

# Howard Early Childhood Center

## BEAR FACTS



**2018-2019**

*A Guide to Howard's School-Wide Activities, Terms, and Events*

## AUGUST

### *MEET THE TEACHER*

Approximately one week before school starts, your child's teacher will call you and introduce herself. Later that week, your child will have an opportunity to meet his or her teacher and find the location of the classroom. You will be given a packet of information to complete and return the first week of school. Please make every effort to attend this "Meet the Teacher" session.

### *COLOR DAYS*

During the first eleven weeks of school, children at Howard will learn a song about each color. On Thursdays, every child, teacher, and staff member are encouraged to wear something with that color. Be creative! If you do not have an item that color, a paper shape with the color of the week pinned on your child's shirt or pants would be perfect.

## SEPTEMBER

### *BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT/PARENT ORIENTATION*

After school has been in session for a few weeks, you will be invited to an important Back to School meeting. At this meeting, you will learn about the curriculum, daily schedule, classroom procedures, and more. You will have an opportunity to sign up for volunteer positions. Childcare is provided for younger children so that parents can attend this informative session. A brief PTO meeting is held in the cafeteria before parents are dismissed to the classrooms.

### *VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!*

In September, most teachers begin using volunteers and there are many ways you can help throughout the school year. Individuals who volunteer must complete a Criminal Background Check form available online. This process takes several days especially at the beginning of the school year.

Here are a few of the ways you can help...

**Beginning of the Year Helpers** — Many volunteers are needed at the beginning of the year to open car doors, escort children to their classrooms, help in the cafeteria during lunch, etc. Contact the PTO to see how you can help.

**Homeroom Parents**—Parents are encouraged to sign up to help during class parties

and to assist the teacher with special classroom activities. A meeting is held in September to review guidelines for class parties. Homeroom parents also act as the point of contact to facilitate communication with other parents in the classroom.

**Library Volunteers** — Children go to the library once or twice a week with their classes at a regularly scheduled day and time. Volunteers are needed to read selected books to the class during part of the time the class spends in the library.

**Cafeteria/Lunch Room Volunteers** — Lunch in our school cafeteria is a new experience for most of our children. Children need help opening milk cartons, yogurt containers, cereal boxes, etc. They also enjoy talking to and getting to know other adults. Cafeteria monitors are on duty but extra help in the cafeteria is always needed throughout the year.

**Special Event Volunteers** — There are many activities throughout the year when extra help is needed. A few of the events are listed on the following pages. Some of the events include *Picture Day, Food Drives, Special Visitors, etc.* Call the school if you ever have a few extra minutes. We assure you there will be some way you can help!

#### *TEDDY BEAR PICNIC*

Children are invited to bring a teddy bear and invite family members to enjoy lunch in our courtyard. We honor grandparents at this time and encourage their participation.

#### *HOWARD RAFFLE*

This is the major fundraiser for Howard School and PTO parents begin work on it months before school begins. Funds raised from this raffle are used to purchase curriculum and enrichment materials, fund playground improvements, and other important efforts. Donations are accepted from businesses, parents, and other individuals. You can help in by donating items for the raffle or by selling and purchasing tickets. The drawing is usually held in October.

#### *HOWDY PARADE*

We participate in the Howdy Parade as part of AHISD Homecoming Week. The Principal, Assistant Principal and the PTO President ride in the parade. Mini-

Mules typically ride in a trailer also. Members of the community sit in their yards or along the street to cheer for the parade members.

## **OCTOBER**

### *FIRE SAFETY*

October is Fire Safety Month. Children enjoy fire safety lessons and demonstrations conducted by firefighters from the Alamo Heights Fire Department during the month.

### *PICTURE DAY*

Each child's picture is taken and purchase choices are given to parents. A percentage of the sales is given to our school and used to supplement the purchase of instructional materials and supplies.

### *HALLOWEEN/FALL ACTIVITIES*

Classrooms celebrate this event in a variety of ways. Teachers enlist the help of parent volunteers to plan and facilitate the day's activities.

## **NOVEMBER**

### *THANKSGIVING DAY LUNCHEON*

Our AHISD Food Services Department will host a Thanksgiving luncheon in which family members are invited to purchase a ticket and join their child(ren) for a typical Thanksgiving Day meal. We host this luncheon in the cafeteria and in the gym.

### *AMERICAN INDIAN CELEBRATION*

Howard students celebrate Native Americans and Thanksgiving with a culminating event, which includes dances and participating in authentic and simulated activities. Teachers may ask for additional items for this activity. PTO provides a Sign-up Genius for you to volunteer to help at an activity or to provide food items or other donations.

### *FOOD DRIVE*

As we approach the holiday season, Howard students learn about generosity and compassion. To connect the concept with a meaningful experience, Howard students collect canned and dry goods to donate to the St. Anthony de Padua food pantry. Classes often walk to the church located one block from our school to personally make the donation.

### *VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION*

Last year we held our first Veteran's Day Celebration. We invite any veterans in our children's family or in the community. The children honor our veterans through song. A brief reception is held after the ceremony.

### *AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT*

Parents of Howard students are given the opportunity to register for a wide variety of afternoon enrichment experiences. The classes are held after school at Howard for four days one week (Monday through Thursday) in December and another week in the spring. Parents are responsible for registration including fees and transportation. Registration is on a first-come-first-served basis. Classes fill quickly so get your registration and fees in early.

## **DECEMBER**

### *POINSETTIA SALES*

You will have a hard time finding prettier poinsettias than the ones sold by the Howard PTO. Beautify your home, office, or give these beautiful plants away as a gift. Delivery of plants is in December but look for order forms in November. Pick-up location is at Howard School.

### *WINTER HOLIDAY PERFORMANCE*

We will have two evenings in which Kindergartners will present a musical performance. North Hall will present one evening and the South Hall will present one evening.

### *HOLIDAY PARTIES*

The holiday season at Howard is a fun time for students, teachers, and parents. Parents are solicited to coordinate with the teacher to provide activities, crafts, and refreshments to celebrate and honor this season. All parties will take place after lunch.

## **JANUARY**

### *KINDERGARTEN PREVIEW*

An opportunity to learn about the kindergarten program is offered, beginning in January, to prospective parents through the Howard Kindergarten Preview sessions. At these sessions, future kindergarten students are assigned to a kindergarten teacher's classroom where they will learn about kindergarten at Howard. While students are in the classrooms, parents will attend an informative session about our school and its programs. The session culminates

with a tour of Howard. Be sure to tell your neighbors and friends about this program. All prospective families are encouraged to sign up for one of these sessions that continue into March and possibly April.

#### *GT (Gifted & Talented) TESTING INFORMATION MEETING*

This meeting will be held in the evening and is open to any Kinder parent that is interested in the GT Program. Testing will take place in February. Parents or teachers may nominate a child to be tested for this program.

#### *100th DAY—Slotted to be January 30, 2019*

Howard students celebrate the 100th day of school engaging in a variety of activities which may include:

- Bringing in a collection of 100 items from home.
- Making a 100th day snack at school.
- Engaging in math activities and centers to reinforce counting to 100.

You may be asked to send items to school for the activities scheduled for the day. It is also a great time to volunteer to help in the classroom.

## **FEBRUARY**

### *VALENTINE'S DAY*

This day is celebrated with a party and a card exchange. Most teachers request that children prepare cards at home for each child in the class. Many teachers also ask parents to mail one Valentine card to their child at school. A special postal worker will deliver the cards throughout the day. You may be asked to help with games and activities at the party or provide food or party supplies.

### *BOOK FAIR/TEXAS TEA ROOM*

A Book Fair is sponsored by PTO and held in the library from 8:00—2:00 each day for one week. Parents are invited to drop in and take their child to the book fair. In conjunction with the book fair, each class is assigned a special day to eat lunch in the front foyer which is decorated in a Texas theme. There is no special menu for lunch during this week. Following lunch, parents and children visit the book fair. If parents are unable to attend, they can send money and teachers will help children select a book.

## MARCH

### *RODEO*

Classes highlight the study of Texas through a variety of activities that may include the following: ranch-themed outdoor games, activities, and fixin' vittles. Wearing western attire is encouraged and your child may be asked to make a "stick horse" at home to use at the rodeo. Parents may be invited to participate by helping with games and activities and/or rustling' up supplies.

### *SPRING BREAK*

Spring Break is held in March each year and it is a great time to relax, rest, and rejuvenate in preparation for the remainder of the year!

### *CLASS GROUP PHOTO*

A photographer comes once a year to take a photo of each class. Watch your child's calendar for which day the class picture will be taken in order to assure they attend that day. A proof will be sent home with pricing information. This class photo becomes a great memento of the kindergarten year.

### *SHOWCASE OF ENGAGED LEARNING*

This is a district-wide evening event in which teachers and students (PK-12) volunteer to "showcase" their exciting and engaging work. It is designed for the whole family to attend and take in the amazing gifts, talents, and efforts of our children and their teachers. Although not all teachers and kids participate, it is a great event to see the work of the district as a whole.

## APRIL

### *DUAL LANGUAGE/SPANISH IMMERSION MEETINGS*

Sometime in April, we will hold two information meetings in the Howard Cafeteria about these two language programs at Woodridge and Cambridge. Attendance at one of these two meetings is required to be eligible for the programs.

### *LITERACY ON THE LAWN*

Parents and family members are invited to join their children for lunch in our courtyard and engage in some reading time picnic-style.

### *RACE TO READ*

Our librarian hosts this challenge. Children are encouraged to read books with their family members and at school. Books can be read to, with or by the children. Once children achieve a goal, they earn a medal.

### *MINI-FIESTA*

A day-time, age-appropriate version of NIOSA is held during this special time of year. Howard's Mini-Fiesta is held on Thursday of Fiesta Week. This outdoor fiesta is enjoyed by children, parents, and teachers and includes booths of activities, food, and fun. PTO, with the help of many parent volunteers and teachers and staff, put on this event. PTO provides a Sign-up Genius for you to volunteer to help at an activity or to provide food items or other donations

### *TRANSITION TO FIRST GRADE*

Activities to facilitate the transition from Howard to first grade may begin as early as April. Watch your child's calendar for information about meetings and other activities

## **MAY/JUNE**

### *VISITS TO FIRST GRADE*

Teachers accompany the children to their first grade campus one day in May. Parents are invited to meet their children at the receiving campus. Children are given a tour of the first grade classrooms and building. Parents should watch for evening meetings held for parents of entering first graders held by the elementary school campuses.

### *CHARACTER PERFORMANCE*

The Kinder children will present an evening performance that shows all they they have learned about character during the year. The performance is led by Mr. St. Romain (Behavior Specialist) and Mrs. Anderson (Music).

### *END OF YEAR ACTIVITIES*

The end of year is celebrated through a variety of activities that may include: Splash Day, Camp Day, student performances, special field trips, and other fun activities. You will receive information about these activities from your child's



teacher.