

# HCMS News

April 28, 2023

## NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS AND IMPORTANT REMINDERS

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### **BUS TRANSPORTATION 2023-2024**

*Families whose children are eligible for bus transportation must register through HCPSS Connect Synergy to receive bus service for the 2023-2024 school year. This new process will take place annually to help HCPSS plan for student ridership and to make routes more efficient. Registration for 2023-2024 bus service is open now through June 1.*

*Visit <https://www.hcpss.org/schools/transportation/registration/> for instructions on how to register and more information. Families who reside in non-transportation areas are not eligible for bus transportation and do not need to take any action. Find the new [non-transportation areas](#) for your school online. Students who receive transportation as part of their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan do not need to register.*

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### **Non-Transportation Areas for the 2023-2024 School Year**

#### **Areas sin transporte para el año escolar 2023-24**

Non-transportation areas (walk areas) have been expanded for the majority of HCPSS schools for the 2023-2024 school year. Board of Education [Policy 5200 Student Transportation](#)[Links to an external site.](#) increases the allowable distance students may walk to school based on the distance between a student's home and school.

**These changes result in an expanded walk area for our school.** [Please view the online map](#) for our school that identifies the households that will not receive bus transportation next school year.

We will send out information if changes are made that impact our school community. If you would like to know more about the countywide changes that were made, please visit the [HCPSS websiteLinks to an external site.](#).

Sincerely,

Dr. Alexia K.S. Couch  
Principal

Estimadas familias de Harper's Choice Middle School:

Las áreas sin transporte (áreas a pie) se expandieron para la mayoría de las escuelas del HCPSS para el año escolar 2023-2024. La [Norma 5200 – Transporte estudiantil](#) del sistema escolar aumenta la distancia permitida que los estudiantes pueden caminar hacia la escuela en base a la distancia entre la casa y la escuela de un estudiante.

**Estos cambios resultan en un área a pie expandida para nuestra escuela.** [Vean el mapa en línea](#) para nuestra escuela que identifica los grupos familiares que no recibirán transporte en autobús el próximo año escolar.

Enviaremos información si se realizan cambios que afecten a nuestra comunidad escolar. Si desearan saber más sobre los cambios efectuados al nivel del condado, visiten el [sitio web del HCPSS](#).

Atentamente,

Dra. Alexia K.S. Couch  
Directora

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## **HCPSS RAINBOW CONFERENCE**

*The HCPSS Rainbow Conference will be held on Saturday, May 6 from 9 a.m.- 5 p.m. The conference will be hybrid with opportunities for both virtual and in-person participation. For more information scan the QR code on the [Rainbow Conference Flier](#) or access this [link](#).*

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## **HCPSS GIFTED AND TALENTED SUMMER INSTITUTES**

HCPSS Gifted and Talented Summer Institutes for Talent Development is available to all HCPSS Middle School students and registration is open now! New classes this year include "Environmental Justice League," a combination of policy making and entrepreneurship, "Crime Stoppers," and "Adventures in Printmaking." We have STEM classes such as "**Civil Engineering**" and humanities offerings like "**Becoming a Historian.**" Check out our full course list [here](#) or on the [HCPSS Summer Programs Website](#). Directions to register through HCPSS Connect are here: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1382ja7snHr76LJnWvq9xAy5oEc\\_xUnHU/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1382ja7snHr76LJnWvq9xAy5oEc_xUnHU/view).

Classes run from June 26-July 7 and July 10-July 21 and are held at Burleigh Manor Middle School from 8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Limited community bus stop locations will be available based on enrollment. Before and after care on site is available through Howard County Parks and Recreation. Registration is open until March 15th at 6pm. Scholarship opportunities are available. If you have any questions, please contact [GTSummer@hcpss.org](mailto:GTSummer@hcpss.org).

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## **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE NOTICE**

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR THOSE WITH MEDICAL ASSISTANCE: Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, MA has been automatically renewed since March 2020.

**AUTOMATIC RENEWALS WILL STOP AS OF APRIL 30, 2023.** Please call the Health Dept Insurance Line at 410-313-5845 to check your status. They will set up an appointment for you if needed.

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## HC DRUGFREE

**Free Parenting Classes (open to grandparents too):** Free. Guiding Good Choices is an evidence-based, interactive prevention program that provides families with the skills and knowledge to reduce the risk that their children will use drugs and alcohol or engage in other dangerous behaviors. Howard County parents, guardians and grandparents will learn how to encourage your child to adopt healthy attitudes and behaviors, how to communicate more effectively, how to build a relationship of trust, and much more! Classes will be held Tuesdays, May 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. via Zoom. Learn more or register: <https://hcdrugfree.org/2023/02/guiding-good-choices-free-classes-for-parents-2/>.

**Know What's Happening in Howard County:** Sign up for HC DrugFree's newsletter at <https://hcdrugfree.org/enews-signup/> or follow us on social media to get updates on events as well as information to keep your family safe and informed: [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#) [LinkedIn](#)

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## UPCOMING DATES

05/11/2023 PTA Meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the media center  
05/12/2023 Dance Showcase at Wilde Lake High School, 7 p.m.  
05/26/2023 Music Department Hershey Park trip  
05/30/2023 Chorus Concert, WLHS, 7 p.m.  
05/31/2023 Band Concert, WLHS, 7 p.m.

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## CONTINUING ANNOUNCEMENTS

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## **RTA BUS PASSES**

HCPSS has again partnered with the Howard County Government and the Regional Transportation Agency of Central Maryland to provide free RTA bus access to students. This supports students who use public transportation to get to jobs and other services and destinations throughout the county. The passes are not intended to take the place of school buses for transport to school. Please [email Ms. Riordan](#) or call the HCMS front office if interested.

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## **ATTENDANCE REMINDERS**

Need to report an absence? Please email your absence notes/questions to: [HCMSabsence@hcpss.org](mailto: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](mailto:HCMSabsence@hcpss.org).

For Religious Observances, please complete the linked form and email to: [HCMSabsence@hcpss.org](mailto:HCMSabsence@hcpss.org).

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## **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](#)

- [2022-2023 School Year](#)
  - [2022-2023 Communication](#)
  - [HCPSS News site](#)
  - [HCPSS Help site](#)
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### **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

View, download, print or subscribe to the [HCPSS 2022-2023 calendar](#) online. The calendar is subject to change; the online calendar reflects the most recent version. There will be no printed 2022-2023 calendars.

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### **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.

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### **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.

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#### **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.

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#### **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.