

HCMS News

February 12, 2021

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS AND IMPORTANT REMINDERS

2021-2022 MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE REGISTRATION OPEN THROUGH FEB. 15

Current 5-7th grade students and their parents/guardians may view their teachers' course recommendations and submit course placement requests for the 2021-2022 school year through [HCPSS Connect](#). Course requests and alternates should be submitted by Monday, February 15. [Additional information and resources](#) to assist in course selection are available online.

CHANGES TO 2020-2021 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The Howard County Board of Education [approved changes](#) to the 2020-2021 academic year calendar during its February 11, 2021, meeting. Thursday, February 25 and Friday, February 26 are now scheduled as 3-hour early dismissal days for students at all levels, rather than full academic days as previously designated.

The changes are made in preparation for HCPSS' [phased transition to a hybrid model](#) of in-person and concurrent learning, which is scheduled to begin March 1. Designating February 25-26 as early dismissal days will provide school-based staff with additional time needed to complete classroom setup and other preparations necessary to ensure a smooth transition for students and staff.

ALL SCHOOL START TIMES AND STUDENT SCHEDULES TO CHANGE MARCH 1

Effective Monday, March 1, our hours for students will be 8:25 a.m.-3:10 p.m. A detailed bell schedule will be shared soon. [School start times](#) will be adjusted to begin 20 minutes later than pre-COVID times. Students will not change courses/subjects during the third quarter (Feb. 1-April 14); however, class times and lengths will change.

Prior to the schedule shift on March 1, we will share the grade level and/or school schedule with start and end times. Your child's teacher(s) will share the specific times that your child will need to join with Google Meet for the synchronous instruction.

HYBRID LEARNING RESOURCE

A new [resource document](#) summarizes all major aspects of the school system's planned transition to hybrid in-person and concurrent virtual instruction that begins on March 1. The document is intended to serve as a reference for both families and staff.

UPCOMING DATES

02/12/21 Schools Closed for Students, Professional Work Day
02/15/21 Schools and Offices Closed, Presidents' Day
02/25/21 Schools Close 3 Hours Early
02/26/21 Schools Close 3 Hours Early

CONTINUING ANNOUNCEMENTS

QUARTER 2 REPORT CARDS

Your child's Quarter 2 Report Card can be viewed via [HCPSS Connect](#).

Parents/guardians may view/download report cards by taking the following steps:

1. Log in to [HCPSS Connect](#) using your parent email and password
 2. Select More Options from the left panel
 3. Select Report Cards from the middle
 4. Select the report card you wish to access
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WEDNESDAY ACADEMIC SUPPORT

We are very excited to be able to provide additional academic support for all students at Harper's Choice on Wednesdays from 8:30-11:30 a.m. with our para-educators. Our para-educator team is excited to provide this opportunity to all students! Students can come for assistance with classwork and homework assignments or just to say hi!

6th Grade: 8:30-9:30 a.m.

7th Grade: 9:30-10:30 a.m.

8th Grade: 10:30-11:30 a.m.

The google meet codes will be the same for all grades:

HCMS-Science-support

HCMS-Math-support

HCMS-English-support

HCMS-GeographyHistory-support

HCMS-RelatedArts-support

If you have any questions about the support time they can be directed to our Assistant Principal, Kristin Terry at Kristin_Terry@hcpss.org.

UPDATE YOUR FAMILY FILE

We still need many families to complete their Family File for the 2020-2021 school year. We have begun calling families who have not yet completed Family File to offer assistance. If you have questions on how to complete the Family File, please call the school at 410-313-6929.

HCPSS uses Family File for parents/guardians to provide emergency information. **Parents/guardians must verify and/or update information annually for each child** and can do so by logging in to [HCPSS Connect](#) and selecting the Family File tab and then clicking on Family File.

Once logged in, parents/guardians will be asked to provide or update the following information:

- Student information
- Parent/guardian contact
- Emergency contacts
- Medical information
- Arrival/dismissal procedures
- Media release (photo approval)
- Data confidentiality
- PTA/PTSA directory

Changes of address may not be made through Family File. If you have recently moved, please contact your child's school as soon as possible.

2020-2021 INCLEMENT WEATHER PROTOCOLS

For the 2020-2021 school year, while in virtual, small groups or hybrid instructional

models, HCPSS will transition to fully virtual instruction during inclement weather days. [View the four possible inclement weather decisions.](#)

HCMS ATTENDANCE POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

Need to report an absence? Please email your absence notes/questions to: HCMSabsence@hcpss.org. **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.

For Discretionary Absences (up to 3 per school year), please complete the [linked form](#) and email it to: HCMSabsence@hcpss.org.

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

PTA BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED

The HCMS PTA needs you! We are seeking volunteers to fill several vacant board member positions and to assist our PTA President Mrs. Headlam. Be involved with your child's school and let your voice be heard as we plan for an engaging school year. The PTA is a rewarding way to meet other parents/guardians in our school community and a way for you to make a difference in your child's middle school experience!

A FULL BOARD IS NEEDED to continue the amazing work of our PTA, which supports our students while building community and pride in our school. Unfortunately, without a full board, the PTA will not be able to continue all the programs we currently provide. Please consider joining the HCMS PTA Board!

If you are interested or would like more information, please contact our HCMS PTA President at ingrid.headlam@gmail.com or call the front office at 410-313-6929.

FUNDRAISING PROGRAMS

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.

Clothing to Cash

Please donate to our 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, stuffed animals, and more. What a great way to help our school and clean out your closets! All donations must be bagged and put in the collection bin.

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.