

Honor Code

Mission Statement

The Honor Code of Fort Worth Country Day has been established to instill trust, integrity, and respect for others in ways that create and maintain an environment of trust based on a balance between responsibility and freedom, providing each individual with an opportunity for great self-development.

Definition of Honor

The basic components of honor are honesty, integrity, trust, and respect for oneself, others, and their property. The Fort Worth Country Day Honor Code is designed to uphold these qualities. The Honor Code is not only a system of expectations with the School, but a way of life for the members of the FWCD community. Honor is ultimately a matter of personal responsibility. The Honor Code, however, is a way for each individual to raise the whole community to a higher level of trust and freedom. By acting honorably and trusting that others are acting honorably, the individual contributes to a positive, trusting environment that aids personal and community development. Students, faculty, and administration are equally charged with the responsibility for promoting the principles of honor and creating this atmosphere of trust.

Statement of Honor

Under these principles of honor, the Honor Code includes:

1. **Expectations.** Members of the Upper School are expected not to lie, cheat, steal, and act honorably in everything they do at Fort Worth Country Day. Members of the Upper School are expected to be honest and forthright in all communications with members of the FWCD community. Members of the Upper School are expected to respect the personal property of other community members. Students are expected to take responsibility for completing their own academic work as defined by the individual teachers. It is the student's responsibility to understand what constitutes cheating. Students should assume that all work is to be done individually unless the teacher states that collaboration on a particular assignment is permitted. It is the teacher's responsibility to establish clear expectations for all assignments.
2. **Reporting Violations of the Honor Code.** The Honor Code cannot function if those living under it do not hold others accountable for their actions. Every member of the Upper School community, including administration, faculty, staff, and students, has the moral obligation to confront students who have violated the Honor Code and to report the violations to the Honor Council. While failure to do so does not constitute a punishable offense, this expectation is crucial to the maintenance of the Honor System. However, if a student has been found guilty of violating the Honor Code, he/she must reveal the identity of any accomplices involved in the infraction.
3. **Annual Signing of the Honor Pledge.** In keeping with the above expectations, the Honor Code requires that every student recite the following Honor Pledge at the beginning of each school year, agreeing to uphold the expectations of the Honor Code:

“On my Honor, I will not lie, cheat, or steal, and I agree to
act honorably in everything I do at Fort Worth Country
Day.”

After reciting the Honor Pledge, with their classmates as witnesses, students will then sign their name in the Honor Book, below the Honor Pledge which will be written at the top of each page in the Honor

Book. Any student who joins FWCD after the beginning of the school year will recite the pledge and sign the Honor Book in front of the Honor Council. Students are expected to know and understand the expectations of integrity, any potential violations that occur before the signing of the Honor Book will still be processed through the Honor Council.

4. **Signing of the Honor Statement.** The Honor Code further requires that every student either write and sign the following Statement of Honor on every test or other graded assignment or provide a signature following a teacher's printed Honor Code statement:

“On my Honor, (the student's signature)”

Signing the pledge and statement serves as a reminder of the concepts that the Honor Code represents. A person's signature is a promise of honesty and integrity.

The Honor Council

The Honor Council is an elected body of students, responsible for supervising the maintenance of the Honor Code, which includes dealing with violations of the Honor Code and educating the community about the expectations of the Honor Code. Members of the Honor Council will offer guidance and give access to the Honor System to everyone in the community. A student who witnesses a violation of the Honor Code may bring that information to an Honor Council member as well as to a teacher or administrator. The composition and duties of the Honor Council and the actual procedures for dealing with an Honor Code violation are explained in the Honor Council Charter.

Honor Council Charter

Article I - Name

The official name of this organization shall be the Fort Worth Country Day Upper School Honor Council, hereby known as the Honor Council

Article II - Membership

The Honor Council shall consist of seven elected student members: three representatives from the rising senior class; two representatives from the rising junior class; one representative from the rising sophomore class; and one representative from the rising freshman class. The president and the vice president of the Honor Council will be appointed as outlined in Article IV, Section B.

Article III - Advisor(s)

The advisor(s) to the Honor Council will be faculty members appointed by the division head. The advisor(s) will be selected from a list of faculty submitted by the Honor Council. The advisor(s), along with the president, will serve to coordinate efforts between the administration and the Honor Council. They will attend all meetings of the Honor Council that deal with violations of the Honor Code.

Article IV - Elections

Section 1: Eligibility Requirements

- A. A candidate for any position on the Honor Council must be enrolled at FWCD, and be in good academic and disciplinary standing. Any student who has been on any kind of disciplinary probation in the Upper School cannot run for a position on the Honor Council. No student is allowed to hold a position on the Honor Council during a period of academic probation. At filing, candidates will be reviewed by the Upper School administration to allow for the administration to clarify any reasons why the candidate may be prohibited from running for the Honor Council.

- B. Students may only hold one elected position. They cannot serve on multiple councils (Honor Council, Discipline Council, and Student Council). This policy goes into effect for the Class of 2026.

Section 2: Election Procedures

A. Election of Representatives

- 1. General Election Rules
 - a. Candidates will file in writing with the Honor Council advisor(s) at least one week prior to the election date. The advisor(s) will verify the candidate's eligibility to run.
 - b. All elections will be held by secret ballot, where students will only be eligible to vote for their respective class representatives.
- 2. Senior / Junior / Sophomore Elections
 - a. Honor Council representative elections for rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors will be held in the spring for the next school year.
 - b. The three candidates with the most votes in the senior class will be designated Honor Council class representatives. There will be a runoff only in the case of a tie between the third and fourth-place candidates.
 - c. The two candidates with the most votes in the junior class will be designated Honor Council class representatives. There will be a runoff only in the case of a tie between the second and third-place candidates.
 - d. The candidate receiving the most votes in the sophomore class will be designated Honor Council class representative. There will be a runoff only in the case of a tie between the first and second-place candidates.
- 3. Freshmen Elections
 - a. The election for a freshman representative will be held in the fall of freshman year, after the Honor Code orientation.
 - b. The candidate receiving the most votes in the freshman class will be designated the Honor Council class representative. There will be a runoff only in the case of a tie between the first and second-place candidates.
- 4. Alternates
 - a. The fourth-place candidate in the senior class will be designated as an Honor Council alternate for that class. Should another alternate be required, the next candidate with the highest votes will become the alternate for that class.
 - b. The third-place candidate in the junior class will be designated as an Honor Council alternate for that class. Should another alternate be required, the next candidate with the highest votes will become the alternate for that class.
 - c. The second-place candidate in the sophomore class will be designated as an Honor Council alternate for that class. Should another alternate be required, the next candidate with the highest votes will become the alternate for that class.
 - d. The second-place candidate in the freshman class will be designated as an Honor Council alternate for that class. Should another alternate be required, the next candidate with the highest votes will become the alternate for that class.
 - e. In the event that a student is removed from the Honor Council, the alternate from that class will fill the position (See Article VIII - Dismissal).

B. Appointment of *the Honor Council President and Vice President*

- 1. Appointment of the Honor Council President and Vice President

- a. To be eligible for Honor Council President and Vice President, the member must have served on the Honor Council for at least one semester. If no newly elected junior or senior has served previously on the Council for at least one semester, the one-semester requirement may be waived by the advisor(s).
 - b. Members interested in becoming president or vice president must complete the application and attend an interview with the advisor(s) and the outgoing senior representatives.
 - c. Once interviews have been completed, the outgoing senior representatives will make a recommendation for the president and vice president. This recommendation will be submitted to the advisor(s) and be considered in the final decision.
 - d. The final decision for president will be made by the Honor Council advisor(s).
 - e. Once the president and vice president have been appointed, an announcement should be made to the Upper School community as soon as possible.
2. Appointment of the Secretary
 - a. The secretary will be appointed by the advisor(s) and the outgoing senior representatives.

Article V - Duties

Every member of the Honor Council is expected to uphold and maintain the concepts set forth by the Honor Code. The duties of the Honor Council representatives include, but are not limited to, the following guidelines:

Section 1: The President will be responsible for:

- A. Notifying all members of Honor Council meetings.
- B. Organizing that part of the freshman orientation that concerns the Honor Code.
- C. Discussing the Honor Code and Honor Council at the signing of the Honor Code each year.
- D. Working with the advisor(s) to organize meeting times of the Honor Council.
- E. Attending all interviews between the Honor Council advisor(s) and the person referred to the Honor Council.
- F. Assigning Honor Council members as community liaisons and assigning the role of the secretary.
- G. Notifying the community when abstracts will be read at assembly.

Section 2: The Vice President will be responsible for:

- A. Attending all responsibilities of the President should the President not be able to attend to those responsibilities.
- B. After a case, assigning one Council member the responsibility of writing up the case abstract for the community.
- C. Proofreading and verifying the accuracy of the abstract before submitting it to the advisor(s) for review.

Section 3: At least one senior representative and underclassmen representative, as the community liaisons, as appointed by the President, will be responsible for:

- A. Making sure that every Upper School student has signed the Honor Book at the beginning of the year. Any new students who join FWCD after the beginning of the year will sign the Honor Book within the first week of starting at FWCD.
- B. Organizing an assembly of Middle School students during the first semester of the school year, explaining the Honor Code.

- C. Organizing an assembly of 8th-grade students during the final quarter of the school year, educating the students on the Honor Code expectations in the Upper School.

Section 4: The secretary will be responsible for:

- A. Recording minutes and recommendations of all meetings of the Honor Council and delivering them to the Honor Council advisor(s).
- B. Maintaining a file that contains all relevant information regarding a case in front of the Honor Council.

Article VI - Procedures of the Honor Council

Section 1: Violation of the Honor Code

- A. The Process for Cases Involving Potential Violations of the Honor Code
 - a. Any member of the School community who observes a violation of the Honor Code is expected to discuss the incident with the person involved and/or report the incident to a member of the Honor Council, a teacher, or the division head. While this is an expectation, failure to do so in itself does not constitute a punishable offense.
 - b. Initial Investigation
 - i. If a member of the community, including administration, faculty, staff, and students, suspects that a student has violated the Honor Code by lying, cheating, or stealing, they will report their concern to the advisor(s). The advisor(s) and the president will meet with the person suspected of violating the Honor Code to interview the student and gather information regarding the suspected incident.
 - ii. The student will be notified via email regarding their initial interview with the Honor Council advisor(s) and the president. The student is required to respond to the email acknowledging receipt.
 - iii. If the student fails to respond to the email, and fails to report to the initial meeting, and does not communicate their absence beforehand, the meeting will be rescheduled.
 - iv. If the student fails to report to the second meeting, and does not communicate their absence beforehand, the student will be deemed to have given up the opportunity for an initial discussion prior to their meeting in front of the Honor Council.
 - v. If the situation warrants further action, the division head, the assistant division head, and the advisor(s) to the Honor Council, will meet to discuss the situation and determine if a formal meeting of the Honor Council is necessary. In all cases where a student has been reported for an Honor Code violation, the Upper School Counselor will be notified and updated appropriately.
 - vi. In all cases, the advisor and the parent/guardian of the student in question will be notified of a meeting regarding a suspected violation of the Honor Code. The advisor and the parent/guardian of the student in question will again be notified by the administration after a decision is reached, by the division head, upon completion of the case.
 - c. Meeting with the Honor Council
 - i. If a meeting of the Honor Council is necessary, it should be held as soon as possible.

- ii. All meetings of the Honor Council to discuss a suspected violation of the Honor Code must be at a time when classes are not meeting in a location physically separated from the Upper School.
 - iii. The Honor Council will hear verbal and or/written testimony from the person who observed the alleged violation.
 - iv. The student in question will then be invited into the meeting to further discuss and describe the situation.
 - v. When a student comes before the Honor Council, he/she must bring any FWCD staff members to the meeting to serve as moral and emotional support.
 - vi. If the student fails to show up to their scheduled Honor Council meeting, without communicating their absence before the meeting, their written statement will be read and the FWCD staff member attending to support the student will be allowed to speak.
 - vii. After the person in question leaves the meeting, the Honor Council will discuss and vote on a recommendation of action to be submitted to the division head.
 - d. Actions by the Division Head
 - i. The Honor Council advisor will notify the Honor Council of the decision of action to be taken. The division head may confer with the Honor Council before making the final decision.
 - ii. Recommendations by the Honor Council will remain confidential between the Council and the administration.
 - iii. If a student has been found guilty of violating the Honor Code, he/she must reveal the identity of any accomplices involved in the infraction.
 - e. An abstract of the case will be generated in a timely manner after the decision is made. The abstract will contain an outline of the events that led to the meeting of the Honor Council and the final decision. No names will be included in the abstract. An announcement will be made to the Upper School community regarding the content of the abstract.
- B. Confidentiality
- a. Every effort should be made to maintain the confidentiality of a person reporting an Honor Code violation.
 - b. Every effort should be made to maintain the confidentiality of a person who is found to have violated the Honor Code.
 - c. All information disclosed in a meeting of the Honor Council should be kept confidential by everyone involved.

Article VII - Amendment Procedures

The Honor Council has the right to amend the Honor Code Charter with a vote of eight of the eleven members of the Honor Council, and the approval of the Upper School division head and the Head of School.

Article VIII - Dismissal

If a member of the Honor Council violates the Honor Code or is placed on disciplinary or academic probation, then he/she will no longer be an Honor Council representative. The alternate for that class will assume the position of Honor Council representative. In the event that an alternate from a class does not exist, the Honor Council advisor(s) and the administration will appoint a student from that class to fill the position as needed.

If a member of the Honor Council is dismissed for disciplinary or academic reasons, the Honor Council advisor(s) and the administration will determine whether the student will be allowed to run for the Honor Council in the future.