying concepts and methods that teachers have presented in the classroom.
- ❖ Strengthen concept attainment and skill development and students' time to reflect learning.
- ❖ Strengthen student/parent academic conversations with the parent as a valuable resource for students to synthesis what they are learning at school with their home lives.

Guidelines:

- ❖ In all grades, homework may be given Monday through Thursday. It is up to the teacher's discretion on when the homework is due, whether the next day or at the end of the week.
- ❖ Students may make up assignments missed due to excused absences.
- ❖ Teachers are not expected to provide assignments in advance for absences of any type.
- ❖ **Required homework** will not be assigned the night before a standardized test, over the weekends or during breaks and holidays.
- ❖ Homework is used as a communication tool of what is being learned in the classroom. Toward that end, teachers will communicate with parents through websites, email, newsletters, or home folders.
- ❖ When appropriate, a second opportunity to complete homework will be offered during lunchtime homework lab, or during the first ten minutes of recess if applicable.

Homework will not be a significant factor in determining academic grades. In most cases, homework completion will be included on the learning skills section of the report card and as a small percentage of grading.

Time Allotments:

Homework times are flexible and up to the discretion of the individual teacher. Below are the times, on average, that students should spend on homework each night:

- ❖ Grades K: up to 10 minutes academic/extension activities + independent reading 10 minutes
- ❖ Grades 1-2: up to 20 minutes academic/extension activities + independent reading 10 minutes
- ❖ Grades 3-5: up to 20 minutes academic/extension activities academic/extension activities + independent reading 20 minutes

*If a student has worked constructively for the suggested time frames, but the assignment is not complete, or the child is frustrated, parents are encouraged to write a note to the teacher stating this to address his/her needs.

The Teachers' Role

- ❖ Communicate classroom policies and procedures to students and parents in September.
- ❖ Communicate due dates and directions for completing each homework assignment to students.
- ❖ Provide homework assignments that are directly related to instructional objectives and consider the differences among students so that it can be completed independently.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for students to ask questions and receive clarification of expectations when the assignment is given.
- ❖ Review and provide feedback to students. This feedback may include self-evaluation and/or tracking of progress, peer feedback, or teacher comments.

The Students' Role

- ❖ Make sure you understand the work when the teacher assigns it.
- ❖ Ask for help when needed.
- ❖ Complete the assigned work neatly and hand in assignments on time.
- ❖ Review work with parents if possible.

The Parents' Role

To help children be successful with work at home, parents should:

- ❖ Create a place that supports studying. Most children do best in quiet, well-lit environments.
- ❖ Set aside a specific time to do homework each day. Family routines, including set homework times, have been linked to higher achievement.
- ❖ Make sure children have the supplies they need to complete assignments.
- ❖ Be available if children have questions. Parents can support their children by looking over homework and giving suggestions, but should not do the homework for them.
- ❖ Let teachers know if homework assignments are too difficult or unclear.
- ❖ Monitor assignment completion through the use of student planners or Parent Student Connect.

APPENDIX D

OFE's EMPOWERMENT

We are EMPOWERed through these core values...

E ffort
M otivation
P erseverance
O wnership
W isdom
E mpathy
R espect



Being empowered for success begins with effort and is founded upon respect

Philosophy: To become a well-rounded student, a foundation of morals and values must be put in place. Our campus goal is to focus on developing students academically and behaviorally to become a foundation of a well-rounded citizen. These values above were created in such to support them throughout Oak Forest and life. Our Empower values were developed base on our campus' needs and goals. Within this book, our goal is to develop a deeper understanding of what those goals are and how to exemplify them across campus. When using our Core Values, children will learn self-discipline strategies that adhere to the guidelines in the HISD Code of Student Conduct Handbook. After reading about our empower values and you find that you have questions, please see your student's teacher.

Stay Empowered Bobcats

How does one show that they are
EMPOWERed?

Effort

Definition: A serious attempt to learn assignments, complete work, take risks, problem solve and engage in learning.

Statement: My reading and research efforts resulted in a creative Genius Hour project.

Pre-K – 2 Examples		3-5 Examples
Practice reading and testing on High Frequency Words	Learn assignments/complete work	Study and test on vocabulary
Conduct research and present Genius Hour project (group)	Take risks	Conduct research and present Genius Hour project (individual)
Preteach problem solving strategies in whole group setting	Problem solving	Student chooses appropriate problem solving strategy and applies the strategy
Actively engaged while listening to a story	Engage in learning	Revealing answers and applying knowledge in creative projects

Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment, full effort is full victory.

Mahatma Gandhi

Teachers	Students
Excited to teach subject	Eager to learn and set academic goals
Creates a learning environment that fosters independent learning and risk-taking	Willing to take risks
Foster creativity and curiosity	Excited to learn and collaborate with others
Create a threat-free environment	

Motivation

Definition: to be eager and excited to do one's best

Statement: Teachers work to keep students motivated and eager to come to class and get excited to learn new things. They set challenging goals for themselves and work

hard to reach these goals. Their excitement for learning helps keep friends motivated as well.

Examples: A kindergartener feels excited to read and explore literature at home and at school.

A first grader reads at home every night to improve his reading level. After two months, he has gone up 3 levels.

A third grader still does not know her multiplication tables. Every day she practices flash cards for 10 minutes in class with a partner and for 10 minutes at home with her father. In one month she has improved her timed assessment from 3 minutes to 1 minute 35 seconds.

A fifth grader is assigned a research paper. She selects a topic that she knows will interest her. Each day she spends some time in class and at home reading and taking notes on her topic. She becomes an expert on her subject and even confers with two other students who had picked the same topic, but have struggled to find good sources. She is excited to share her final product with her classmates

Quote: "I am a motivated learner. I am excited to learn new things. I set goals for myself and work to reach them."

What it would look like for teachers and students

Teachers	Students
Excited to teach subject	Eager to learn and set academic goals
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Perseverance

Definition: Perseverance is what we show when we focus ourselves and don't give up so that we can succeed when we find something challenging.

Statements: When I have a math problem that I don't understand, I don't give up. I ask for help so that I can solve the problem.

Even though I'm not sure if I can complete the task that the teacher has given me, I try my best to understand and complete it.

It's tryouts for your favorite sport, and you're trying to prove yourself and make the team. You've been practicing for hours, and you're tired. You start to wonder if you can really do it. You think it would be easier just to quit, but you don't. That's perseverance.

Examples: Learning how to ride a bike is one of the first things you learn with perseverance. It was difficult for you, and you might have fallen down, but you kept trying and believed in yourself until you persevered and finally rode that bike. Now you're a pro at it!

Quote:

Perseverance is failing 19 times and succeeding the 20th.

-Julie Andrews

If you can't fly, then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk, then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward.

-Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ownership

Definition: The act, state, or right of possessing something:

Statement: 'the ownership of land'

Examples: 'the rise in car ownership'

taking responsibility for your actions

"I am in control of my actions."

"I own my choices."

Wisdom

Definition: The quality of having experience, knowledge, and good judgement; the quality of being wise:

Statement: Think before you act.

Examples: Make wise choices.

Work smarter, not harder.

Know when and "whoo" to ask for help.

Quotes: "All men make mistakes, but only WISE men learn from their mistakes." – Winston Churchill

Empathy

Definition: The feeling that you understand and share another person's experiences and emotions : the ability to share someone else's feelings.

Statements: Empathy is defined as the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. But it's not enough to understand, we have to act. Understanding happens in the mind. Action happens in the body. Feeling empathy is necessary, but it is not sufficient. It must be perceptible. We must express it, perform it. To embody empathy is to quite literally give our body to it. To allow it to fill us completely.

Examples: When someone is crying because they have been called a name, I can tell them I am sorry and I know how that hurts.

Quote:

Yet, taught by time, my heart has learned to glow for other's good, and melt at other's woe.

Homer

Remember that everyone you meet is afraid of something, loves something and has lost something.

H. Jackson Brown

For Teachers	For Students
<ul style="list-style-type: none">We as educators must fulfill this need in our students in order for them to feel safe and EMPOWERED in the school setting. <i>The implication is that our student's emotional health requires socially positioning ourselves within a community of empathy.</i>	Our students seek a connection with someone who is going to lend them an empathic ear, someone who is able to listen to them and endeavor to understand their fears, anxieties and uncertainties.

Empathy is

Seeing with the eyes of another
Listening with the ears of another
Feeling with the heart of another

no one heals
themselves
by wounding
another.

Respect

Definition: When you care enough about others feelings before you act.

Statements of respect:

Respect Pledge: I pledge to show respect to every person in my class and school so that all students at Oak Forest have the best opportunity to learn. Respect. It starts with you. If not, you then who?

Examples of respect at school:

PreK-2nd:

I will not run in the halls. I will use an inside voice.

I will use manners while eating and keep the cafeteria clean so teachers do not have to pick up after me.

I will include all friends to play at recess or on the playground so no one is left out.

I will not call people names because I respect their feelings.

I will not laugh at others when they make mistakes because I respect others.

3rd -5th:

I will keep my hands, feet, and other objects to myself that might otherwise hurt people to show respect for others' well-being.

I will come to class prepared, on time and ready to learn to show respect for my teachers.

I will complete my homework and classroom assignments.

I will be quiet in the library to show that I respect others' need to read without interruption.

I will not interfere with other peoples' right to look, think, or act differently than me because respect means caring about others.

Other examples of respect:

You follow your parents' rules to show them you care (respect) how they feel about the situation.

I admire (respect) a historical figure who stood up for what they believed in, even when it was hard.

I dress, speak, and act in a way that shows I care about what I know is right and safe, because I care about (respect) myself and my well-being.

Quotes:

"Respect for ourselves guides our morals, respect for others guides our manners."

Laurence Sterne

"Every human being, of whatever origin, of whatever station, deserves respect. We must each respect others even as we respect ourselves." **U Thant**

What it look like for teachers and students:

For Teachers	For Students
*Don't give up on students; expect and encourage excellence for ALL *Maintain classroom management; use proper tone of voice * Provide meaningful lessons; differentiate instructions	* Be kind to others *Do not destroy or take property that belongs to others. * Follow classroom rules.

How do you show that you are **EMPOWERed**?

I show **EFFORT**, I do my best and more!

I have **MOTIVATION**, I am eager to learn!

I will **PERSEVERE**, I keep going!

I take **OWNERSHIP** for my actions, I must have self-control!

I use my **WISDOM** to make good choices, I think before I act!

I show **EMPATHY**, I care about my world!

I **RESPECT** myself and others with my words and actions!

x

Empower Philosophy

Our goal is to work collaboratively to create an atmosphere conducive for learning through empowering students to embrace our core values and utilize them throughout their lifetime. Our mission at OFE is to be proactive with discipline through instilling an

understanding and desire in our students to exhibit the EMPOWER values. Campus wide and in the classrooms we recognize students for their efforts to become better citizens through demonstrating these values through their actions. When a student makes good choices, our staff uses the Empower values to exhibit what the student excelled in. If a student made a bad choice, the teacher would show the student how in the future they could use a core value to make better choices.

If a student makes poor choices, the following consequences are followed by the classroom **Teacher**:

- Level 1: Class Verbal Reminder
- Level 2: Nonverbal Cues
- Level 3: Student Specific Reminder/Modification
- Level 4: Private Conference
- Level 5: Time Away (in- or out-of-class)
- Level 6: Parent Conference
- Level 7: Administration/referral

In the event a student has made an extremely poor choice, (violent threat/fighting) staff may send the student directly to the office.

Threatening to physically harm or kill another student either verbally, written or through actions are serious violations of the HISD Code of Conduct. Teachers and administration will investigate the intent and seriousness of the violation before deciding on a consequence. All consequences are measured based upon the intent. In grades prekindergarten-second grade, lunch and recess in the office is the first level of consequence for threatening to harm another student. In grades third-fifth the consequence could range up to a suspension.

We encourage you to join us in using the EMPOWER value words at home during your own dialogues about good and bad choices.

BUS CONDUCT

Specific student behavior expectations are established for the safe and efficient operation of the school district transportation system. Transportation is considered an extension of the regular school program and students who violate behavior expectations while riding a bus are subject to suspension from riding the bus and/or other penalties established for misbehavior while students are on the school premises. A bus behavior report will be provided to administration. The parent will be notified immediately.

CAFETERIA GUIDELINES

In addition to our Core Values, the following cafeteria guidelines are in place:

- ❖ Do not share food due to allergies
- ❖ Soft drinks are not allowed
- ❖ Go through the lunch line only once
- ❖ Ask permission to leave your seat

If a child makes poor choices in the cafeteria his/her teacher will administer the same consequences that are applicable in the classroom. Poor choices in the cafeteria will be reflected in the student's conduct sheets.

RECESS

Oak Forest students will participate in physical activity for approximately thirty minutes daily. Physical Education, Yoga and Music are all classes that include physical activity and are included toward the state requirement of 135 minutes a week of physical activity. At the teacher's discretion, if the 135 minutes are going to be met that week, recess may not be held on days that include one of the three classes mentioned or if the school has an extracurricular event (performance, Fun Run, etc.).

Role of School Stakeholders

Who is responsible for supporting students with the empower values? Administration, Teachers, staff, parents and students.

APPENDIX E

The Oak Forest Student/Parent Handbook has been written to help your child gain the greatest possible benefit from his or her school experience.

It is important that every student understands the Student/Parent Handbook guidelines. **Please read and discuss the handbook with your child.** Signatures of parents and the student acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Oak Forest Student Parent Handbook and certify that they have read, discussed and will uphold our policies and procedures..

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent or Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Parent or Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Grade _____ Homeroom _____