



Student Handbook

Houston Independent School District

2010 – 2011

Challenge Early College Collaborative Partners

- Houston Independent School District
- Houston Community College System
- Houston A+ Challenge
- Middle College Early College Consortium
- Foundation Community
- Texas Education Agency
- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Texas High School Project

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HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Board of Education is the official policy-making body of the Houston Independent School District. The nine trustees, elected from separate districts, serve staggered four-year terms. The board holds public meetings at 5:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month. The meetings are held in the HISD Board Auditorium, 4400 West 18th Street. Printed Agendas are available from the Board Services office and the HISD Information Center, both located at 4400 West 18th Street. Agenda summaries are available online. Members of the public may speak about items on the agenda of any meeting before the board votes on those items. There is also a "citizens' forum" during each regular meeting at which individuals may voice concerns and request information about proposed board actions.

A Declaration of Beliefs and Visions: The 1990 Board of Education produced "A Declaration of Beliefs and Visions," which launched a district wide movement to improve scholastic performance. The basic tenet of that document is HISD's commitment to focusing all of its resources on students and schools. To achieve that end, the school system is progressively decentralizing administrative authority and establishing critical decision-making and accountability at the campus level. In May 2001, the board approved an addendum reaffirming the philosophy and vision stated in the "Declaration" and proclaiming HISD's continued pursuit of the goals and ideals set forth in 1990.

2010 Board of Education

Terry B. Grier, HISD Superintendent of Schools

District I	Anna Eastman, Asst. Secretary	District VI	Greg Meyers, President
District II	Carol Mims Galloway, Secretary	District VII	Harvin C. Moore, Trustee
District III	Manuel Rodriguez Jr., Trustee	District VIII	Diana Dávila, Second Vice President
District IV	Paula M. Harris, First Vice President	District IX	Lawrence Marshall, Trustee
District V	Michael L. Lunceford, Trustee		

HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees envision the Houston Community College System as the educational institution of choice for those who seek skilled training for the workforce, those who seek to upgrade their skills to enhance preparedness for economic opportunity, and those who seek lifelong seamless educational opportunities to enhance their quality of life. The Board views HCCS as an integral part of the economic and educational life of the community. Through quality partnerships and its responsiveness to community needs, HCCS provides a vital service. Known for its quality and competency and its commitment to an open environment that fosters trust and confidence, HCCS provides opportunities to an ever-expanding body of students.

Trustees

Bruce A. Austin	Mary Ann Perez
Yolanda Navarro Flores	Neeta Sane
Eva Loredo	Richard M. Schechter
Sandie Meyers	Dr. Michael P. Williams
Christopher W. Oliver	

SCHOOL CONTACTS

The Challenge Faculty and Staff can be reached through the office phone system at 713-664-9712 or at the following email addresses:

Challenge Early College High School Faculty

Connie	Alfaro	Campus Coordinator	calfaro@houstonisd.org
Monique	Billings	Guidance	mbillin1@houstonisd.org
David	Brown	English	dbrown6@houstonisd.org
Beverly	Buchanan	Attendance Clerk	bbuchana@houstonisd.org
Charles	Burrus	Mathematics	cburrus@houstonisd.org
Dolly Ann	Covington	Dean of Students	dcovingt@houstonisd.org
Paul	Cross	Theatre Arts / Advisory Leadership	pcross@houstonisd.org
Omar	Elizondo	Social Studies	oelizond@houstonisd.org
Justin G.	Fuentes	Principal	jfuentes@houstonisd.org
Gastonia (Terri)	Goodman	Dean of Students	ggoodman@houstonisd.org
Fran	Guilfoyle	English	fguilfoy@houstonisd.org
Jana	Harker	Health/CTE	jharker@houstonisd.org
Ines	Hernandez	Secretary, Student Success Center	ihernand@houstonisd.org
Yvette	Johnson (Moss)	Secretary, Dean of Students	yjohnso6@houstonisd.org
Kirk	Jopowicz	Social Studies	
Bonnie	King	Mathematics	bking1@houstonisd.org
Ericka	Lawson	Science	elawson2@houstonisd.org
Matthew	Martinez	English	mmarti20@houstonisd.org
Kanavis	McGhee	CTE	kmcghee@houstonisd.org
Alexander	Mironitchev	Mathematics	amironit@houstonisd.org
Warren	Morales	Mathematics	wmorales@houstonisd.org
Bernie	Ostroff	Study Hall	bostroff@houstonisd.org
Savitri	Ramkissoon	Science	sramkiss@houstonisd.org
Rachel	Reedy	Social Worker	rreedy@houstonisd.org
Mary	Selvas	English	mselvas@houstonisd.org
Joshua	Silberman	Life Fitness/Advisory Leadership	jsilberm@houstonisd.org
SuzAnne	Sisak	Science	ssisak@houstonisd.org
Dulce Christina	Slack	Foreign Language	dsack1@houstonisd.org
Joni	Straker	Secretary, Dean of Students / Student Information Representative	jstraker@houstonisd.org
Patty	Syzdek	School Secretary	psyzdek@houstonisd.org
Frank	Valle	Foreign Language	fvalle@houstonisd.org
Alma	Webber	College Access Coordinator / Registrar	awebber@houstonisd.org
TBA	TBA	Special Education / Instruction Coordinator	

THE CHALLENGE EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL (CECHS) MISSION STATEMENT

To graduate confident, ethically responsible, lifelong learners who are prepared to succeed in higher education and be productive citizens in our world.

THE CHALLENGE SCHOOL STRUCTURE

“Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships”

CECHS students function in a college environment and will be guided by adult advocates to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning through work and life tools acquired in Advisory, Student Leadership, and Guidance classes. The high school curriculum is designed with a level of rigor that better prepares students for a successful college career.

A high-quality education at Challenge Early College is founded on relationships. One of the major strengths of this school is its size. We personalize each student’s education by supporting the development of meaningful, sustained relationships among teachers and students. In study after study of successful small high schools, students compare their school to a family rather than a factory and link their academic achievement to their caring relationships with teachers. Like many successful small schools, CECHS has smaller classes for students and reduced pupil loads for teachers, so that the young people and the adults in the school are well known to each other.

The Early College Model

An early college provides high school-age students a “seamless” pathway from high school to college. Housed on the HCCS campus, with articulated sharing of space and staff, CECHS allows the high school student to gradually integrate into college course work through his or her traditional high school degree plan. This integration requires dual enrollment, with the student having to show mastery of the knowledge and skills necessary for success (Compass or another HCCS designated requisite test). Upon successful completion of the HISD requirements for graduation, the students may elect to leave CECHS for higher education or they may choose to withhold some of these requirements and remain for an additional year to complete their Associate’s Degree. During this additional year, the student will primarily be enrolled in college credit courses, and given individualized support provided by CECHS. Students who graduate from CECHS will potentially have not only a Texas Scholar diploma, but also accumulated approximately 61 college credits, transferable to the post-secondary Texas institution of their choice. In both instances, CECHS will provide strong support to each student and the family in obtaining entrance to, and success in, higher education.

The Challenge Schedule

Our A, B, and C block schedule allows teachers to pace lessons according to student needs. On A and B days, students see four content teachers per day. On Fridays, students will participate in “C” Schedule which is a rotation of either A or B day classes followed by one “Interest Class” selected by the student. Interest classes cover a wide range of topics and last for an entire semester. On C schedule students are released to go home after lunch and should leave campus as soon as possible. Teachers and staff are in meetings the remainder of the day.

CHALLENGE EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL 2010-2011 WEEKLY SCHEDULE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday		Friday
A/B Schedule Time	A1	B1	A2	B2	C Schedule Time	A or B Flip
8:00-9:25	1	5	1	5	8:00-8:55	1st or 5th
					9:00-9:55	2nd or 6th
9:30-10:55	2	6	2	6	10:00-10:55	3rd or 7th
					11:00-11:55	4th or 8th
		Advisory	Common Lunch		12:00-1:00	Interest Class
		11:00-11:40	From		1:00-1:30	Lunch
			11:40-12:25			
12:30-1:55	3	7	3	7	1:30-3:30	Staff Meeting
2:00-3:25	4	8	4	8		
3:30-4:30	Tutorials	Tutorials	Tutorials	Tutorials		

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

GRADING

Criteria for Grading High School Academic Subjects

- 90-100** **A** Excellent quality of work through mastery of subject
- 80-89** **B** Good quality of work – above average with consistent effort
- 75-79** **C** Satisfactory quality of work – average achievement
- 70-74** **D** Below quality of work expected – below average achievement
- Below 70** **F** Unsatisfactory quality of work – poor work, failing

Criteria for Grading Citizenship Traits

- E** Excellent quality of behavior - totally self-disciplined
- S** Satisfactory quality of behavior - cooperates readily
- P** Poor quality of behavior - below average
- U** Unsatisfactory quality of behavior - needs drastic improvement

College Grading System

If a student receives the following letter grade in a college class, it will translate to the following numerical grade on their high school report card and transcript. The college reports grades only at the end of the semester. No Progress Reports or nine-week grades are given in college classes.

- A = 95** **D = 72**
- B = 85** **F = 60**
- C = 77** **W = 50**

High School Grade Point Calculation

Grade Point Average (GPA) at Challenge is based on all courses completed. Grade points are assigned to each semester grade according to the following HISD point system.

Grades in classes not designated AP or Pre-AP, including dual credit courses, are calculated using the following grade scale:

A = 4 points, B = 3 points, C = 2 points, D = 1 point, F = 0 points

Grades in AP courses and Pre-AP classes are given extra weight:

A = 5 points, B = 4 points, C = 3 points, D = 2 Points, F = 0 Points

The number of grade points earned is divided by the total number of grades to determine a grade point average (GPA). All courses are counted to determine the number of grades averaged including any in which the student may have earned an "F" or a "W".

Grading Periods

Each semester is divided into two nine-week grading periods. A semester average is calculated by weighting each nine-week grade as 40% and a final exam grade as 20% for the semester. If credit for the semester is not earned by obtaining a 70 or above in courses required for graduation, the student must repeat the semester.

School-wide **Progress Reports** will be sent home with each student during the fourth and seventh weeks of each nine-week grading cycle. **Report cards** will be sent home as indicated in the following table.

Report Card Schedule

Semester	Nine-Week Cycle	Dates	Report Cards Issued
1	1 st	08/23/10 – 10/15/10	11/22/10
	2 nd	10/18/10 – 12/17/10	01/07/11
2	3 rd	01/04/11 – 03/11/11	03/25/11
	4 th	03/21/11 – 06/02/11	06/08/11

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Both students and parents have the responsibility of selecting the proper courses needed to fulfill future goals; however, the student's teachers, dean, and principal will be available to offer any assistance needed in planning a student's future. To receive a diploma from an HISD high school, a student must have met the credit requirements of the district and passed the state's exit level test prior to graduation.

Students at Challenge Early College are expected to complete a coherent sequence of courses. The HISD Recommended High School Program will be used as the minimum expectation for graduation from Challenge. Expectations are for all students to receive a distinguished achievement diploma.

Senior Surveys

As a part of CECHS senior check-out, each senior MUST complete two senior surveys provided by the College Access Coordinator and the Guidance teachers.

Senior Exhibition

The focus of the Senior Exhibition is to engage each senior in a personalized learning experience. It allows each senior an opportunity to demonstrate interdisciplinary skills and knowledge while investigating a specialized area of interest with the assistance of a mentor and a faculty facilitator. Each senior will create a product, create an exhibition binder based on the learning, and make an oral presentation in addition to completing all the assignments and activities of the class. Completion of the senior exhibition is considered a graduation requirement for Challenge ECHS.

The intention of senior exhibition is to allow graduating seniors the opportunity to demonstrate their skills as independent learners. In the place of final exams in your Leadership class, the Exhibition will be evidence of the student's ability to solve problems, to organize their time and resources, to communicate effectively and to reflect on themselves as a learner. A student should select an exhibition of sufficient interest to keep engaged in the project for the entire year.

The Distinguished Achievement and Recommended High School Program follow:

English Language Arts for Distinguished and Recommended: Four credits must consist of:

- English I, II, III, and IV
- A fifth English Language Arts Elective Credit is required for graduation

Speech for Distinguished and Recommended: One-half credit chosen from either:

- Communication Applications
- Speech Communication
- Public Speaking
- Debate
- Oral Interpretation

Mathematics: Four credits must consist of:

- **Recommended:** Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and Independent Study (AMDM)
- **Distinguished:** Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and Pre-Calculus

Note: A Math Track is based on the student's ability, grades, need, and desire.

Science for Distinguished and Recommended: Four credits chosen from four areas (no more than one credit may be chosen from each of the four areas):

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|---|
| • Biology | OR | IPC (if IPC was taken in middle school) |
| • Chemistry | | Biology |
| • Physics | | Chemistry |
| • Dual Credit Science (HCC) | | Physics |

Social Studies for Distinguished and Recommended: Four credits must consist of:

- World History Studies (one credit)
- World Geography Studies (one credit)
- U.S. History Since Reconstruction (one credit)
- U.S. Government (one-half credit)
- Economics (one-half credit)

Languages Other Than English:

- **Recommended:** at least two credits in the same language
- **Distinguished:** at least three credits in the same language

Fine Arts for Distinguished and Recommended: One credit

Technology Applications: One credit (Challenge requirement)

Physical Education: One credit

- or Certain Career and Technology Education courses

Health Education: One-half credit

Additional Components for Distinguished and Recommended:

- Recommended: Three and one-half credits of electives
- Distinguished: Two and one-half credits of electives

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Entered 9th Grade: 2007-2008 and subsequent years

DIPLOMA TYPE: ⇨	<u>CORE</u>	<u>RECOMMENDED</u>	<u>DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT</u>
ENGLISH	4	4	4
MATHEMATICS	3	4	4
SOCIAL STUDIES W. Hist (1.0) W. Geog (1.0) US Hist (1.0) Govt (0.5) Econ (0.5)	4	4	4
SCIENCE	3	4	4
HEALTH	0.5	0.5	0.5
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	1.5	1.5	1.5
SPEECH	0.5	0.5	0.5
SECOND LANGUAGE	1	2	3
TECHNOLOGY	0	1	1
FINE ARTS	N/A	1	1
ELECTIVES	5.5	3.5	2.5

TAKS – Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

The TAKS are secondary exit-level assessment instruments designed to be administered to students in grade 11 to assess essential knowledge and skills in mathematics, English Language Arts, social studies, and science. The mathematics section includes at least Algebra I and Geometry with the aid of technology. The English Language Arts section includes at least English III and includes the assessment of essential knowledge and skills in writing. The social studies section includes early American and United States history. The science section includes at least Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. The assessment instruments are designed to assess a student's mastery of minimum skills necessary for high school graduation and readiness to enroll in an institution of higher education. Students are also tested at the 9th and 10th grade levels to gauge future success on the exit level assessment.

CURRICULUM

CECHS curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of the early college student. Many students have never experienced the rigor required at CECHS and, as a result, classrooms require a diverse approach to preparing students for their early entrance into college. Teachers prepare lessons based on student needs and a combination of the HISD CLEAR curriculum, Pre-AP and AP curriculum and additional objectives to improve student success on the SAT and Compass test.

HISD CLEAR Curriculum

Teachers have access to course syllabus documents for all core instructional areas, enabling each teacher to see the recommended scope and sequence for each course. Teacher effectiveness is enhanced through access to newly implemented model lessons for each of the TAKS-critical courses.

Pre-AP

The primary core content high school curriculum at Challenge is a Pre-AP sequence with some exceptions (Algebra I). The philosophy behind the Pre-AP sequence is to provide a rigorous academic experience that helps **all** students “acquire the knowledge, concepts, and skills needed to engage in higher levels of learning”. (College Board, AP Central) On the sophomore level, students enroll in either college bound World History or AP World History and on the junior level students enroll in either college dual credit English 1301/1302 or AP Literature.

AP Program

The College Board's Advanced Placement Program® enables students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. Thirty-four courses in 19 subject areas are offered. Based on their performance on rigorous AP Exams, students can earn credit, advanced placement, or both, for college.

Articulation between Challenge and HCC

The matrix below indicates the number of targeted college hours for students, depending on their year in high school and the semester. Sixty-one college hours are earned in this program and enable a student to finish an Associate's Degree. The number of required hours will be decreased for students who earn Advanced Placement credits. Furthermore, students who take additional courses during the summer can accelerate the process.

Course Outline for Challenge Early College Students

Year	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summer 1	Summer 2	
Year One	No college courses	No college courses	No college courses	No college courses	
Year Two	GUST (3 Local Credits)	SPCH* (3 hours)	Elective Course* (3 hours)	Elective Course* (3 hours)	12
Year Three	Three college courses (9 hours)	Three college courses (9 hours)	Two college* courses (6 hours)	Two college* courses (6 hours)	30
Year Four	Up to four college courses (12 hours)	Up to four college courses (12 hours)	Complete	Complete	24
As many as 66 College Credits Earned					66
Year Five	Application Year	Application Year	Application Year	Application Year	

* Only two college courses are allowed during the summer

- Students must maintain a “B” (3.0) or better grade point average (Official HISD and HCC Transcript) to maintain the HCC enrollment progression displayed on the previous Course Outline for Challenge Early College students.
- The fifth year is an application year. All students who plan to remain for a fifth year must complete and submit an application. The criteria is based on the student’s grade point average, conduct, number of hours needed to receive an Associate’s Degree, and overall student academic record.
- The reason a student may need to remain for a fifth year is to obtain their Associate’s Degree and they did not attend HCC during the summer sessions; therefore, lacking the approximate eighteen hours that would otherwise have been obtained during the summer schedule listed above.

Dropping or Withdrawing From a College Course

- All college courses for students MUST be approved by the student’s Dean of Students.
- The *dropping or failing of a college course* will result in limitations on the amount and progression of college classes that may be taken by the student in subsequent semesters; this will include the placement of a “W” or “F” on the student’s official HCC transcript which will be viewed for admissions into other Universities.
- *Dropping a college course will require parent approval* through the Dean of Students’ Office and the College Access Coordinator. Students not adhering to this procedure will be subject to actions defined in the previous bullet.
- Once approved to drop a course, a student who drops an HCC class before the official HCC last day to drop (generally two weeks into the semester) they must also adhere to the following procedures:
 - The student must notify the College Access Coordinator
 - The student must submit a copy of their new schedule to be place in their Personal Graduation Plan and their high school schedule

Note: The student’s high school and college transcripts and GPA’s will not be affected.

- During each fall/spring semester, there MUST be at least one HISD required course needed for high school graduation to maintain high school status to receive the state waiver to pay for HCC courses.
- In the event a student enrolls in an HCC course and they withdraw (after the official HCC last day to drop) or they fail the course, retaking the course will not be available as dual credit. Options for credit recovery will be available through Online Credit Recovery, Credit by Examination, Virtual Schools, or some other means of non-dual credit recovery.

Credit for CECHS Dual Courses

Upon completion of a student’s junior level credit requirements (>12 credits), dual credit courses will be available in conjunction with the rules and regulation of the Houston Community College System. Credits earned in dual credit classes will count toward both the high school graduation requirements and the HCC Associate’s Degree.

Who is eligible to take Dual Course Credit?

- Must be recommended by school principal
- Must meet HISD criteria
- Must meet HCCS requirements
- Must meet Compass placement requirements

The State of Texas requires all students to take the Compass Placement test or a TEA approved college entrance exam prior to enrolling in college level coursework. Some students may be exempt from Compass based upon ACT, SAT or TAKS results. Students must provide proof of Compass exemption prior to enrolling in dual credit classes. Students should consult an HCCS counselor for Compass exemption scores.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

The Challenge GO-Center is designed for Challenge Early College student use in planning for college. The GO-Center Coordinator, Ms. Ines Hernandez and Guidance teachers will assist students in areas such as financial aid, admission requirements, entrance examination preparation and timelines, and college visits.

College Entrance Exams

Most colleges and universities require that a student take either the SAT I or ACT and, in some cases, three SAT II Subject Tests. A student must check which tests the college of choice requires. Some private colleges require various combinations of SAT/Subject tests.

- **SAT I** - Scholastic Aptitude Tests: verbal and mathematics aptitude tests. Scores on these tests are used by colleges to determine a student's probable success in college. For test dates go to www.collegeboard.com.
- **SAT II** - Subject Tests: available in foreign language, social studies, English composition and literature, science, and mathematics. For test dates go to www.collegeboard.com.
- **PSAT** - Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test: taken normally by sophomores as a "warm-up" for the SAT. Scores on this test are used to determine eligibility for the National Merit Scholar competition. For tests date go to www.collegeboard.com.
- **ACT** - American College Test: four (4) sub-tests in English, mathematics, social studies and natural science. The ACT is accepted by some colleges in lieu of SAT/Achievement tests, by almost all in lieu of the SAT I. For test dates go to www.act.org.
- **Advanced Placement Exams** - available for students who have exceptional talent in particular areas in which they may earn college credits. Students generally take a related advanced placement course before taking the exam, although students may take the exams without having taken the course. Colleges vary in the credit they give for scores on AP exams. For testing dates, check with the A/P coordinator.
- **CLEP** - College Level Examination Program - testing program similar to the AP program that some colleges use to grant credit or advanced placement in foreign languages.
- **Community College Tests** - Houston Community College and other community colleges require that students take placement tests in English and mathematics.

CLASS RANK

The numerical ranking of seniors is determined by straight rank of cumulative GPAs from highest to lowest, and the class is divided into percentage groupings and into quartiles. CECHS graduating seniors receive both a preliminary and a final class ranking during their graduating year. Tentative class rankings are issued in November based on the student's grades from all courses taken for high school credit through the spring semester of his/her junior year. At the close of the fall semester during his/her senior year (usually February), the registrar calculates final class ranks for seniors based on all grades earned through the seventh semester.

FINAL TRANSCRIPTS

After completion of all TEA and HISD graduation requirements and after the student has been certified to graduate, students MUST request a final transcript to be sent to their college choice and provide to CECHS verification of enrollment.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

Most colleges and universities offer scholarships of varying amounts to deserving high school seniors. If you are interested in obtaining scholarship assistance, ask your Guidance teacher or inquire at the Houston Community College Student Success Center. Most scholarships are awarded on the basis of financial need and scholastic standing, but some are available for special interest groups. Students who may need financial aid to attend college should check application deadline dates with the Houston Community College Financial Aid office. The GO-Center, College Consultant (Mr. Dick Stabell), and multiple parent workshops will be available throughout the year to assist students with Financial Aid.

In addition, all students must register with Prep HQ. Guidance teachers will assist with registration. Prep HQ offers various resources for scholarships, financial aid, student surveys, etc.

PROACTIVE STUDENT SUPPORT

The end goal for all academic support in the early college model is to facilitate the development of self-monitoring and self-advocacy skills on the part of the student. The Challenge community is dedicated to providing proactive intervention strategies in which to address the whole child - academic, social, and emotional needs. In this regard, a clear pathway is in place to monitor and support our students from entry until graduation. The first step in the process is always to contact a child's high school teacher and to keep the lines of communication open in regard to course expectations and deadlines. We encourage parents and students to be knowledgeable active participants in pursuing a rigorous education. Following is the sequence of interventions that Challenge has in place for student support.

Horizontal Teams (Tier 1 Intervention)

CECHS faculty members meet once a month in grade level teams to monitor student success in academic classes. One of the objectives of the team is to identify students who may need additional support and provide appropriate interventions through the Academic Student Support and Intervention System Teaming (ASSIST).

Guidance (Tier 1 Intervention)

Junior and senior students are assigned to Guidance classes with a teacher who assists in navigating the complexities of HCC's higher level course expectations and deadlines. The Guidance teacher also supports students as they apply to universities and seek out scholarships and grants.

Academic Student Support and Intervention System Teaming (ASSIST) (Tier 2 Intervention)

Signs the student is in need of ASSIST

- 2 or more Failures on a given grade report
- 3 or more Absences in a four-week period
- 5 or more Tardies in a four-week period
- Grade Point Average (with HCC dual credit) below 2.0
- Grade Point Average on the CECHS transcript below 3.0
- Inability to place on the Compass in more than one subject

Initiation of Process

A need is recognized in one or more of the following ways:

- 6th week Progress Report
- 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Report Card
- Houston Community College grade reports
- monthly monitoring
- recommendation of CECHS Horizontal Team

Process

- Meeting set during school hours with parent and student
- Required Attendees: student, parent, grade-level Dean
- Optional Attendees: teacher(s), Social Worker
- Individual interventions will be recommended, monitored, and reviewed

Following 3rd Report Card

ASSIST meetings are held in April during school hours with parent, student, grade-level Dean, and Horizontal Team teachers. Student is responsible for facilitating the meeting to examine his/her progress and to review interventions. Following the meeting, a warning “Letter of Transfer Revocation” is sent to the student and parent.

During May

If a student involved in the ASSIST process has shown a lack of progress, the lack of academic or attendance expectations at CECHS, and following a recommendation from the ASSIST and Horizontal Teams, an official “HISD Transfer Revocation Letter” will be sent to the student’s home.

End of May

A student who has received a Transfer Revocation Letter may request a meeting to appeal the decision. The student is responsible for facilitating the meeting and for presenting documentation to support his/her progress in making gains based on the intervention recommendations. CECHS Faculty and Administration will make the final exit decision and the student and family will be notified by the principal.

Intervention Assistance Team (Tier 3 Intervention)

Students who need a level of support beyond the ASSIST process are referred to the IAT, which may be composed of an administrator, teacher, and social worker. At this time the team may refer the student for testing and/or assessment.

Section 504

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, a student qualifies for recommended services related to a disabling condition when there exists a physical or mental impairment that **substantially** limits one or more major life activities (breathing, walking, vision, hearing, working, and learning). Section 504 is a federal law enforced by the Office of Civil Rights. It is an anti-discrimination law. It is the intent of the Houston Independent School District to ensure that students who are disabled within the meaning of Section 504 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate access to education.

Special Education

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ensures that all children with disabilities will have a free, appropriate education available to them that meets their unique needs. Through federal and state laws, special education programs and services are provided to students whose disabling conditions interfere with their education.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES, CONDUCT, AND PRIVILEGES

HISD AND CECHS ATTENDANCE POLICY

Absences

Students who have been absent or tardy must present a written excuse from the parents, guardian, or physician no later than three (3) days upon returning to school. Notes are to be submitted and recorded in the Attendance Office (e-mails or faxes are accepted with a parent contact number).

- Excused absences include: Religious Holiday, personal illness, sickness or death in the family, quarantine, weather or road conditions making travel dangerous, participation in school activities **with permission of the principal**, juvenile court proceeding documented by a probation officer, approved college visitation, emergencies, or "any other cause acceptable to teacher, principal, or superintendent." (TEC 25.087)
- Absentee/tardy notes should include the following: dates of absence, reason for absence, signature of parent or legal guardian, phone number, student name, and grade level.
- College Visits will be approved through the College Access Coordinator's Office. Students will complete a College Visit form with the approved dates and parent signature.
- It is the **student's responsibility** to ask the teachers for missing assignments and make arrangements for missed assignments.

ADA Advisory Attendance

Monday – Thursday Attendance

Average Daily Attendance (ADA) will be taken each day at 9:45 a.m. Students who are not assigned to a high school class at that time (2nd or 6th periods) should **sign-in no later than 9:30 a.m.** in the common area or front office.

Sign-in must be done in person. ADA is an official attendance for which CECHS receives funding from the state. Inaccuracy of this attendance calls into question CECHS' reputation with the state, can have serious legal repercussions, and effect CECHS' Exemplary rating.

Failure of a student to follow the procedure will result in

- discipline actions for truancy listed under the Attendance Policy in this handbook,
- loss of student privileges, and
- withdrawal from college classes.

Students found unable to follow this policy will be exited from CECHS and returned to their home school.

Friday Attendance

State required Average Daily Attendance (ADA) will be taken at 9:45 a.m. Students will follow their regular A-Day or B-Day schedule with 55 minute class periods and no Advisory. During those periods in which a student is assigned to a college class the student should

- sign the attendance roster in the front commons (foyer) area,
- use the time to study,
- work in study groups, or
- conference with their guidance teacher.

Friday Sign-In Schedule for College Students

Mon/Wed College Class	Tues/Thur College Class	Report to front commons on Fridays
8:00 – 9:30	8:00 – 9:30	8:00
9:30 – 11:00	9:30 – 11:00	9:00
12:30 – 2:00	12:30 – 1:00	10:00
2:00 – 3:30	2:00 – 3:30	11:00

Required Attendance in Class

Secondary teachers check attendance each class period each day. **A student must be in attendance 60 minutes in a 90-minute class period in order to be counted present.**

Absences for extracurricular activities do **not** count as absences as they apply to the HISD attendance policy unless a student accumulates more than five for one semester. If a student accumulates more than five absences for extracurricular activities for one semester in one class or subject, each absence over five becomes an **unexcused** absence, and these unexcused absences apply to the HISD attendance policy.

Unexcused Absences

Repeated unexcused absences are a truancy issue. Three unexcused absences will result in the following:

- loss of academic credit
- recommendation for Transfer Revocation
- denial of VOE
- HISD Court Referral
- failure to have a child attend school is a Class C misdemeanor, TEC 25.0951

Truancy and the Courts

Unexcused absences become a truancy offense and are reported to the court system according to HISD policy. A court case may be filed on a student along with a case against his/her parents/guardian after at least three unexcused absences in a four-week period of the current school year. A court case must be filed on a student, along with his/her parents, after at least 10 unexcused absences in a six-month period of the current school year. Parents will be notified by issuance of a **truancy letter**.

Credit Appeal for Excessive Absences

HISD policy states that a student may not be given credit for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 93 percent of the days the class is offered. In an 18-week semester with an every-other-day (A/B) block schedule, a student may not have more than two unexcused absences per semester per class to receive class credit.

To restore lost credit, the student must complete an assigned number of tutorials and/or community service hours (seniors only if tutorials are not possible). All excessive absence tutorials and/or community service hours must be completed and approved no later than the following semester (i.e. fall credit must be completed by the end of the spring semester; spring credit must be completed by the end of next fall semester).

If a student has excessive absences in more than one class the student must complete tutorials and/or service hours for each class as follows:

- 3 absences 2.0 hrs
- 4 absences 2.5 hrs
- 5 absences 3.0 hrs
- 6 absences 3.5 hrs
- 7 absences 4.0 hrs
- 8 absences committee decision

Credit Appeal forms will be available in the Main office and returned to College Access Coordinator, Alma Webber. Student attendance will be assessed each nine-week period.

Skipping

Class attendance in high school and college classes is mandatory and linked to a student's academic success. Truancy (failure to attend class) will be addressed with **serious consequences**:

- First incident of skipping will result in Saturday detention, 8 a.m.-12 p.m. and a phone call to parents.
- Second incident of skipping will result in two Saturday detentions, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. and a parent conference with an administrator.

Tardy Policy

A student is counted tardy if he or she is not in the classroom at the assigned time. **If a student is 30 or more minutes late to class, they must be counted as absent.** Students who arrive late to class must check in with the Attendance Office to receive a permit to class. A tardy will be excused with a note if the reason falls under the excused absence guidelines (page 15). Please note that multiple (unexcused) tardies will result in the following disciplinary:

- 1st Tardy – Warning
- 2nd Tardy – Level 1 Teacher Consequences
- 3rd Tardy – Level 1 Teacher Consequences
- 4th Tardy – Friday afternoon detention, 1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.
- 5th Tardy – Saturday school, 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- 6th Tardy – Probation & parent conference

Failure to comply will be referred to the Dean of Students for further action. Students will be notified of impending disciplinary action when they check in to the attendance office.

TEXTBOOKS

All students will be issued textbooks for the courses in which they are enrolled according to the teacher recommendation. Some teachers will choose to have only a class set in the room and others will recommend students have their own book for study at home. It is the responsibility of the students/parents to maintain the books in good order and turn them in at the appropriate time.

There is a \$25.00 fee per college class/per semester for textbook usage. All college textbooks are to be returned to the bookroom at the end of each semester. The students will be held accountable for the books if they are lost or damaged. Payment plans for lost or damaged books are available, but the student may not have any previous open balances.

Students are to return ALL textbooks and will be held financially responsible for all damaged/lost textbooks. Failure to return or pay the price of the books will result in withholding a student's records, and forfeiting the right to free textbooks the following semester. (TEC 31.104)

CONDUCT

Challenge students share responsibility for maintaining a positive school climate both on the high school and HCC side. Self-discipline and integrity are essential characteristics of a college-ready student so the expectation is that our students will be able to demonstrate behavior and a level of maturity that reflects pride in being a part of our community.

On the Challenge campus this means there is an emphasis on building trust and respect in our relationships with one another, so the following guidelines for conduct are strictly enforced when violated (listed are examples):

CECHS VALUES	EXAMPLES	NON-EXAMPLES/VIOLATIONS
Rigor Work ethic Academic integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Studying ➤ Completing Assignments on time ➤ Attending tutorials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Plagiarism (claiming credit for work which is not one's own) ➤ Copyright violations (downloading music, videos, games, or other materials) ➤ Cheating (tests, homework)
Relationships Respect for self and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Courtesy to classmates, teachers, staff, and visitors ➤ Following the Dress Code ➤ Positive attitude ➤ Speaking in a conversational tone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Disrupting class ➤ Defiance or disrespect (verbal, visual, or physical) toward school personnel ➤ Public Displays of Affection ➤ Sexual harassment ➤ Fighting, stealing ➤ Public use of profanity
Relationships Tolerance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Valuing differences ➤ Listening without judgment ➤ Supporting each other ➤ Acceptance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Verbal or physical abuse of others based on race, religion, national origin, disability, physical/personal appearance, or sexual orientation ➤ Bullying
Relevance Social responsibility Service to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ "Chill"/relaxed environment ➤ Mature/Independent students ➤ Community Service Volunteers (on and off campus) ➤ Striving/Active learners ➤ Cooperative and supportive of each other ➤ Trustworthy ➤ Student Voice and Participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cell phones and/or electronic devices are prohibited from 8 a.m. - 3:25 p.m.* ➤ Defacing school property or littering ➤ Possessing, selling, or using drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and/or other controlled substances ➤ Possession of a weapon

***A \$15.00 fee is required for any student who has a cell phone confiscated. A second offense will result in disciplinary action and a \$15.00 fee.**

The rights, rules, and guidelines found in the HISD Code of Student Conduct and HCC Student handbook will be observed. Violations that constitute misdemeanor or felony offenses will be addressed by the campus HISD officer.

PRIVILEGES

Challenge students are allowed significant freedoms as part of their enrollment in an early college. But, with this freedom comes a great deal of responsibility and some restrictions that are designed to maintain a strong working relationship with HCC and to protect the safety and well-being of our students. Privileges, for the most part, are based on grade level, academic performance, and social responsibility.

The following outline should guide Challenge students in understanding their privileges:

- **All** Challenge students are encouraged to ask questions, engage in healthy discussions around social issues and their education, and participate fully in campus life.
- **All** Challenge students who have conflicts with students or adults may have them resolved through a clearing (mediation) by a designated teacher or staff member.
- **All** Challenge students may use computers to research or complete class assignments (based on teacher and Acceptable Use Policy [AUP] requirements).
- Juniors and seniors have full access to HCC including the campus bookstore and library.
- Sophomores may be on the HCC side if enrolled in a college class, but are **not allowed** in the bookstore (use of the library requires a teacher's note and assignment).
- Freshmen are prohibited on the HCC side during school hours including the bookstore. Freshmen may only go to the HCC library when accompanied by a teacher.

Acceptable Use Policy for Computers

Access to your HISD/HCC computer resources is a privilege, not a right. Failure to comply with the guidelines set out in the AUP Contract may result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and other disciplinary action consistent with District policies. Student users should refer to the Student Code of Conduct for a detailed description of the consequences of improper use of the computer system.

Senior Week

Seniors must meet the requirements listed below before participating in senior week. In addition, administrators will approve the final list of participants.

Academic

- Graduating seniors must have met all credit requirements for graduation and currently be passing all required classes.
- Continuing seniors must have been approved through the application process for their fifth year.
- Students enrolled in online credit recovery must complete coursework **NO LATER** than May 1st.
- Students must obtain teachers' permission to miss high school classes during senior week.

Attendance

- Students must complete credit appeal for any loss of credit due to absenteeism.
- Students **MUST NOT** have received a truancy letter (see Attendance Policy) at any time during their senior year.

Discipline

- Students must not have a Student Code of Conduct Level 3, 4, or 5 violation at any time during their senior year.

Community Responsibilities (completed prior to senior week)

- Senior dues are paid
- Textbook fees are current
- Senior exhibition project is complete
- Parent permission is obtained
- Senior volunteer fundraising hours have been met

CAMPUS LIFE

DRESS CODE

The Challenge Early College dress code is established to

- teach appropriate dress and grooming,
- instill discipline,
- prevent disruption,
- avoid safety hazards,
- teach respect for authority, and
- provide a positive, productive learning environment in both high school and college classes.

The Administration expects students to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to wear clothes that are suitable in our community and the HCC community. School administrators will make final determinations on dress code issues.

The following are defined as **inappropriate** dress for a Challenge student:

- shirts cut off above the waist exposing the abdomen
- blouses or dresses low cut and exposing cleavage
- blouses or dresses that are strapless, have spaghetti straps, or are halter tops
- shorts, skirts, dresses, or slits shorter than the tip of the student's middle finger when arms are extended straight down
- bedroom clothing such as
 - flannel pants with cartoon characters, clouds, etc.
 - bedroom slippers
- exposed undergarments including men's white, tank-style undershirts
- pants that are not appropriately sized and are worn below waist level
- head coverings of any type (unless it is a documented religious garment)
- sunglasses inside the building
- bare feet
- shirts promoting drugs, alcohol, violence, weaponry, gangs, sex, tobacco usage, or profanity
- any hair, makeup, or clothing that is a distraction to teachers, students, or staff will not be allowed

Enforcement

This policy shall be enforced uniformly and fairly by the faculty and administration. Campus administration may use reasonable disciplinary tools to enforce this policy including requiring a student to change clothes, student and parent conferences, detention, and/or Saturday school.

ADVISORY PROGRAM

Challenge Early College provides student support and enables strong relationships to develop through the advisory program.

Advisory groups place 18 - 23 students together daily with a faculty advisor for ongoing academic and personal counseling and support. These small student-adult ratios are achieved by having every staff member in the school take or share responsibility for an advisory group. In many cases, teachers advise students they also teach in class, thus increasing the amount of time they spend together during the week. Students stay with the same advisor for at least two years - thus building on existing relationships over extended periods of time. The advisory is lead by senior level students trained for that responsibility in leadership classes.

The Challenge Advisory program is focused on developing the skills and behaviors embedded in the HISD Graduate Profile. Using the HISD Graduate Profile as a guide, the Challenge Advisory curriculum was developed to support the acquisition of positive workforce affective behaviors.

Goals and Objectives of the Advisory Program

Cooperative Team Member:

- develop leadership skills
- know himself or herself and others
- develop the skills to support positive group dynamics
- demonstrate kind, cooperative, yet assertive behavior
- strengthen cultural awareness
- identify social proprieties
- understand power and cooperate with authority figures

Responsible Citizen:

- identify and link together global, national, and local issues
- contribute through the democratic process
- create a relationship to money and determine how his/her money will affect the global economy
- consider his/her own welfare as s/he contributes to the greater society
- make a positive impact on the world around him/her
- cultivate sound judgment
- create a “rubric” to apply to his/her life and his/her self-exploration
- strengthen community service component, i.e. giving something back

Effective Communicator:

- develop intrapersonal and interpersonal skills with emphasis on group communication
- consider delivery of a message and use different forms of communication
- apply basic skills including reading, writing, and speaking to daily life situations
- develop ways to communicate articulately, effectively, and efficiently

Proficient Problem Solver:

- develop organizational skills
- analyze a problem and break it into its component pieces
- determine pros and cons of a problem’s many solutions
- interpret and deconstruct symbols in the world

Independent Worker and Thinker:

- set goals and create a plan of action to accomplish those goals
- routinely evaluate the effectiveness of the action plan
- prioritize goals and desires by weighing the importance of each
- identify what she/he values
- identify personal strengths and weaknesses through self-exploration
- determine ways to focus oneself
- self-assess his/her work
- explore multiple frames of reference (e.g. testing pros/cons of a decision, forcing yourself into another point of view, examining the power of peer pressure)
- monitor his/ or her health, both mental and physical

STUDENTS AS OFFICE WORKERS AND TEACHER ASSISTANTS

In order to prevent interference with scholastic achievement, all students working in the office or as teacher assistants must

- be a junior or senior,
- have an overall 3.0 grade point average, and
- no conduct grade of P or U.

The student will be removed from duties and assigned to study hall for serious infraction of the school rules or failure to improve either the GPA or conduct grade. **Special emphasis in dress and behavior of office workers should be given as they are the first impression visitors to our campus may have.**

STUDENTS AS CLASS OFFICERS

In order to obtain the best possible student leadership and to prevent interference with scholastic achievement, all students serving as a class officer must

- have an overall 3.0 grade point average and
- no conduct grade of P or U.

The position shall be relinquished for serious infraction of the school rules or failure to improve either the GPA or conduct grade. In the event a class officer is determined ineligible, the officer below them in the leadership hierarchy will move up.

STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

School districts shall not schedule, nor permit students to participate in, any school-related activities on or off campus that would require, permit, or allow a student to be absent from class in any course more than

- 10 times during the school year (full year course), or
- 5 times during one semester.

To participate in any extracurricular activity, a student must be passing all subjects as indicated by nine-week performance reports. This includes all advanced level course work at Challenge Early College High School.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

- The purpose of this organization shall be to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character in the students of secondary schools.
- Membership in local chapters is an honor bestowed upon a student. Selection for membership is by a Faculty Council and is based on outstanding scholarship, character, leadership, and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities.
- Membership shall be known as active, honorary, and graduate. Active members shall become graduate members at graduation. Graduation members shall have no voice or vote in chapter affairs.
- The Faculty Council shall reserve the right to award honorary membership to school officials, principals, teachers, NHS advisers, adults, students with disabilities, or foreign exchange students in recognition of achievement and/or outstanding service rendered to the school in keeping with the purposes of the National Honor Society. Honorary members shall have no voice or vote in chapter affairs.
- Candidates become members when inducted at a special ceremony.
- Members who are seniors in good standing are eligible to be nominated by their chapters to compete in the National Honor Society Scholarship Program.
- Members who resign or are dismissed are never again eligible for membership or its benefits.
- To be eligible for membership the candidate must be a member of those classes (sophomore, junior, senior) designated as eligible in the chapter bylaws. Freshmen (ninth graders) are not eligible.
- Entry into the National Honor Society is not only based on strong academic showing but social action as well. It is recommended that students get involved with volunteer work as well as in school and out of school organizations to be considered in their application process.
- For National Honor Society the minimum GPA requirement is a 3.7.
- The application, selection, and induction ceremony will take place in the fall.

In the event that an NHS member is unable to fulfill the responsibilities of membership, probation, suspension, or dismissal by the Faculty Council will occur.

LIBRARY

Juniors and seniors have full use of the HCC library. Library privileges for freshmen and sophomores during school hours are restricted and require supervision of a Challenge faculty or staff member. At all times Challenge students who use the HCC library or computer lab must behave as college students and abide by the Acceptable Use Policy contract rules.

HOMEWORK REQUESTS

Homework may be requested from the main office once a student has been ill for two full days. Please allow twenty four (24) hours for make up work to be gathered. If your response is not met in a timely manner, please contact the teacher's department chair person. Parents and students may also contact teachers by phone or email.

REQUESTS FROM REGISTRAR

All information must be requested in writing. Request forms are available in the main office. Requests for **VOE's** (Verification of Enrollment) and school records will generally take two school days to prepare. All requests will be available for pick up at the main office. Requests for official transcripts must also be accompanied by a transcript request card. Students will receive three (3) transcripts at no charge. A \$1.00 charge will apply for each additional transcript.

HEALTH SERVICES

Health Technician:

Challenge shares a health technician to assist students during school hours. This staff member is a valuable resource for those occasional illnesses and health topics of special interest to adolescents. The health technician will be housed on the Pin Oak Middle School Campus.

Immunizations:

All students are required to have current and updated immunizations 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. Exclusion from compliance is allowable on an individual basis for medical conditions and religious conflicts. Students falling into these categories must submit affidavits as specified in the law.

Medication at School:

Students should not bring medication to school without consulting with the school administration. Medications shall be administered only by employees designated by the principal. Administration of medication is allowed only with physician and parental permission. The parent must sign form 40.3740, which can be obtained from the main office. The physician can sign the form or attach a statement. This must be on file before the medication is administered. Student's found in possession of prescription or over the counter medications without the proper form on file may be subject to disciplinary action as stated in the HISD Student Code of Conduct.

MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS FROM PARENTS

*****PARENTS SHOULD NOT CALL OR TEXT A STUDENT'S CELL PHONE DURING SCHOOL HOURS. CELL PHONE USE IS PROHIBITED DURING SCHOOL HOURS AND WILL RESULT IN CONFISCATION AND FINE. *****

In case of an emergency, parents should call the office and have a message sent to the student. To avoid unnecessary classroom disruptions, the urgency of the message will determine the time of receipt.

PERSONAL PROPERTY PROTECTION

- The Challenge community would like to assume that all students will respect other people's property, but unfortunately, that is not always the case. Occasionally, property is stolen or vandalized. Students are responsible for protecting their personal property from theft and vandalism. While the campus is well supervised, school officials cannot be everywhere at all times. **The school is not responsible for the security of personal property.**
- Backpacks and personal belongings should not be left unattended. Lockers and bikes should be secured at all times. Students are responsible for providing their own locks for bicycles and lockers.
- Reports of theft or vandalism should be reported immediately to a Dean, another administrative staff member, or the campus police officer. The school will investigate all reports of theft. Students are encouraged to file police reports if a bike or car has been vandalized. Recovered goods will be returned to their rightful owner.
- Students caught stealing or vandalizing school or personal property will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary consequences and restitution. A police report will be made.

VISITORS TO SCHOOL

Persons who are not students at Challenge, nor school employees, and who do not have official business at school, are not to be present on campus during school hours, including lunch and breaks. All visitors must first sign-in at the main office upon arrival.

Houston Independent School District students may not be present at a school site other than their own during the school day (30 minutes before or after school, lunch, breaks, and at school-related events) without prior approval of the school of residence and the home school administrator. A student's unapproved presence will be deemed as trespassing and may be subject to punishment under the law. The students' school will also be notified and forced to review the case administratively.

PARKING ON CAMPUS

Students who have a driver's license may park on campus in accordance with state law and HCC regulations. All cars must have

- current vehicle registration,
- current state inspection, and
- insurance.

All parking regulations of the HCC System must also be followed.