

Horizons Academy

2024-2025

Student Handbook



Travis Cochran – Principal

Tarshay Singleton – Assistant Principal

Roy Shaw – Assistant Principal

Mission Statement

The mission of Horizons Academy is to get students back on track and progressing towards graduation.

Vision Statement

To be nationally recognized for alternative education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Bell Schedules	3
Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports/School Focus	4
Student Expectations	5
Dress Code	6
Cell Phone Policy	7
Student Check- In	7
Student ID's	7
Attendance Policy	7
Tardy Policy	8
Leaving Campus During School Hours	8
Clinic Use	9
Hall Passes	9
Telephones	9
Grades and Grade Points	10
Technology Policy	11
Discipline Process	12
Bullying and Harassment	13

BELL SCHEDULES

Regular Bell Schedule

Period 1	7:30AM – 8:23AM
Period 2	8:25AM – 9:18AM
Period 3	9:20AM – 10:13AM
Period 4	High School lunch: 10:15AM-10:45AM High School class: 10:47AM-11:40AM Elementary lunch: 10:45AM-11:15AM Middle School class: 10:15 – 11:08 AM Middle School Lunch: 11:10AM -11:40AM
Period 5	11:42AM-12:35PM
Period 6	12:37PM-1:30PM
Period 7	1:32PM-2:25
PM	

Early Release Bell Schedule

Period 1	7:30AM – 8:10AM
Period 2	8:12AM – 8:52AM
Period 3	8:54AM – 9:34AM
Period 4	High School lunch: 9:34AM-10:06 High School class: 10:08AM-10:54AM Middle School class: 10:15 – 11:08 AM Middle School Lunch: 11:10AM -11:40AM
Period 5	Elementary lunch: 11:00AM-11:30AM Middle and High school class: 10:56AM-11:36AM
Period 6	11:38AM-12:18PM
Period 7	12:20PM-1:00PM

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS

Horizons Academy is a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) School, which places focus on desirable behaviors, rather than punishing or reacting to un-desirable behaviors. PBIS aims to build effective environments in which positive behaviors are more effective than problem behaviors. PBIS is a collaborative and assessment-based approach to developing effective interventions for problematic behaviors. The Goal of PBIS is to reduce undesirable behaviors and teach alternative skills to ensure student success. Horizons Academy will offer PBIS through the following techniques:

1. Prevention- Alter environments prior to problem behaviors occurring.
2. Teach- Focus on skill development.
3. Reinforce- Acknowledge the display of appropriate behaviors.
4. Systematic Use of Data- Parent/Student input, Teacher record/observation, and FOCUS.

HORIZONS ACADEMY'S "BIG 3"

1. ATTENDANCE

Attend school every day and be in class on time.

2. DISCIPLINE

Respect yourself, respect others, and follow school rules and staff directives.

3. GRADES

Be prepared to learn, be motivated to learn, and give your best effort.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS FOR COMMON AREAS

Courtyard

- Be in your assigned area (do not go to the Clinic or Front Office without a pass)
- Use school-appropriate language at school-appropriate volumes.
- Be physically appropriate.
- Always follow staff directives.

Pods

- Be in your assigned area.
- Remain in your classroom the first 10 and the last 10 minutes of class.
- Students must have a hall pass to be out of class.
- Use school-appropriate language at school-appropriate volumes.
- Be physically appropriate.
- Always follow staff directives.

Cafeteria

- Enter quietly.
- Get seated and wait to be called by levels.
- Remain seated unless returning your tray or throwing out trash.
- Raise your hand if you need to get out of your seat.
- Clean-up after yourself
- Use school appropriate-language at school-appropriate volumes.
- Be physically appropriate.
- Always follow staff directives.

Bus Loop

- Go directly to the bus loop after school if you are riding a bus home.
- Board immediately once your bus is at school.
- Wait on the sidewalk on the marked lines if your bus is not at school.
- Use school-appropriate language at school-appropriate volumes.
- Be physically appropriate.

Car Rider Area

- Go directly to the car rider area after school if you are a car rider or walker.
- Walkers/bike riders must leave the campus immediately.
- Car riders stand on the blue lines and wait for your car to pull up before getting in.
- Use school-appropriate language at school-appropriate volumes.
- Be physically appropriate.
- Always follow staff directives.

DRESS CODE

In addition to the Manatee County School District Code of Conduct dress code requirements, the following uniform policy specific to Horizons Academy must be followed:

1. Students must purchase and wear a grade-level appropriate Horizons shirt.
2. Students must wear khaki shorts or pants with a draw string or belt. Students can only wear one pair of pants or shorts at a time (for example, no netted shorts under uniform pants). Sagging pants are not allowed and a student with sagging pants will be asked to wear a belt or zip tie. The shorts or pants cannot have any rips, tears, or holes and may not be form-fitting or excessively tight. Shorts must be a reasonable, appropriate length (no shorter than above the tips of the fingers with arms and hands extended straight down).
3. Students must wear closed-toe shoes (no crocs, slides, flipflops, water-socks, sandals).
4. **Sweatshirts, jackets, or sweaters with hoods are not permitted.**
5. Students can wear solid-color long-sleeved shirts or sweatshirts UNDER the uniform shirt. Jackets must be worn open.

**Students out of dress code will be sent home or assigned ISS until a parent brings appropriate clothing. Repeated dress code infractions will result in a referral for defiance of school policy.*

Including and in addition to the Manatee County Code of Student Conduct, the following apparel or items ARE NOT allowed at school:

- a. Hoodies or Jackets/Sweaters with hoods
- b. Bracelets or watches
- c. Necklaces
- d. More than \$20 cash
- e. Sunglasses, hats, visors, bandanas or headbands
- f. Visible pierced body jewelry that has the potential to cause injury or be considered a safety risk, or cause disruption to the learning environment.
- g. Gang-related tattoos or inappropriate tattoos (as determined by the Principal)
- h. Cutoff pants, shorts, or skirts
- i. Unbuckled belts
- j. Known gang-related symbols
- k. Any clothing or jewelry that can be used as a weapon
- l. Any clothing, accessories, jewelry, or hair styles that may be a distraction to self or others, or that has obscene or drug-related phrases

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Horizons Academy is a **NO CELL PHONE OR ELECTRONIC DEVICE campus**. Students are not permitted to have mobile/electronic devices in their possession while on campus. This includes cell phones, wireless headphones/ear pods, or “smart” watches.

**Violations will result in the device being confiscated for parent pick-up and additional disciplinary action that may include suspension for defiance of school policy.*

STUDENT CHECK-IN

Every student must be physically checked-in upon arrival at school. Students must remove their socks, shoes and belts for inspection. Then, students must walk through a metal detector or be scanned by wand for any contraband. **Students will not be permitted on campus if they refuse check-in procedures, are uncooperative during the check-in process and/or the scanner indicates the student is in possession of contraband.** Those students will be directed to wait for a parent in the front of the school or may be referred to the SRO.

Students are not permitted to carry any type of wallet, bag, or backpack at school. Any bags or backpacks will be searched by staff and kept in the front office for parent pick-up at the end of the day.

STUDENT ID'S

Students are required to have their Horizons Academy student ID (which is always worn around the neck) while on campus. Failure to do so will result in a loss of privileges or possible disciplinary action. Damaged or defaced ID's must be replaced at a cost to the student. No other school ID's can be worn.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is a critical component for your child's success. Students on an eLearning/Virtual school schedule must log-in daily and complete at least one assignment to be considered “present” for the day. If a virtual student is unable to complete Virtual coursework, the parent or student should contact the attendance clerk. Attendance will be an important factor in deciding when your child may return to his or her districted school.

Florida Law requires each parent of a child under 18 years of age to be responsible for the child's school attendance. Please be aware that parents are only allowed to call in a student absent nine (9) times for the school year. After the 9th absence, documentation is required for an excused absence. Continued absences could result in the child being referred to the district's truancy department.

State law requires all absences to be unexcused unless they fall into the following documented reasons: an absence for religious instruction or for a religious holiday; an absence due to sickness, injury or other insurmountable condition; an absence due to participation in an academic class or program; a subpoena or a forced absence by any government agency; an appointment with a doctor or dentist; or a School Board approved activity.

Make-up work is the responsibility of the student.

TARDY POLICY

Tardies to class result in lost instructional time for the tardy student and an interruption of the teaching and learning activities for others. The warning bell signals that students should be moving toward class. When the tardy bell rings, students must be inside the classroom.

Tardy Procedure

- Teachers may issue the student a “tardy” in the FOCUS grade book if the student enters the class after the tardy bell.
- If the student is found to be skipping class, discipline consequences will be assigned.
- Excessive unexcused tardies within a grading quarter will result in progressive consequences on the discipline matrix.

ARRIVING LATE / LEAVING CAMPUS DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Arriving Late to Campus

Students must arrive to the campus by 11:00am on regular days or 10:00am on early release days UNLESS the tardy is excused with a doctor’s note or other written documentation of an appointment.

Leaving Campus with Parents’ Permission

Sign-out with parent permission may only be done through the front office. Once a student leaves campus, he/she may not return that day unless accompanied by a parent with appropriate documentation. Upon returning to school, students will have to follow check-in procedures.

Leaving Campus without Permission

Students may not leave campus prior to administration or parent permission. If a student leaves campus without permission the appropriate consequence will be assigned, including possible suspension.

CLINIC USE

Staff must call the clinic prior to sending a student. If the clinic is unavailable, staff should call the front office.

The nurse may come to the classroom of any student that is feeling unwell. Students that have cold or flu-like symptoms and/or a fever of 100.4 or higher, will be isolated until parent pick-up. Parents must arrange to be to school within 30 minutes of a determination to send the student home due to injury or illness. Parents should ensure they provide the clinic and the school office with current phone numbers and contact information.

Students taking medication will develop a medication schedule with the clinic. The nurse may come to the classroom to provide medication.

Female personal hygiene products will be made available in each Pod. Students are not to come to the clinic for these items.

The clinic is not a place for students to “hang out” or miss class time. Students will not be allowed to brush teeth or use the restroom in the clinic.

NO over the counter or prescription medications will be administered to students without a doctor’s authorization and parental consent. See clinic nurse for necessary documents.

HALL PASSES

Students leaving the pod during class must carry the appropriate pass. Students are not to be sent out of class during the first or last 10 minutes of class. If a student is out of area without a pass, the student will be sent to a member of the discipline team. Leaving class without teacher permission is subject to disciplinary action.

TELEPHONES

Students are not to use classroom telephones. Phone use for students must be approved by administration. Phones are available for student use after 2:35pm in the front office.

GRADES AND GRADE POINT AVERAGES

Grading Scale (Middle & High School)

Value	Numeric Range	Letter Grade	Definition
4	90-100	A	Outstanding Progress
3	80-89	B	Above Average Progress
2	70-79	C	Average Progress
1	60-69	D	Lowest Acceptable Progress
0	0-59	F	Failure

Grade Point Average (Middle & High School)

A student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) will be calculated based upon all courses a student has completed, including courses taken for high school credit in middle school, except those where the forgiveness policy applies. Transfer credit(s) with a grade of Pass (P) will not be calculated into the GPA. In order to graduate, students must earn a cumulative unweighted GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.

- We ask that the following policies be adhered to so that the integrity of the school, the school's network, and the equipment will be maintained.
- **Computers on Horizon Academy's campus are to be used for instructional purposes only.**
- **Installation or use of unauthorized software or programs (especially programs to get around school internet filters) is prohibited.** Copyright laws will be strictly enforced and observed. Altering, deleting, or installing unauthorized programs or software will result in student suspension and/or loss of computer privileges.
- Handle devices with care. Damaging a device in any way by throwing the device, slamming the screen shut, moving, reconfiguring, or tampering with hardware may result in student suspension and possible financial restitution. Tampering includes but is not limited to the following: changing, altering, or deleting any setting, adding or deleting any programs or settings, adding passwords or other lockout devices, maliciously damaging any equipment such as removing keys, defacing hardware or disassembling a mouse, hacking into systems.
- Manatee County's Internet Policies will be strictly enforced when accessing the Internet. Never consider electronic communications to be completely private. The school district does have the right to review the contents of any, and all e-mail created and stored on school district equipment using e-mail systems operated by school district staff.

DISCIPLINE PROCESS

Staff will constantly and consistently model and coach school-appropriate behaviors. Teachers will use PBIS strategies to encourage students to make good behavior choices. Students demonstrating Level 1 behaviors will be redirected and may be asked to complete a behavior reflection. Students who continue inappropriate behaviors or escalate to Level 2 or 3 behaviors will be removed from the classroom by a member of the discipline team. Depending on the severity of the behavioral infraction, a consequence may be assigned.

Discipline Consequences

- The administration team will follow the Discipline Matrix guidelines in the Manatee County Code of Conduct but will take into consideration other factors such as behavior plans, 504s or IEPs, and the overall safety and security of the campus.
- Discipline consequences may include the following: warning, lunch detention, time-out, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, referral to law enforcement, or extension of time.
- Students who commit Level 3 or 4 offenses, as described in the Manatee County Code of Conduct, may receive reassignment to Horizons Academy for an extended period.

Parent Contact

Parents will be contacted when a student is assigned a discipline consequence. **Parents must provide accurate contact information at enrollment, including emergency contacts.** To update your personal information in FOCUS, contact the front office. If staff are unable to reach a parent or emergency contact, law enforcement or Child Protective Services may be notified.

Crisis Response Team

In an effort to ensure the safety of the staff and students on the school campus, Horizons Academy has a Crisis Response Team that responds to all serious situations and incidents. The Crisis Response Team members are certified to use Professional Crisis Management strategies. The strategies include: verbal redirection and de-escalation strategies; physical transportation in which the student is moved from one area to another; and immobilization procedures in which the student is restrained in a vertical or horizontal position. The Crisis Response Team will respond in the following situations: when students are in a physical altercation; when students are engaged in physically aggressive and threatening behaviors; when students are engaged in destructive behaviors; and when students refuse to remain in a supervised setting. The Crisis Response Team members will use the least restrictive management techniques first, moving to the more restrictive techniques when students remain non-compliant. Staff will attempt to contact a parent when the Crisis Response Team is deployed.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

No one should be subjected to bullying or harassment at school for any reason. No one should be fearful of physical harm or be the victim of gossip, verbal abuse or mistreatment by peers in person, through others or via text messages, e-mail, Facebook or other communication. Students do not have to be friends with everyone but are expected to treat everyone with civility and respect. It is expected that all students will deal with all persons in ways that convey respect and consideration for individuals, regardless of race, marital status, national origin, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as, "Repeated aggressive, hurtful action of a physical or verbal nature by an individual or group against another individual." Bullying involves a power imbalance and a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim. Such acts can be social, emotional, or physical in nature and may include (but are not limited to) teasing, name-calling, rumor spreading, exclusion, intimidation, threats, personal property damage or theft, pushing, shoving, or other physical acts. Any of these acts committed via any form of electronic device or social media is also considered bullying and can have a school discipline consequence even if the action originates off-campus. Disciplinary action for students determined to be guilty of bullying may include suspension and/or reassignment. Law enforcement may be contacted.

Harassment/Sexual Harassment

Harassment in the form of name-calling, taunting, gestures, intimidation, conduct, jokes, pictures and slurs are prohibited. Such conduct referencing or directed at an individual or group that demeans the person/group on the basis of race, ethnicity, Religion, gender, sexual orientation, creed, age, disability or other extraneous factors is prohibited and shall be grounds for disciplinary action. Sexual harassment includes all unwanted, uninvited and non-reciprocal sexual attention as well as the creation of an intimidating, hostile or offensive school or work environment. This can include: sexually suggestive looks or gestures; sexual jokes, pictures or teasing; pressure for dates or sex; sexually demeaning comments; deliberate touching, cornering or pinching; attempts to kiss or fondle; threats, demands or suggestions that favors will be granted in exchange for sex or tolerance of sexual advances. Disciplinary action for students guilty of any harassment will be dependent upon, but not limited to, the student's attitudes, intent, the effect on other students and/or staff, mitigating circumstances, and the student's disciplinary history. Based on these factors, discipline may be imposed, up to and including suspension and/or reassignment. Additionally, law enforcement may be contacted. Please refer to the Manatee County Student Code of Conduct for further information.