

Honor Ridge Academy

2017-2018
Parent/Student Handbook



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Welcome!

Welcome to the 2017 – 2018 school year.

On behalf of all of our faculty and staff members, we welcome you and your family. Honor Ridge Academy focuses on providing a successful and rewarding educational experience that will impact your life for years to come. The philosophy of our school is to provide a supportive and enriching environment where students learn at their own pace according to their individual strengths and needs. We feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to work with you and your child this year and we want to assure you that we will do our best to provide a positive, safe, healthy, nurturing, and respectful environment which encourages learning and provides the necessary social and emotional support to facilitate growth and success. With everyone working together, student, families and our school team, this should be an excellent school year! If you are a new student it can be difficult when transitioning into a new school. Our team is available to answer any questions and to support you with your new beginnings. We strive to help students quickly learn they are in a place where they can begin to trust and immediately feel like a part of our school culture. Once again, a big heartfelt, welcome!

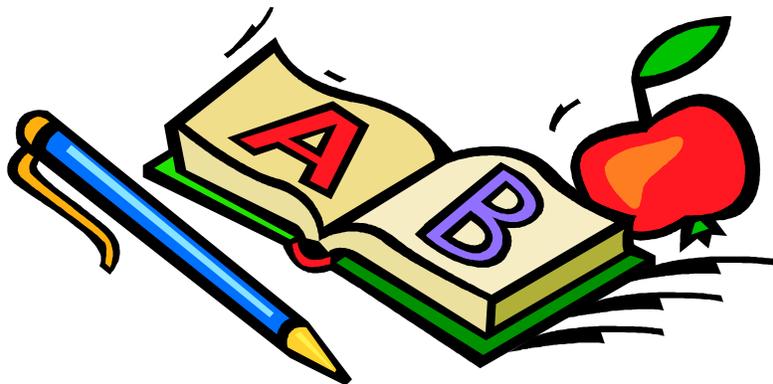
Sincerely,



Maria Torres

Mission Statement

It is the aim of Honor Ridge Academy to provide a positive, safe, healthy, nurturing, respectful, and emotionally supportive environment in which students can learn at their own pace, according to their individual strengths and needs. The students are provided with the strategies needed for learning in all academic areas. The academic environment also provides the students with skills that foster the development of their self-esteem and confidence, enabling them to function as a successful member in our society.



School Hours/Contact Info

Honor Ridge Academy

342 Madison Hill Road

Clark, NJ 07066

Phone: (732)827.5885

Fax: (732)827.5456

Mailing Address & Business Office

170 Changebridge Road, Suite C5-3

Montville, NJ 07045

Phone: (973) 784.4787

Fax: (973)784.4788

School Hours

8:30-3:00pm

In the event of inclement weather

Honor Ridge Academy Inclement Weather Policy:

Honor Ridge Academy uses the Honeywell Instant Alert system to notify parents of any changes to the schedule.

**** Check NJ 12 (website or TV channel) for listing of school closings.**

Honor Ridge Academy makes every effort to contact each parent/guardian in the event of a schedule change. Under some circumstances, that is not possible. New Jersey 12 news, both the website and TV channel, will have any updates. Any cancelled school days may result in additional days being added to the calendar. Parents/guardians will be given as much advanced notice as possible of any calendar changes.

Attendance Policy

Honor Ridge Academy requires that the pupils enrolled attend school regularly in accordance with compulsory attendance laws of this state. The educational program offered is predicated on the presence of the pupil and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. The regular contact of pupils with one another in the classroom and their participation in a well-planned instructional activity under the tutelage of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose. It is the legal responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure that their child is enrolled and attends school during the day and hours that school is in session.

School attendance is the responsibility of the student and the parents. The student who absents himself/herself from school/class impedes and compromises the teaching-learning process. The school neither condones nor permits absences from school for any reason not specified in the law, and course credit will not be issued if the student attendance requirement is not met. **This may affect eligibility for graduation.**



Dress/Backpack/Phone Policy

Dress Policy:

Honor Ridge Academy's students are expected to be neat and clean in appearance (i.e., no excessively ripped jeans). The Administration will determine the appropriateness of a student's clothing if there is a question. Any clothing which promotes alcohol, drugs, tobacco products or currently recognized gang symbols, which are racially or sexually offensive or demeaning, or which otherwise interferes with the educational process is not allowed. Hats, hoods, head coverings, slippers, flip-flops, "shoe skates", and sunglasses should not be worn in school or on field trips unless deemed appropriate. Undergarments should be covered at all times. Footwear or clothing that has any features which may damage school property is not allowed. Students may not wear beachwear, bare midriff shirts, halters, tube tops, camisole shirts with less than 1" straps, short shorts or skirts (no more than 6" above the middle of the knee), pajama pants and tops (exception: Dr. Seus week), baggy pants, long pants dragging on the ground, transparent clothing, or extremely low hip huggers. Honor Ridge Academy will not be responsible for the loss of jewelry, games, and other personal items. Inappropriate T-shirts are not allowed and will be turned inside out and should not be worn again in school. Large earrings hoops or jewelry with metal studs or chains of any kind many not be worn at school due to safety concerns. Small posts will be allowed with parental permission.

Backpack Policy:

Honor Ridge Academy day students are required to use a clear backpack. Any backpack that is not transparent will be checked by staff upon arrival and stored during the school day. The school staff has the right to store transparent backpacks as well, if deemed necessary.

Cell Phone Policy:

Cell phone usage in school is prohibited by students. Cell phones must be turned in daily upon arrival. If a student refuses to hand in the phone, he/she will remain in the office and a parent/guardian will be contacted. Student will remain in the office until the student is compliant and is able to hand in the phone. A school administrator will assign the decided discipline for their non-compliance. The parent/s or guardian will be asked to keep the phone from coming to school due to the student's non-compliance. If a student is found to have a concealed phone on them, they will receive in-school suspension and the phone will be confiscated. Once confiscated the parent/s or guardian must come to school to retrieve the phone. The parent/s or guardian will be asked to keep the phone from coming to school. A student who breaks the phone policy in any way will be ineligible to make honors or mention due to their non-compliance or concealing a phone.



Transportation

- I. **Bus Discipline** – All students are expected to display appropriate behavior at all times, while traveling to and from school. If a student engages in behavior that is dangerous to self or others, 911 will be called. The police may take your child to the police station and it will be the parent's/guardian's responsibility to meet the student at the police station. Behaviors at this level will cause a student to have in-school suspension. In the event a student engages in continuous behavior that is dangerous to the student and the well-being of others, the student will receive additional in school suspensions. Additionally, the bus company or sending districts may suspend your child from the bus, in these cases, the PARENT/GUARDIAN WILL BE RESPONSIBLE for their Child's transportation until a meeting can be arranged with the Parent/Guardian, Child Study Team and Honor Ridge Academy in order to review the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) and disciplinary action.
- II. **Bus Arrival/ Departure** – Transporting students can be a very challenging job. Safety MUST be a PRIORITY. Please talk with your child about appropriate bus behavior.
- Listen to the bus driver and attendant.
 - Stay in your seat at all times.
 - Always stay buckled up!
 - Engage in appropriate conversation.
 - Cursing is unacceptable and will be reported!
 - Soft voices should ALWAYS be used.
 - Keep hands and body parts inside windows.

- No inappropriate gestures out of windows.
- No throwing anything out of the windows of the bus.
- No teasing, provoking or hitting others.
- No cell phone usage on bus or in school

When a driver or an attendant reports a student doing any of the above, the student may start his day in the office area and remain there until he is able to discuss his behavior and accept the consequences given for his actions. In-school suspensions will be given for severe and/or repetitive behaviors.

It is important for you, as the parent(s)/guardian(s), to meet the bus driver and assistant working with your son. Please be advised that buses should not arrive at Honor Ridge Academy before 8:15a.m. Students are not dismissed from the bus until 8:30 a.m., and the afternoon dismissal from school is at 3:00 p.m.

Honor Ridge Academy is **NOT RESPONSIBLE** for **transportation**. **Your school district has contracted with the transportation company. Please contact the school district or bus-company directly, if you are having problems.** Make sure to exchange phone numbers with the bus driver. Honor Ridge Academy is responsible for bus drills, which will be conducted periodically, as mandated by the state.



Fire/Emergency Drills

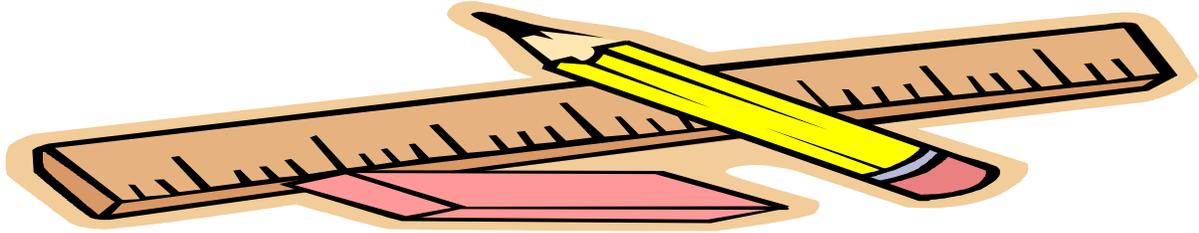
Fire drills are held once each month in accordance with New Jersey State Law. The drills help students learn to safely evacuate the building in the event of a fire. Students are taught to react quickly and follow instructions during the fire drills.

Bus evacuation drills are held at regular intervals. All students are required to participate in these safety drills.

Emergency Management Drills will be held once monthly to ensure the preparedness of students to act promptly and appropriately in the event of an emergency. Teachers will be trained and in turn, guide and train the students before and during the drills.

School Visitors

In an effort to keep our students and schools secure, all visitors must be “buzzed in” to the school building and shall report to the school office upon entering the building to sign in and obtain a visitor’s pass. A “visitor” is anyone other than a pupil enrolled in or a staff member employed in the particular school. Visitors may not consult with the teaching staff or pupils during class time without the principal’s permission.



Curriculum and Instruction

Our curriculum is designed to provide each student with the most fulfilling education we can provide. We provide a full and varied school curriculum that is aligned with New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS), yet accommodate individual students who have special needs. We manage this important balance in several ways. Combining flexible academic instruction with a school-wide social skills training program, emotional/behavioral counseling and small classroom settings allow our teachers to provide individual support for each student. Instructional lessons are taught in smaller sections over a longer period of time. As a result, students can fill in gaps in their education and learn at a more reasonable pace.

The high school curriculum is designed to fulfill the state mandated requirements for graduation. Each year, every high school student meets with an academic advisor to make sure they are on track to graduate, and to create a plan to earn the necessary credits.

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”
-William Butler Yeats”

Discipline/Behavioral Points System

Therapeutic Behavioral Program Description and Policy

Program Description

Honor Ridge Academy provides a therapeutic behavioral program which utilizes a multi-disciplinary and team approach that combines student behavioral outcome with programmatic performance. The following system is in place to support students and to guide them toward making good choices and decisions. The goal is for students to be successful in their academic and behavioral goals. Safety is always a primary goal and one that is taken seriously. Building students' self-esteem, social and emotional skills, and teaching about healthy choices and responsibility for their choices is a focus in our program.

Point System

Students at Honor Ridge Academy have the ability to earn points daily which is reflective of their behavior. (See description below) Recognition on a daily basis is provided through teacher/staff praise, privileges, trips, and tangible rewards. Points are totaled for each day and by the end of the week students can make an honorary status that will enable them to receive tangible rewards, trips, special privileges, etc. as selected by the principal, behavioral team, social workers, and classroom teachers. Whole classrooms can also work toward behavioral goals, allowing them to earn special trips, rewards, etc.

School Arrival

When students arrive to school, they are expected to enter in an orderly way. They will be greeted each morning and will be scanned by a behavioral staff member for metal detection. This is strictly done for safety purposes; respect and sensitivity is displayed at all times. Students will leave their backpacks, electronics, games, etc. with the behavioral staff. The backpacks will be kept in a large bin. The other items will be collected, labeled, put in individual plastic bags, and kept in a safe area until needed. If students have permission from their teachers, they will be allowed to have approved items during their earned time in class. This is based on behavior and up to the teacher's discretion; otherwise, the items are given out during dismissal. At no time may a students use their phone during school hours.

De-escalation of Behavior

A proactive role in de-escalating behaviors and recognizing detached and or depressed behaviors is fundamental in dealing with our special needs populations. All staff will receive ongoing training in these areas. If a student becomes agitated and/or a possible danger to others or him/herself, a staff member trained in crisis intervention and/or counseling will be called upon to intervene when necessary. If needed, the student may spend a few minutes in the office to “reset” or calm down and prepare for the transition back into the classroom. If further counseling were required, the student's social worker would be involved. For ongoing serious behavioral concerns, a team approach would be implemented whenever necessary. Ongoing

communication between school staff, parents, and/or guardian, and CST case manager, is essential.

Suspension

In-school suspensions are given for dangerous or non-compliant behaviors, bringing in prohibited items, fighting, violent/aggressive or bullying behaviors. These behaviors are unacceptable in school, on the school bus, or at the bus stop. If any of these behaviors take place, an in-school suspension will be utilized. The length of in-school suspension is dependent upon the severity of the behavior, the development and maturity level of the student, and the levels of harm or act. The parent/guardian and CST will be notified. In cases of students displaying extremely unsafe behaviors, a team decision to suspend out of school may be necessary.

Prohibited Items

For safety reasons the following items are prohibited. Weapons, bullets, knives, Leathermans (a pocket knife with tools), pocket knives, box cutters, switchblades, razors, gun powder, toy guns, poppers, fireworks of any kind, drugs, drug or alcohol paraphernalia, alcohol, matches, lighters, high energy drinks, bath salts, and cigarettes are all prohibited and should not be brought to school under any circumstances. The Executive Director from Honor Ridge Academy and the Chief of Police from the Clark Police department, the Union County Superintendent from the Department of Education and the Union County Prosecutor from the County Office are committed in a Memorandum of Agreement. Any student who is in violation of

bringing any of the above items will be held accountable. The Clark Police will be notified and a student may be taken to the Clark Police Station which may lead to an arrest. The items above, all have potential of being a danger and should not be brought to school or left anywhere outside of school or on the school bus. Open beverages are NOT allowed on the school bus. If a beverage is brought to school for lunch, then it must be an unopened sealed beverage. The parents and CST case manager will be notified if the police need to be summoned; however, if either one cannot be reached, a message will be left. When the police are summoned, they will request the student information, age, date of birth, address, parent/guardian's home address and home phone number. The police will also try to contact the parent or guardian and may request pick up from the police station.

Team Meetings

Team meetings within the school involving teachers, administrative, social workers and behavioral staff are utilized when concerns arise. The concern may involve a whole classroom dynamic and or an individual student or students that require a team effort and possibly a behavioral plan/s.

Our system-wide therapeutic behavioral program is for all students. The Code of Conduct fosters respect for self and others. The key components are: Respectfulness, Responsibility, Cooperation, Self- Discipline, and Self-Determination; these components are reflected in the school rules.

Honor Ridge Academy has five rules that are implemented throughout the school day. These include: Be there, Be Ready,

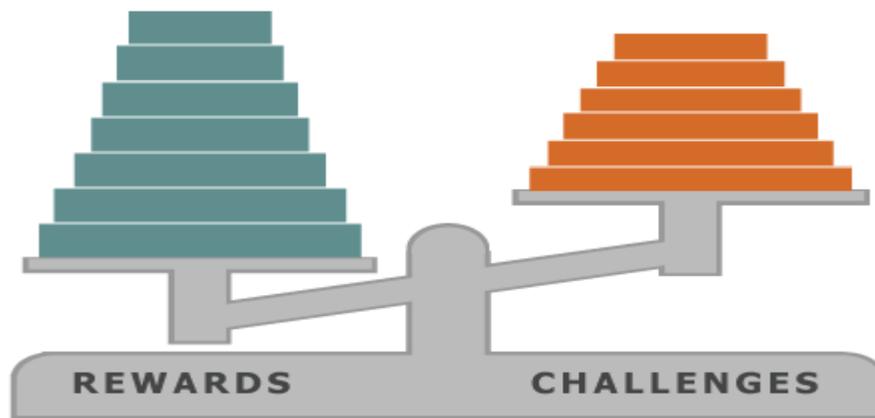
Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Personal Space, Follow directions. (See on page 19). These rules are Poster size and posted in each classroom area.

Students earn points for meeting school and classroom expectations. Each student starts every class period with zero points. Students do not lose points for misbehaviors rather they earn points for appropriate behaviors.

Students can earn: High Honors if they make 95% of their points, Honors if they make 86% of their points and Mention if they make 75% of their points. The possible weekly points total is 100 points.

When students earn status, they can purchase items from our school store on Fridays, as well as, earn honor's trips, special events, special tangible rewards or treats. The class as a whole may work toward motivating each other in the class to earn status for a special trip, etc. If students continuously earn status consecutively, they are eligible for more desirable trips, i.e. bowling; tangible rewards, or privileges.

In addition, students may take advantage of Honor's Art the last period of the day on Fridays. They are also eligible to attend an Honor's swim at the YMCA on Friday mornings. Students with Honors and Honorable Mention status must choose between Friday's activities. High Honor Status' students may participate in both activities.



Rewards

Honor Ridge Academy Rules

Students earn points for meeting school and classroom expectations. Each student starts every class period with zero points. Students do not lose points for misbehaviors rather they earn points for appropriate behaviors.

Be there be ready:

- Transition appropriately to and from class.
- Enter room quietly and sit appropriately.
- Remain in assigned area.
- Focus eyes on speaker.

Be responsible:

- Participate in all class activities.
- Work quietly.
- Focus on self.
- Use anger management strategies when upset.
- Use materials appropriately.

Be respectful:

- Remain quiet when others speak.
- Use appropriate gestures.
- Encourage others to do well.
- Treat teachers, staff, and peer with respect.
- Use polite and appropriate language.
- Raise your hand to speak.

Personal Space:

- Keep hands and feet to yourself.
- Maintain appropriate social distance.
- Use only your own materials unless given permission.

Follow Directions:

- Follow directions and procedures the first time they are given.
- Ask questions when confused.

Computer/Internet Usage Policy

Internet Terms and Conditions

Use of the Internet, which has great potential for education, also carries a potential for abuse. It is the purpose of this policy, as well as the contract for Internet use, to assure that all who use the school service Internet or other telecommunications, both students and faculty, use this valuable resource in an appropriate manner.

Acceptable Use:

The purpose of the Honor Ridge Academy's network Internet access is to support research and education in the school. Use of the Internet should be in support of education and research consistent with the education objectives of the school.

Medical Emergencies

Medical Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, students will be taken to:

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Rahway

865 Stone Street

Rahway, New Jersey 07065-2797

Allergies/Medical Conditions:

Honor Ridge Academy employs a full-time School Nurse during school hours. The nurse should be notified in the event that any medical conditions or allergies exist.