

HCMS News

April 1, 2021

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS AND IMPORTANT REMINDERS

HAPPY SPRING BREAK!

As a reminder, schools are closed April 2-6 for Spring Break. We hope everyone is able to unplug, rest, relax, and recharge.

THANK YOU

We would like to thank the Kindness Pantry for their donation of water bottles, binders and backpacks to our school. We always appreciate your generosity and support.

A big thank you also to Marriotts Ridge National Honor Society for organizing a food drive to help stock the HCMS Food Pantry. Your generous donation was incredible and we greatly appreciate your support of the Harper's Choice community.

HEALTH CHECK REMINDER

To ensure students are healthy enough to attend in-person instruction, parents/guardians are to perform a symptom check every day before the student leaves home. A student having any of the following symptoms should not be sent to school and may continue to access their classrooms virtually if they are well enough to do so:

1 of the following: New onset cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing; New loss of taste or smell;

OR

2 of the following: Fever over 100.4 or chills within the past 24 hours; Fatigue; Muscle or body aches; Headache; Sore throat; Congestion or runny nose; Chills or shaking chills; Nausea or vomiting; Diarrhea.

Additionally, students who have been in close contact (within less than 6 feet for a cumulative time of more than 15 minutes over the past 24 hours with or without a mask) with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 or is suspected of having COVID-19 (exhibiting COVID- like illness and has not tested negative after exhibiting symptoms) should not enter any HCPSS building.

Parent/guardians will assess their children for symptoms of COVID-19 illness and refrain from sending/transporting them to school until after they have been symptom-free at least 10 days after the onset of symptoms, have no fever for at least 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication, and have continued improvement of symptoms and /or medical consult with their primary care physician.

STAYING CONNECTED

As students return to the building, we continue to focus on ensuring the safety and wellness of our students not only in their daily activities, but also in the event of an emergency. It is important for all HCMS families to complete their Family File in [HCPSS](#)

[Connect](#) so we have updated contact information and so families receive all school communications.

HCMS and HCPSS frequently send updated information to parents/guardians via email and text. Please be sure that your [Family File is up-to-date](#) and that you have opted into text messages to ensure you receive all messages. To opt into texts, text “yes” to 67587 from the cell phone listed in your Family File. If you need assistance updating your Family File, please contact our front office at 410-313-6929.

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT CENTERS

The HCPSS Technology Support Center site at the ARL is now closed for device exchanges, returns and support. In addition to a location at Old Bushy Park Elementary School, a new support center will open at the nearby Old Cedar Lane building in Columbia. [Click here](#) for full details.

FREE FOOD DRIVE

There will be a free Food Drive at Howard Community College on Thursday, April 1 and Friday, April 30 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. [View flier](#) for more information.

UPCOMING DATES

04/02/2021 - 04/06/2021 SCHOOLS CLOSED, Spring Break

04/14/2021 Schools close 3 hours early, End of Quarter 3

04/22/2021 Report cards issued

CONTINUING ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHROMEBOOK CARE WEBPAGE

There is a webpage for students, [Chromebook Care](#), which includes tips on caring for and transporting Chromebooks, as well as student mobile technology support and additional resources.

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Featuring answers to hundreds of FAQs, HCPSS' [Help Site](#) provides a wealth of information about the Bridge to Normalized Instruction Hybrid Instructional Model, health and safety, transportation, technology, and more. The site is organized by category and can be searched by keyword, making it easy to navigate to the information you need. New FAQs are continually being added and we encourage you to visit the site regularly.

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.

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.

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.

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