

HARDIN-JEFFERSON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

DIRECTIONS TO PARENTS

REGARDING CHILD CUSTODY MATTERS

The MISSION of the Hardin-Jefferson Independent School District is to provide the best possible education for all students in an environment that promotes and develops responsible, productive citizens through a cooperative effort of all parents, students, teachers, administrators, and the Hardin-Jefferson community. We work with parents to implement educational programs in a safe and nurturing environment conducive to learning.

PRESUMPTIONS

As a general presumption, all parents (whether biological or adopted) and legal guardians have the rights enumerated in the Texas Family Code §153.071. The school district will recognize and honor these rights as they exist for both parents unless directed otherwise by a court order or lawful directive.

- to receive information from any other conservator concerning the health, education, and welfare of the child;
- to confer with the other parent to the extent possible before making a decision concerning health, education and welfare of the child;
- of access to medical, dental, psychological, and educational records of the child;
- to consult a physician, dentist, or psychologist of the child;
- to consult with school officials concerning the child's welfare and educational status, including school activities;
- to attend school activities;
- to be designated on the child's records as a person to be notified in case of an emergency;
- to consent to medical, dental, and surgical treatment during an emergency involving an immediate danger to the health and safety of the child, and
- to manage the estate of the child to the extent has been created by the parent or parent's family.

Parents who are married and "separated" but who have not filed for divorce in a court of proper jurisdiction, retain equal rights, privileges, duties, and power until some legal recourse is sought by one of the parents and a court enters an Order specifying the parental rights. This remains true of unmarried parents who are the biological parents of the child/children in question and who are separated but have not filed for divorce.

ENROLLMENT

To be authorized to enroll a child, the person must be a biological or adoptive parent or the child's legal guardian. A legal guardian is a person having legal control of the child for all purposes and not for the ostensible purpose of the child's being able to attend school. Legal guardianship must be reflected in an Order of a county or probate court.

In situations where only **one parent** is on the child's birth certificate, only **that person** can enroll or withdraw the child or can authorize another individual to enroll or withdraw the child. A person claiming to be the biological parent of a child, but who is not on the birth certificate and whom the enrolling parent does not recognize as the other biological parent, is not entitled to either enroll or withdraw the child. A biological parent without recognized rights should establish his or her parental rights through the family court system.

COMPLIANCE WITH COURT ORDERS

At the time of enrollment, a copy of the most current divorce decree or court order establishing the rights of each parent shall be provided to the campus principal. Any modifications to those orders shall be provided immediately upon issuance by the Court.

Campus personnel will make their best efforts to interpret and comply with the terms of the orders affecting the parent child relationship. Please do not ask school personnel to act inconsistent with a court order. It is the parent's responsibility to seek modification of existing court orders when terms and conditions warrant.

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

While all parents (unless restricted by court order) have the right to participate in school activities, such participation must be consistent with school policy and procedure. It is imperative that we preserve the sanctity of the classroom and minimize disruptions to the educational environment. As such, invitation is generally extended for particularized events and activities.

We discourage unannounced visits by all parents and will exercise our discretion in granting requests for participation of attendance on campus. The school campus will not be used as a visitation site.

Unless required by court order, the school district has no obligation to inform one parent that the other parent has been on campus. Please do not ask that our educators report participation by your child's mother/father in school activities.

TEACHER CONSULTATION

Each parent (unless restricted by court order) has the right to consult with their child's teacher regarding educational issues. All teachers have a conference period where they may meet with parents or visit by telephone. Please do not ask your child's teacher NOT to talk with your child's father/mother. Unless restricted by court order, the teacher will respond to inquiries of both parents.

Unless required by court order, the school district has no obligation to inform one parent that the other parent has consulted with the child's teacher. Please do not ask that our educators report parent contact or communication.

ACCESS TO RECORDS

Each parent (unless restricted by court order) has the right to access educational records of their child. Upon request, copies of records will be provided. Please do not ask that we deny requests by mom/dad for your child's report card or other records. Unless restricted by court order, the district will provide access equally to both parents.

Unless required by court order, the school district has no obligation to inform one parent that the other parent has requested education records. Please do not ask that we report requests for records.

TIMES OF POSSESSION

Our general rule is that students are released only to those individuals identified on the emergency contact form or upon written directive by a judge. Students will be released consistent with the terms of the court order - that is, they will be released only to those person(s) identified in the order and only at such times required. Please do not be offended if we ask for identification prior to release. If the order allows for a parent to designate another competent adult to retrieve their child from school, such designation must be in writing and signed by the parent.

The school district will not alter bus routes to transport students during times of possession. Please do not ask that your child ride a different bus during times of possession.

The safety and well-being of students is our primary concern. The district reserves the right to refuse release and/or to contact law enforcement if at any time the circumstances reflect a health or safety concern for the child.

The district also reserves the right to ban any person who causes a disruption or has no legitimate purpose for being on campus.