



September 25, 2025

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A Message from Admin

Dear HES Families,

Today, we'd like to take a moment to shine a light on a truly incredible group of individuals here at Hammond Elementary, our custodial staff!

October 2nd is National Custodian Day, and it's the perfect upcoming opportunity to recognize and celebrate the essential work our custodians do each and every day. Their efforts often happen behind the scenes, but their impact is felt by every student, staff member, and visitor who walks through our doors.

Our custodial team works tirelessly to keep our school clean, safe, and secure. Whether it's maintaining a spotless environment, responding quickly to unexpected challenges, or helping ensure that our building is a welcoming place to learn and grow, they do it all with care and dedication.

We are deeply grateful for all they do, not just on October 2nd, but every single day. Please join us in thanking and celebrating our custodial staff for the vital role they play in making Hammond Elementary such a special place.

Warmly,

Heather Moraff, Principal

Nykia Mapson, Assistant Principal

Bookmark the [School's Website](#)

This is a valuable tool for up-to-date information, calendars and absence reporting. Check this resource before calling the school as you may find the answers to your questions.

Bus Safety Reminders

It is hard to believe that we are at the mid-point of the first quarter. As the school year continues to progress, we are encouraging families with students that ride buses to please take time and review safety expectations with your children.

We would like to especially draw your attention to the reminder that students must remain flat in their seats, facing forward, at all times while the bus is in motion. Thank you for your understanding that this is for the safety of students.

Often students can be easily distracted by their peers, causing them to be unaware of how they are sitting, even if just for a moment. At times we have observed students standing, walking, turning around, and leaning into others' seats while the bus is in motion. It is our goal that the brief bus rides remain an enjoyable experience for our students and drivers, with the safety of all at the forefront of the trip.

The bus is an extension of the school day and students are expected to follow directions of the bus driver and school bus rules. We want to ensure the ride to and from school is a safe and comfortable bus environment for all.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to these safety expectations so all of our students and drivers are able remain safe each day.

Bus Expectations

In order to ensure the ride to and from school is safe, enjoyable and comfortable for all, families, please remind your bus rider(s) of the following:

- Only students and the bus driver are permitted on the bus. Adults other than school staff or staff from the Office of Transportation, are not permitted to enter the bus. If you have any concerns that arise, please contact the school.
- Make sure students are at the bus stop at least 5-8 minutes before the bus arrives. Students should be prepared to enter the bus when it arrives.
- There is no eating, drinking or using cellphones while on the school bus. Cellphones and food should be away during the school bus ride.
- For their own safety, students must remain flat in their seats at all times while the bus is in motion for their safety.
- Students should use a voice level that is not distracting to the bus driver and courteous of others while riding the bus each day.

We will uplift this same message at school and we appreciate your continued support!

For complete information regarding our HCPSS Parent and Student Bus Responsibilities, see the document linked below.

HCPSS Parent and Student Bus Responsibilities

<https://www.hcpss.org/schools/transportation/responsibilities/>

Please do not hesitate to reach out to the school and or the transportation office if you have any concerns regarding your child's bus transportation.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

Fall MAP Assessments

Students in grades 1-5 will take the Measured Academic Progress (MAP) assessment during the months of September and October. There are two sessions scheduled for each grade level: one for reading and one for mathematics. The data from the MAP assessment will help schools and teachers measure your student's academic progress. The MAP test does not affect grades and the difficulty adjusts depending on how your child responds. It is normal for students to only answer about half the questions correctly. To learn more about the MAP assessment, please visit: [HCPSS The Measures of Academic Progress Information](#) page.

Teachers in grades 1-5 will administer the assessment on the dates listed below. Teachers will share specific dates or changes to dates with you via Canvas announcements. If you have any questions regarding MAP testing, please reach out to Mrs. Mapson, Assistant Principal and Testing Coordinator or your child's teacher.

- First Grade Testing Dates
 - Week of September 15th (varies by homeroom)
- Second Grade Testing Dates

- September 22nd and September 25th
- Third Grade Testing Dates
 - September 29th and September 30th
- Fourth Grade Testing Dates
 - October 6th and October 7th
- Fifth Grade Testing Dates
 - October 8th and October 9th

You do not need to do anything special to prepare your child for the MAP assessment other than ensure that they have a good breakfast and a good night's rest the night before. We do ask that you avoid scheduling appointments on the day when your child will be assessed. Students who are absent on the day their grade takes the assessment will be afforded the opportunity for a make-up session on another date.

Parents will receive a report on their child's performance on the MAP assessment after the testing window closes.

Fall Fun Run

The annual Hammond ES Fall Fun Run is almost here! We need your help to have this amazing event run smoothly. The Fall Fun Run is on Tuesday, October 21st during your child's related arts hour block. Please review the available grade level slots below and click on the button to sign up. The rain date for the Fall Fun Run will be on Friday, October 24th.

[Fall Fun Run Volunteer Sign-up](#)

No Crocs Allowed in PE

Just a reminder that per Howard County policy, crocs are not allowed to be worn for PE. Please make sure your child has the appropriate footwear on PE days. If you have any questions, please email sserpico@hcpss.org.

Counselors' Corner

This month, our school counselors visited each classroom to introduce themselves and explain how they support students throughout the year. Every grade participated in an engaging activity designed to help students understand the counselor's role:

- **Kindergarten** read *The Rainbow Fish* and explored the *Counselor's Bag of Tricks* to see the different ways counselors can help.
- **1st Grade** read *Mrs. Joyce Gives the Best High Fives*, a story about connection and support.

- **2nd & 3rd Grade** became “secret agents,” decoding clues about the many roles of a school counselor.
- **4th Grade** reviewed the counselor’s role and learned how to connect with the counselor when they need support.
- **5th Grade** reviewed the counselor’s role and reflected on the importance of belonging at school.

We look forward to continuing these conversations and supporting students’ academic, social, and emotional growth this year.

Healthroom Highlights

Vaccination Clinics

Due to extenuating circumstances, HCPSS will not offer in-school seasonal flu or COVID vaccination clinics this year. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact their child’s pediatrician for vaccination information, or consider accessing vaccinations from local pharmacies, urgent care centers, retail stores, etc. Additionally, the [Howard County Health Department will offer free flu shots](#) at various community events this fall.

Reporting Student Absences

Students who are sick and need to stay home will be given an excused absence. Please complete this Google Form: [Absences Reporting Form](#) to report your child's *full day* absence. (Early pick-ups and late arrivals will be entered on the forms at school; not on this online form.) This form will alert the school of your child's absence and will serve as an absence note for your child's return. You are not required to send a separate note after completing this form. If your child has been absent for five or more days due to illness, a doctor's note is appreciated.

If a student needs to stay home for a prolonged period due to illness, the student or a parent/guardian can reach out to their teacher(s) for resources students can use at home to continue learning once they feel well enough. Additional [information on student absences](#) can be found online.

Happy National Hispanic History Month: September 15-October 15th

[Hispanic Heritage Month Newsletter](#)

Black Student Achievement Program (BSAP)

Registration for BSAP Saturday Math Academy has opened. The BSAP Saturday Math Academy fall session is approaching! The program offers an in-person enrichment for Howard County Public School System students in all levels of math for grades 3-12, based on course availability. Class space is limited. Families can register by accessing the HCPSS Connect Website. Please contact BSAP Supervisor, Nicole Brown if you have any questions.

For more information, please visit:

<https://news.hcpss.org/news-posts/2025/09/black-student-achievement-program-bsap-saturday-math-academy-fall-2025-program/>

- [BSAP SMA Fall 25 Flyer \(Spanish\)](#)
- [BSAP SMA Fall 25 Flyer \(Chinese\)](#)
- [BSAP SMA Fall 25 Flyer \(Korean\)](#)

HCPSS Family Academy Kickoff

- **Date:** Saturday, Sept. 27, 9:00 am–12:00 pm

Location: Oakland Mills High School

This districtwide event is open to all HCPSS families and will feature:

- A session with Superintendent Bill Barnes
- Resource tables hosted by HCPSS offices and local organizations
- Information on programs, resources, and services available throughout the school year
- Childcare and language access provided

- For additional information, please visit the [Family Academy Kickoff HCPSS News Post](#).
Flier: [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Chinese](#) | [Korean](#)

Student Behavior Interventions

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 a tiered system of supports to address student behaviors and keep students safe and free of harm
2. to minimize the practice of exclusion from the classroom environment
3. to minimize the use 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).

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.

How to Report Student Absences

Please complete the [Absences Reporting Form](#) found on our [school website](#) to report your child's *full day* absence. (Early pick-ups and late arrivals will be entered on the forms at school; not on this online form.) This form will alert the school of your child's absence and will serve as an absence note for your child's return. You are not required to send a separate note after completing this form. If your child has been absent for five or more days due to illness, a doctor's note is appreciated.

You do not need to call the school to report an absence, simply use this form.

Is your child arriving late to school? Your child must be in their classroom by 9:25am

Tardiness should be a rare occurrence and avoided to the best of your ability. Let's work together to give your child the best start to their day possible. Please do your very best to have them in their classroom by 9:25. You may need to look at your morning routine if you are noticing a trend of being tardy. Perhaps set your alarm a few minutes earlier. We appreciate your attention to this very important issue.

Late Arrival Procedure: You will need to park and escort your child into the building. Parents must sign any tardy students in on the appropriate sheet. It is not necessary to call nor do you need to use the absence reporting forms. Simply come to school and sign them in. Children dropped off without a parent signing them in will be given an unexcused tardy.

Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions (SPACE) Program

Register for Fall 2025 SPACE Program

HCPSS again will offer a [no-cost, evidenced-based training program to assist parents/guardians](#) in helping their children manage anxiety. The program is specifically designed for parents/guardians of children and adolescents with anxiety issues, obsessive compulsive disorder, and other related concerns. Parents/guardians interested in participating in SPACE should complete registration forms by Sept. 26.

 [SPACE Fall 2025 Flier with Registration links.pdf](#)

Free After School Meals

HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service announces the availability of free afterschool meals (supper & snack) for students that participate in after-school enrichment at forty-two (42) eligible schools for school year 2025-2026. Programs must provide participants with regularly scheduled activities in an organized, structured, and supervised environment and should include educational or enrichment activities. Students can get a free supper and/or snack **if they participate in the enrichment activity.**

The following schools are eligible for free after school meals* in SY 2025-2026:

Schools Eligible for Free After-School Meals in SY 2025-2026 (Commencing October 1, 2025)							
(Provided that they have Enrichment Programs/Activities)							
Elementary		Middle		High		Other	
1	Atholton	1	Bonnie Branch	1	Atholton	1	Homewood
2	Bellows Spring	2	Clarksville	2	Guilford Park		
3	Bollman Bridge	3	Elkridge Landing	3	Hammond		
4	Bryant Woods	4	Ellicott Mills	4	Long Reach		
5	Clarksville	5	Harper's Choice	5	Oakland Mills		
6	Clemens Crossing	6	Lake Elkhorn	6	Reservoir		
7	Cradlerock	7	Mayfield Woods	7	River Hill		
8	Deep Run	8	Murray Hill	8	Wilde Lake		
9	Ducketts Lane	9	Oakland Mills				
10	Elkridge	10	Patuxent Valley				
11	Guilford	11	Thomas Viaduct				
12	Hanover Hills	12	Wilde Lake				
13	Jeffers Hill						
14	Laurel Woods						
15	Longfellow						
16	Phelps Luck						
17	Running Brook						
18	Stevens Forest						
19	Swansfield						
20	Talbott Springs						
21	Thunder Hill						
Total	21	12		8		1	

Howard County Recreation & Parks - Fall 2025 Before & After School Classes

These classes provide fun, structured, educational, and enriching activities for students on site at Hammond ES, benefitting both the child(ren) and parents! Families can register for before/after school classes offered at Hammond ES by HCRP: [Hammond ES Registration Page](#).

Save the Date! HES Staff vs. Wizards Basketball Game



Save this date! On **Monday, November 10th at 6:30pm** the Wizards basketball team is playing against a Hammond staff team! This event will raise funds for our school! It will be held at Atholton High School. Stay tuned for more details about tickets. We would love to partner with your local business as a sponsor for this amazing event! Contact Committee Chair, Melissa Zawadzki, at melissazed@gmail.com for more information.

Important Dates

- Thur. 10/2-Schools and Offices closed
- Fri. 10/2 - National Custodian Appreciation Day
- Fri. 10/17-Schools closed for Students
- Mon. 10/20-Schools & Offices closed
- Tues. 10/21 - Fall Fun Run during Related Arts
- Thur. 10/23 - Individual School Pictures
- Fri. 10/31-Schools close 3 hours early
- Mon. 11/10 Wizards Basketball Game at Atholton High School
- Wed. 11/12-Schools close 3 hours early
- Mon. & Tue., 11/ 24 & 25-Schools close 3 hours early
- Mon. & Tue., 11/ 24 & 25- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Wed. 11/26-Schools closed for students
- Thur. & Fri.-11/27 & 11/28 Schools & offices closed