

# 2017–2018 HTS Family Participation Agreement

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# 2017–2018 HTS Family Participation Agreement

## ***Submission of registration for classes signifies full concurrence on the part of the parents and students with this Family Agreement***

### **Our purposes for the classes are threefold:**

- To provide support and resources that help parents more effectively integrate academics into the overall discipleship and character development of their children.
- To assist and support the parent(s) in achieving educational goals and academic excellence while developing independent learners.
- To enhance and support the family's ability to successfully homeschool their children through the high school years.

### **HTS Classes are designed to be a partnership among administration, parent, instructor, and student.**

#### **• What you can expect from the Instructor**

Each class will have an instructor who is educated in and passionate about their subject material, teaching and evaluating unapologetically from a biblical worldview. Each instructor will provide a course syllabus and will have regular email contact with the parent(s) that may include a brief description of material covered and current assignment(s). Quarterly progress reports (semi-annual for Elective Classes) and a final year-end report for Grades 6-12 will be issued in sealed envelopes or via email at the discretion of the instructor. Grades K-5 will receive a Certificate of Completion suitable for framing or keeping in a notebook at the end of the year. The instructor will contact a parent immediately if behavioral problems surface or if lack of academic progress is evident. While we will not provide a transcript, there will be sufficient evaluations, tests, etc., to enable the parent to produce a transcript for our courses that sufficiently meets your educational requirements.

#### **• What we expect from the Student**

This is NOT a self-paced program. The student will be expected to attend all classes, meet assignment deadlines, participate actively and respectfully in class discussions, and perform to a satisfactory level on quizzes, tests, and assignments. Being properly prepared for class is an important part of the training necessary for future success in college, career, and/or home management. The student will be expected to come prepared with texts, completed assignments, and required supplies necessary to fully participate in class. In the event of a planned absence, the instructor must be notified **by the parent** as far in advance as possible as assignments will need to be completed in advance of the absence. Grace will be extended for missed classes in circumstances beyond the family's control, but submitting missed assignments in a timely manner will still be required. Students must perform all evaluated work individually, and unless other directions are explicitly given, must take all exams without referring to a textbook, notes, or other materials or people. We assume that all work submitted by students to be their own original work, except for portions they explicitly attribute to another source. We consider any other submission to be plagiarism or cheating.

#### **• What we expect from the Parent(s)**

Regardless of the method of education chosen, the ultimate responsibility for the education of the child remains with the parent. The purpose of HTS is not to replace the parent, but to come alongside and assist the parent in this monumental task. We expect that the parent will be intimately involved in monitoring their student's progress, including deadline management. Depending on the level of maturity and responsibility of the student, more or less "hands-on" monitoring will be required. Ideally, less and less intensive monitoring will be required as the years progress and the student begins to achieve independent learning skills necessary for college, career, and household management. We encourage each parent to assist their student(s) in keeping a notebook or file for each class that will enable the parent and their student to assemble a worthy portfolio at the end of the school year. The parents are expected to remain active in ongoing communication with the instructor(s) regarding progress and to initiate contact when any concerns arise. We expect that parents will provide sufficient oversight to ensure their students conduct themselves honorably and adhere to all HTS

policies. If a behavioral issue arises, parents will be expected to partner with the instructor to deal with the situation promptly, courteously, and thoroughly. Discipline issues that linger will be dealt with according to Matthew 18 guidelines. If you are concerned about a particular issue/behavior/assignment, please contact the instructor promptly. Please be alert to potential miscommunications whether through lack of communication or misunderstood expectations which could result in offense or strife. Seek clarity where it is needed as soon as possible. Parents will be required to assist the instructor as a proctor, grade and/or return to the instructor various daily assignments, quizzes, and tests throughout the school year. The specific parental role required for each course will vary. Information specific to each course is available in the course description and directly from the instructor prior to registration.

HTS has a Director operating under the oversight of and in accountability to the leadership of the Harvester. The complete HTS leadership team also includes others with delegated authority covering a variety of responsibilities. In matters involving the HTS mission principles and processes, we ask parents to respect the mission, the community, and the leadership by supporting the direction and decisions of these leaders while working to biblically resolve concerns and/or conflicts within the group. We invite and encourage you to politely and respectfully question matters you do not understand, and make recommendations where you see potentially preferred alternatives. Once a decision is finalized, we ask you to follow the general maxim of "letting our praise be public and our criticism be private" (i.e., between us and the one we are confronting). This will promote strong personal relationships and a unified body of Christ. This will also model appropriate respect and submission to authority and the biblical standard we expect of our children to "do all without grumbling or complaining".

**Special note to parents:** One of the reasons many choose to homeschool is the benefit the 1-1 tutorial relationship brings. It enables the parent to meet both the individual learning style needs of the student and address any special needs that student might have. These may range from modality to more significant challenges. In order that the instructors and administration of HTS may better come alongside you as the parent and evaluate the specific needs of your student we ask that you discuss directly prior to enrollment with each instructor any specific learning needs or challenges your student might have. This will enable them to better assist you in initial enrollment decisions and the subsequent discipleship and education of your child. HTS does not possess governmental directive, training, or obligation to provide special services such as those indicated in various documents as IEPs, 504 plans, and such. HTS is not equipped to provide accommodations for special needs students who require separate grading or instructional procedures. Should a need arise during the course of the year beyond workable limits as earlier agreed and established between the parent and the instructor (with help from administration) a family may be encouraged to disenroll or move a student's academic status to "audit".

## Family Service

In an effort to further partner with families in the day-to-day operation of HTS and to keep operating expenses as low as possible, every HTS family (particularly parents of students) will be required to assist with various administrative and support responsibilities on the days when the classes meet. Each family is required to serve a total of **10 hrs/family + 2 hrs/enrolled student**. The **maximum** service hours required per family is **15**. These hours are served in the following ways throughout the academic year: a single hour as a Lunch Monitor, 2 hours in childcare supporting moms of young children desiring to attend the HTS Ladies Bible Study, or 4 hours as a morning or afternoon Study Hall Monitor. This is a requirement and condition of acceptance into the HTS class program. This service requirement should not be confused with any individual parent involvement requirements in individual classes (such as K4/K5, Elem art or science). Any requirements placed on parents by individual classes are in addition to this requirement. **Family Service sign-up will be conducted on-line in August, prior to the beginning of classes. We ask that each family plan to serve approximately half of their total hours each semester thus spreading their participation throughout the year.**

# General Family Policies

## Family Directory

The HTS Family Directory provides families an avenue to contact each other outside of classroom meeting times. Families may arrange play dates, field trips, swap volunteer hours, and more by opting into and making use of the Family Directory. Out of respect for a family's desire for privacy, HTS staff and instructors will not share information from one family to another when one family has opted out of the Family Directory.

## Introduction to HTS – “HTS 101” FOR NEW FAMILIES ONLY

HTS is a unique ministry to the home schooling family and therefore it is important that participating families understand not just our goals, but how we will strive to achieve them and in particular, the family's role in this process. Our purposes reach far beyond what one sees on a day when classes meet. Over the past few years we have become increasingly more intentional and deliberate in carrying out these purposes. Our communication of this vision is important because our experience has shown that families who enter our community with a clear understanding of these purposes do well and receive far more in return. This is why we provide a venue to discuss the vision of HTS. In 2006 we began offering “HTS 101” to answer questions like these: What is HTS all about? Why is there such an emphasis on parental involvement? How can my family get the greatest benefit from HTS? In addition to these questions, we will discuss the recently updated Child Protection Policy of The Harvester Church. Updates to this policy include, but are not limited to, the willingness of all parents and teachers to submit to a criminal background check. Two “HTS 101” classes are scheduled for the 2017-18 academic year: August 24 and September 21. This class is one and one half hours long and will provide time for discussion and for questions and answers. **All families NEW TO HTS are required to attend one session in order to participate in HTS classes.** Families will receive a partial refund of \$35 of their initial registration fee in the form of a credit to their overall tuition bill after attending HTS 101.

## HTS Orientation

Orientation will be held on Tuesday, August 29, beginning with a Root Beer Float Social at 6:45pm. At Orientation, we preview how a typical class day goes, and update families on modifications to the program. It will provide a good opportunity for especially younger students to meet their instructors and become more familiar with the building, thus reducing first-day jitters.

## Email Access

Email is the primary means we have for continued communication among parents, instructors, and HTS Administrative staff. Parents must maintain a current email address with HTS and check it regularly. Parents of teens are encouraged to also include the email address of their teens upon registration so that they can be included in instructor communication.

## Tardy Student Policy

It is a sign of respect and regard for others that students arrive for class on time. A student is tardy when he/she arrives after the classroom door has been closed and the class has begun. Students habitually arriving late for class are a significant disruption.

## Dropping Off and Picking Up Students

*(The following is a matter of security and safety.)* Upon entering the Harvester property, turn right into the first “travel” lane; the passenger side of your vehicle should be closest to the building when you come on-site to park or to drop off or pick up students at the HTS entrance door. Do not park or wait in the traffic pattern. If you expect any delay when you drive up to the building in either the drop-off or pick-up of your students, park your car, so as to reduce the amount of disruption to traffic flow. Parents are expected to pick up their children promptly. Parents late in picking up their children will find them in Study Hall.

Students are not to be outside the building without the permission and direct supervision of their parent or a HTS staff member. **Students who drive are required to have a signed parent release and are not to leave the Harvester property until he/she is leaving for the day.** Once a student's classes are over, he or she is not to linger in the Harvester parking lot or building. The blacktop area is only for traffic movement and parking. The playing of ball sports and the riding of scooters, roller blades, or skateboards are prohibited in the church parking lot.

There is ONE entry/exit door for HTS; it is located at the far end of the building as you enter the parking lot.

### **Crossing Rolling Road**

No student, unless accompanied by a parent or with express prior WRITTEN permission from the parent, is to leave the Harvester property. ***Any student crossing Rolling Road by himself without parental oversight will face severe consequences including possible expulsion.***

### **Inclement Weather**

In the case of inclement weather, HTS classes will follow the action of the Fairfax County Public Schools. If the public schools are closed, then classes will be canceled. If the public schools close early, HTS classes will also close early (at the same time as the public schools). However, if the public schools open late, HTS classes will commence on time. A program-wide email will be sent to all staff and families *when at all possible* to confirm the HTS schedule, but it is the responsibility of HTS staff and families to listen to radio WMAL-AM 630, any of the major network TV stations, or check the public school district's website, [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu), for this information. Please do not call or email members of the Administrative Team or the church office for this information as it will take resources away from us at a time when they are needed for response to myriad details that arise due to inclement weather.

### **Classroom Behavior & Discipline**

HTS considers the Bible to be the inspired Word of God and the standard for assessing truth and error as well as moral right and wrong. Academically this means that we evaluate all ideas, opinions, and theories by their conformity with both the Bible and, where possible, the results of scientific study. Relationally this means that we endeavor to treat one another with kindness and respect, in mutual submission that considers others before ourselves. An academic setting affords frequent opportunities to consider differing opinions and ideas. We recognize that even within a worldview that sees the Bible as the standard for truth, there is an acceptable range of interpretational opinions and individual applications. We encourage students to present and defend their views and to open-mindedly consider positions other than their own, but we insist that all such interactions be conducted with kindness and respect. We expect all participants to always speak truth in love, remembering that love is patient, kind, and gentle. We do not tolerate personal attacks, insults, or any other approach that belittles other people, regardless of their viewpoint. We believe that mutual accountability reinforces individual restraint in promoting appropriate standards of behavior. Although adult oversight will always play a strong part in the day-to-day operation of HTS, appropriate standards of behavior will best be enforced by all participants in the spirit of Matthew 7&18 and then, if needed, reporting problems to HTS administration.

Examples of unacceptable classroom behavior include, but are not limited to: Talking back to the instructor or showing any sort of disrespect to the instructor or fellow student, bothering another student either through physical touch or verbal communication, or talking out of turn in class.

A student who engages in any of the above misbehaviors will be admonished, but allowed to remain in class. Misbehavior in the classroom or study hall cannot be ignored or overlooked. If the behavior occurs a second time in the same class period, the instructor has the option to accompany the student and discuss the issue with a member of the Administrative Team. If the same or similar behavior occurs again on another day, the same course will be followed. If the problem re-occurs yet again representing a sinful pattern, the parent will be included in the development of a plan of correction for this student that may include, but not be limited to, requiring the parent to attend classes with the student for the remainder of the semester.

## Respect for the Facility

We are guests of The Harvester Presbyterian Church. Students are to be respectful of all church property and equipment. Students will be held accountable for any misuse of Harvester Church property. No one is to use or handle audio and musical equipment. No one is to use the church copier or fax machine without permission from HTS administration. No one is to use the church appliances or to serve themselves from the church refrigerator or cabinets. For the safety of our families and care for the floors, HTS observes a “no wheels” policy including Wheelies.

## Study Hall

There will be a Study Hall offered for student use. Study Hall is a revocable privilege, not a right. Students are required to come prepared for study hall just as if it were a class. Parents are required to ensure that their children come prepared to use study hall for its intended purpose. Students of any age who are capable of sitting still and working independently for the duration of the class period are welcome to sit in Study Hall. Students who are not able to work independently are not permitted in the Study Hall and are encouraged to work under their parent’s direction. *Students may not spend more than two consecutive class periods in Study Hall without the prior consent of the Director.* Attendance will be taken by an adult monitor who will preside over each Study Hall. HTS administration reserves the right to ask parents to pick up their student from Study Hall if the student does not demonstrate the ability to work quietly and independently in Study Hall.

With the exception of chess (played according to “silent rule”), no games or hand-held electronic games are permitted in Study Hall. Cell phones must be put on silent mode AND used in the office for emergency purposes only. Laptops may be used after returning a parent- and student-signed permission slip for school work only. A limited number of electrical outlets are available. MP3 players/iPods may only be used in Study Hall by students who have a parent-signed permission form on file. The intent of this option is to allow students to use audio books, foreign language audio, and for students whose study is enhanced by the use of classical music. The content of the audio device is the responsibility of the parent and will not be policed by the study hall monitor or HTS staff. Use of players without a signed permission form, and the sharing of headphones or a player with others is not allowed and will be reason for confiscation in or out of Study Hall.

We recognize that internet access may be needed by high school students while they are in Study Hall. Any student needing to access the internet for research or to submit a paper must have a Student Network Use Agreement signed by a parent and the student in advance.

Since Bible classes meet during the first class of the day on Tuesdays, there will be no study hall available until 9:40am. Parents should, therefore, plan to either enroll their children in a Bible class or not drop them off until their first class of the day.

## Food and Lunch

***No snacks or drinks are to be consumed during class or study hall with the exception of water.***

Students and their families are invited to eat lunch in areas to be designated by the HTS administration. As Harvester does not have a kitchen, families should bring food that can be eaten without the preparatory use of a refrigerator, microwave, oven, or sink. Students and families will be responsible for cleaning up after they are finished eating. This includes washing the tables and/or chairs, sweeping the floor (if necessary), and putting all trash in the cans provided.

## Outside Areas

**No unsupervised children of any age are permitted outside the HPCA building without express permission from an HTS administrator.** The blacktop area is for traffic movement and parking. The playing of ball sports and the riding of scooters, roller blades, skateboards, etc., are prohibited in the church parking lot during HTS Operating hours. For the safety of our families, HTS observes a “no wheels” policy.

## Visitors

Visitors are not permitted in a classroom without the prior approval of the instructor and the Administrative Team member on duty. Parents are always welcome to silently observe when space permits.

## Resource Center

HTS maintains a Resource Center containing a multitude of books, DVDs, CDs, and curricula. HTS-enrolled families will be given a Resource Center card after classes have begun for the year, and may check out resources on Tuesdays or Thursdays during normal HTS Operating hours. Resources are loaned out for a period of three weeks and accrue fines of \$.10/day when not returned on time. Resources may be renewed in person by speaking with one of the volunteer librarians on Tuesdays or Thursdays.

## Principles of Community Conduct

Students and parents are expected to show respect and consideration for administration, instructors, and one another. Parents should instruct *students to seek out the help of the Administrative Team member on duty* if help is needed in resolving a problem.

*The student will be self-governed by:*

1. Being respectful, obedient, and cooperative.
2. Remaining seated and quiet.
3. Waiting to be recognized before speaking.

*The student will be responsible for:*

1. Doing his/her best in all he/she is asked to do.
2. Paying close attention in class.
3. Following directions.
4. Completing assignments neatly and on time.
5. Being prepared for class with necessary supplies, such as notebook, pen, and paper.
6. Taking the responsibility to ask instructors about make-up work when absent.

*The student will demonstrate the love of Christ to others by:*

1. Being polite, respectful, and considerate toward all adults and fellow students.
2. Caring for their own property and that of classmates and The Harvester.
3. Following the pattern of Matthew 18:15-17 when problems arise concerning another person.

*The student will accept responsibility for his/her actions by:*

1. Being honest and truthful at all times.
2. Not lying, cheating, or plagiarizing others' work.
3. Asking for forgiveness and making restitution when necessary.
4. Not bringing hand-held electronic games to HTS. Cell phones must be put on silent mode and used only in the church office for contact with parents and/or emergency purposes only.

Modesty standards vary, even among conservative Christians. To honor one another in diversity, we will apply a conservative group standard, to minimize the likelihood of anyone being tempted or feeling awkward. The student will dress in a neat and modest fashion. Our general approach will be for the student to remain covered from shortly above the knee to at least above the chest. Tops must be modest. Outer shirts should cover the shoulders, and outer clothing should not be overly tight or form-fitting and should cover all undergarments. (Ex. Boxers are not considered a fashion accessory.) Hats, including "hoodies," are not to be worn inside the building. Any extremes of dress, hairstyle and makeup are not appropriate. Parents, please support us by giving necessary guidance to your student thus avoiding a call to pick up your child early from class for violation of any of these dress guidelines.

While we respect each family's values regarding guy-girl relationships in junior and senior high, we ask that students not approach their HTS opportunities and relationships as exclusive "couples" and, therefore, miss the value of this time for single-minded devotion to God, their academic studies, and mission service.

Therefore, while in any HTS context, either during the academic day or in HTS extracurricular events, students must agree to behave towards one another as “singles,” regardless of their relationships outside HTS. To minimize distraction and potential temptations, as well as avoid the possible perception of impropriety, no student in an HTS context (including the academic day or extracurricular events, in the church building, parking lot, or any other location where the HTS event is occurring) may be in the exclusive company of anyone of the opposite sex or in physical contact with anyone of the opposite sex at any time. This includes, but is not limited to, private discussions out of public view. It also includes physical contact such as back rubs, holding hands, extended hugs, head on shoulders or laps, or any other sustained contact. Again, this is not a judgment of personal or family values or an attempt to define personal morality, but rather an effort to honor others in a diverse group with a shared purpose.

## Registration and Payment Information

### Payment of Tuition and Fees

In keeping with liability insurance requirements, all parents whose children were not enrolled in classes in 2016-17 are required to complete background check consent forms and will be charged an additional \$20 (\$10/parent) for a criminal background check to be conducted on both parents. This will aid us in continuing to protect our community and enable parents to fully participate in the ministry of HTS.

A registration fee of \$95 along with a minimum of 10% down of the family’s tuition for the year is due within 10 days of registration. Families NEW to HTS: Include the \$20 Background Investigation fee with your initial payment. This information can be found by logging into your family account at [www.htslink.org](http://www.htslink.org). Prompt payment is due in order for seats to remain secured. The remaining 90% of the tuition will be paid in 3 installments:

Aug. 1 – 50% of your total balance at this point in time

Oct. 1 – 50% of remaining balance

Dec. 1 – remaining balance

Alternate payment plans can be arranged directly with Joan Silver, HTS Director. Please contact her sufficiently **in advance of due dates** so that all financial obligations can be met in a timely fashion.

A \$20 fee will be added to all returned checks.

HTS is contractually obligated to pay the instructors and its staff. It is vital that families make all tuition payments on time so that HTS can meet these obligations.

### Dropping a Class

We consider a family's registration request to be a well-intentioned commitment to continued enrollment and payment of all fees associated with it. We assume that families will not request a class they are likely to drop later. We understand that circumstances arise necessitating a withdrawal. We want to reasonably accommodate that need.

1. We provide a **grace period until June 15** during which a family may, without charge, drop a course. This can be done online via the family’s HTS account.
2. **Between June 16 and August 1** families must notify the administrator at [htsadmin@harvesterpca.org](mailto:htsadmin@harvesterpca.org) in order to drop a course. 11+ days after initial enrollment, a \$20 administrative fee will be assessed per class withdrawal.
3. First semester tuition payments as well as all materials/supply fees are due in full August 1. This is when all seats are secured. **Any withdrawals after August 1** must include pertinent information regarding the reason for the withdrawal so appropriate determination can be made regarding possible refunds.



***Submission of registration for classes signifies full concurrence on the part of the parents and students with this Family Agreement***