

September 20, 2024

IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND UPDATES

FROM THE HEALTH ROOM

For 8th Grade Students and New Students to Howard County Schools

Please remember to bring your glasses to school on Monday! Hearing and Vision screening will be done on **Monday Sept. 23, 2024**. Letters explaining the screening have been emailed to parents. If your student has glasses or contacts please remind them to wear their glasses that day.

LINDABEN MOBILE MARKET - OPEN THIS SATURDAY

The LindaBen Mobile Market will be making a stop at **Bryant Woods Elementary** on **Saturday, 9/21, from 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

Please [reserve](#) your produce bundle (benevolent option, small option, large option) before Friday 12:00 p.m. If there is something you would like to see in our van pantry (diapers, cooking oil, pasta, etc.) please note it in the comments. We will do our best to accommodate your request.

We are also looking for volunteers! If you can volunteer time, whether it's 30 minutes or an hour, please sign up [here](#).

THE HCMS PTA SPIRIT WEAR STORE IS NOW OPEN

Please visit <http://www.harperschoicespiritwear.com/> to place an online order. There are many different styles and logos to choose from!

[Flyer in English](#)

[Flyer in Spanish](#)

Place your order now so you don't miss out!
Thank you.

6th GRADE MASHUP DAY

On October 2, Harper's Choice will be hosting Mashup Day that will be filled with activities and fun for all 6th grade students! See this [flyer](#) for more information. Here is the link to the [Sign Up Genius](#) to volunteer and donate items needed for activity day.

Please remember to complete the [two trainings](#) prior to October 2. You may bring the signed certificates with you that day. We will have extra copies in the front office for you to sign confirming that you completed the trainings as you sign in to volunteer.

We appreciate your support!

PEP FAMILY RESILIENCE PROGRAM

Spaces fill quickly so register today! For information visit pep-frp.org or register now with the QR code or at tinyurl.com/2w4k2sxp

HC DRUGFREE UPDATES

Teen Advisory Council - Open to students in grades 8-12. Earn Community Service Hours and make meaningful contributions to the community. First meeting of the school year will be held on Zoom on Monday, September 23 from 5:30 -7:00 p.m.

Contact **Admin@hcdrugfree.org** for more information. Must register to receive meeting link: **www.surveymonkey.com/r/TAC2024Sept**

Drive-Thru Medication and Sharps Disposal – Saturday, October 26 in the Wilde Lake Village Center Parking Lot near the Swim Center from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Safely dispose of prescription and over-the-counter medication, EpiPens and other sharps, vitamins, pet meds, vape devices, inhalers, and more! Need student, adult, and medically-trained adult volunteers. Giving away 25 medication lockboxes purchased by HCPSS. For more information and to volunteer, go to : <https://hcdrugfree.org/currentevents/>

2024-2025 PARENT ACADEMY KICKOFF - Sept. 25, 2024

HCPSS parents, guardians and family members are invited to join HCPSS Superintendent William J. Barnes, school system leaders and community organizations for this valuable information night to prepare for a successful academic year. The event will also feature various workshop topics which provide access to resources and support.

The 2024-2025 Parent Academy Kick-Off will be held Wednesday, Sept. 25 from 6-8:30 p.m at Wilde Lake High School, 5460 Trumpeter Road, Columbia. Dinner will be provided from 5:15-6:00 p.m. [Registration is encouraged.](#)

Workshop topics include:

- College and Career Readiness/Career Exploration
- Maryland's Blueprint for the Future
- Navigating the School System for Student Success
- Mental Health
- Advanced Programs K-12
- Social Media Safety & Security
- Elementary ELA, Reading, and the Library
- Math Programs
- Financial Literacy
- Immigration Law
- Early Childhood Programs

Please contact 410.313.1293 for more information.

UPDATE FAMILY FILE TODAY!

We are only at 44 % completion. All families must update their emergency contact information annually. While we recognize many of you may not have any changes, you must transition through each screen and click submit at the end for this task to be completed. **The completion of the Family File is essential to your student's participation in field trips, dances, and other fun activities throughout the year.** Please visit [HCPSS Connect](#) today and click submit on the final screen!

Family File Directions:

[FAMILY FILE USER GUIDE \(ENGLISH\)](#)

[FAMILY FILE USER GUIDE \(SPANISH\)](#)

WILDE LAKE HIGH SCHOOL SPECTATOR RULES/GUIDELINES

Please view this [flyer](#) for more information.

HCPSS STRATEGIC PLANNING INPUT SURVEY

As part of the HCPSS strategic planning process, families are being asked to provide input

about their values for our school system. Please complete this [HCPSS Strategic Planning Input Survey](#) by 9/20/24.

APPLY FOR FREE AND REDUCED MEALS-DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 31

Please visit <https://www.hcpss.org/food-services/farms/> to apply for Free and Reduced Meals. **Families must submit a new application every school year.** If you have additional questions regarding the FARMS program, please review the [FAQ Section](#) or email foodsvc@hcpss.org. **Participation in FARMS qualifies students for a wide range of opportunities and resources beyond breakfast and lunch, including free college applications, free or reduced JumpStart tuition, discounted internet through the Comcast Internet Essentials program, and more.**

CA (COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION) POINTS PROGRAM

The CA (Columbia Association) Points Program is offered to students in grades 3-12 enrolled in the [Free and Reduced Meals](#) (FARMS) program at [participating schools](#). Students can earn a free [CA membership](#) for themselves and their immediate family through their grades and attendance.

To enroll your student, please complete the [CA Points Enrollment Form](#). Online enrollment will **close on Friday, September 27, 2024**. For more information, visit [CA Points Program](#) or email CAPoints@ColumbiaAssociation.org.

GIRLS ON THE RUN REGISTRATION IS OPEN

Click [here](#) to view more information.

UPCOMING DATES

10/03/2024 Schools and offices closed, Rosh Hashanah

10/18/2024 Schools closed for students, Professional Work Day

10/30/2024 End of first marking period

10/31/2024 Schools closed for students, Professional Work and Development Day

CONTINUING ANNOUNCEMENTS

HCPSS POLICY 9400 - STUDENT BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) is committed to providing a safe, engaging, and supportive school environment that fosters the social and emotional safety, dignity, and well-being of all students. HCPSS acknowledges the need for employees

1. to use an array of research-based positive behavior interventions, strategies, and supports to address student behaviors and keep students safe.
2. to minimize the practice of exclusion from the classroom environment
3. to minimize the practice of physical restraint (which may only be used when necessary to protect a student or other person from imminent, serious, physical harm and only after other less intrusive, nonphysical interventions have failed or been determined inappropriate).

It is an expectation that HCPSS employees will be responsive to all incidents of exclusion or physical restraint and appropriately case manage impacted students to minimize unsafe behaviors and maximize instructional engagement.

Additional information can be found at [HCPSS Policy 9400 - Student Behavior Intervention](#). If you have any questions regarding this policy or its implementation, please contact a school administrator.

HCPSS POLICY 9460

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all students. Preventing bullying is an important part of this goal. [HCPSS Policy 9460](#) states that bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and intimidation are prohibited in HCPSS. Our administration and staff have been trained and made aware of this policy as well as preventative and responsive measures.

We know how important your role is in not only supporting your children, but also reporting possible incidents as you become aware of them. The BCHI Reporting Form should be used to report all alleged incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and intimidation that occur at school or have a connection back to the school setting that create a risk of harm to other students while they are at school or interfere with the educational environment. An [online version](#) is available and can easily and confidentially be used by students, staff, and family members. Hard copies of this form are available in the main office, staff workroom, school counseling office, media center, and health services office. If you believe your child has been bullied, please complete and submit this form as soon as possible and/or assist your child in doing so.

Once the form is submitted, school administrators will ensure the parent/guardian of both the alleged target and alleged offender are aware of the report and will begin an investigation within two school days of receiving the report. Parents/guardians can expect a school administrator to reach out to them during the investigation. Once the investigation is completed, parents/guardians will be provided written notice of the outcome of the investigation within fifteen days of receiving the complaint, excluding extenuating circumstances.

CAR LOOP REMINDERS

Please remember that anyone dropping off students in the morning should use our designated drop-off location which is located at the back of our bus line in the large parking lot. We are asking parents to refrain from dropping off students in the small parking lot as it causes congestion. Our concern is the safety of our students, parents and staff. Thank you for using our [designated student drop-off location](#).

CLOTHING TO CASH

HCMS participates in the Clothing to Cash fundraising program. Clothing to Cash is a textile recycling program that donates money to the school for every pound of donated items. Look for the white donation bin at the bottom of the Harper's Choice Middle School parking lot. Clothing to Cash will accept items in ALL conditions: new with tags, or torn, stained, worn-out knees, shoes with holes or only one shoe, backpacks, old sheets, towels, blankets, stuffed animals and more. What a great way to help the school and clean out your closets! All donations must be bagged and put in the collection bin. We appreciate your support!

Please remember to follow these [guidelines](#).

ATTENDANCE REMINDERS

Need to report an absence? Please email your absence notes/questions to: HCMSAbsence@hcpss.org or send in a signed parent/guardian note. The email should include the student's name, the parent's name, the date(s) or period(s) (if absence is a partial day) of the absence, and the reason for the absence. The email must be received within 5 days of the absence. Requests for changes to attendance submitted after the 5 day deadline cannot be honored.

Please Note: Absences are unexcused until an email or note is received.

For Discretionary Absences (up to 3 per school year), please complete the linked form and email it to: HCMSAbsence@hcpss.org. This form must be completed one week prior to absence.

For Religious Observances, please complete the linked form and email to: HCMSAbsence@hcpss.org.

HCMS FOOD PANTRY

HCMS has partnered up with the [LindaBen Foundation](#) and Safeway to help feed our HCMS community. If your family is interested in receiving food boxes or you would like to make donations to our food pantry please call the HCMS front office.

If you would like to make direct donations to the LindaBen Foundation, please view this [information](#).

COMMUNICATION TO FAMILIES

Families may find it useful to bookmark the following webpages where information will be continually updated and posted:

[HCMS website](#)

[HCPSS website](#)

[HCPSS 2024-2025 Calendar](#)

[2024-2025 School Year](#)

[HCPSS News Site](#)

[HCPSS Help Site](#)

GROCERY STORE FUNDRAISING PROGRAMS

HCMS partners with the following grocery stores as a fundraiser for our school. Please consider linking your card and help raise money for our school!

Harris Teeter Together in Education

Harris Teeter's [Together In Education](#) program gives schools a chance to earn funds when you link your VIC card and shop Harris Teeter brands. When you shop Harris Teeter brands, a percentage of your purchase is donated to the school that your VIC card is linked to. There are NO LIMITS to how much a school can earn. Register your VIC card to our SCHOOL ID# 7984.

Weis Markets Weis4School

Through the [Weis4School program](#), you can earn cash for HCMS each time you shop at Weis. To register, simply scan the HCMS Barcode at checkout. Each time you shop at Weis, be sure to scan your Weis card to earn money for our school.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please visit the [Community News and Programs](#) page on the HCPSS website for announcements of upcoming events and programs sponsored by non-profit organizations.