



Greetings HMS Families,

It is almost time to begin another school year. Staff returned last week and they have been working hard to prepare for the return of our students. We will be communicating lots of important information through our newsletter during these next few weeks. Please read carefully.

Remember to visit our [HMS Website](#) for upcoming news and events.

## **Important Dates**

August 22 - New student orientation 1 pm - 2:30 pm

August 22 - 7th/ 8th Grade Open House 3 pm - 4 pm

August 26 - 1st Day of School

September 5 - Back to School Night

September 18 - 3hr Early Dismissal for Students

September 25 - Student Fall Picture Day

October 3 - Rosh Hashanah - Schools and Offices Closed

**Student School Day Hours: 8:30 - 3:15**

**[6th Grade & New 7th and 8th Grade Orientation](#)**

(August 22nd from 1 pm - 2:30 pm)

Students entering 6th grade will enter the building and report to their advisory teacher's classroom. Signs and staff will help direct students to the correct locations. Parents and guardians will meet in the gym while students are with their advisory teachers. This orientation will serve as a time for students to see the school, practice with their lockers, and learn more about HMS. For parents and guardians, this will be a time for you to hear about the transition to middle school and have a brief Q&A with the Administration.

**Link to Advisory List Below.** Students will need to know their Advisory teacher for the orientation.

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1a1RfahxTWSa53fV4vDSePhu41q\\_U8TS\\_/edit?usp=sharing&oid=100483314131416196957&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1a1RfahxTWSa53fV4vDSePhu41q_U8TS_/edit?usp=sharing&oid=100483314131416196957&rtpof=true&sd=true)

*With new enrollments the names will be updated as needed.*

New students entering 7th or 8th grade, will enter the building and meet the school counselors in the media center. These are students who are entering as **first-time** students at HMS. During their time with their counselor, they will learn about HMS, walk their schedule, and practice their locker. Parents/guardians should plan to join us in the gym to learn about the school and participate in a brief Q&A with the Administration. Once you attend this new student orientation, you do not need to return for the Open House.

### **Returning 7th/8th Open House (August 22nd from 3 pm - 4 pm)**

Students returning to HMS in grades 7 or 8 will have an opportunity to stop by the school to walk their schedule and access their locker. This is a self-guided opportunity as there is no formal presentation. This is not a drop-off event. Students should be in the building with a responsible adult. **The event will end promptly at 4 p.m.**

This is not a required event, if a student isn't able to make the orientation or the open house, please do not worry. All information and opportunities will be reviewed with students during the first week of school.

### **Change of address**

This is a reminder to all families that they are required by [Policy 9000](#) to notify HCPSS if they move to a new home address. Current residency documentation must be updated each time residency changes.

### **Student Schedules**

Student schedules will be available via Synergy on August 21 at 8:00 am. Please note we are continuing to balance classes based on changing enrollment and all students will receive a new printed schedule on the first day of school, August 26. To access the schedule, click on SYNERGY, and then click "Class Schedule" from the menu. Please remind your child that they are reporting to their Advisory class when they arrive on the first day of school.

**After** August 21 at 8:00 am: Directions for Finding Student Schedules, Locker Information, Counselor, and Food Service (Cafeteria) Pin # for current HMS students:

- Log into your Synergy account.
- Once in your account, click on Student Info on the left. There you will see your counselor's name as well as your **Food Service (Cafeteria) PIN number**.
- To see your schedule, click on Class Schedule and you will see the schedule. In the upper right, you can see Quarter 1, Quarter 2, Quarter 3, Quarter 4 or All. Our suggestion is to only show Quarter 1 so you will see where you're going on Day #1.

*New to HCPSS students will not have an active account until the first day of school.*

## **Schedule Questions or Concerns**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your student's schedule please complete the Google form listed below and your student's school counselor will get back to you.

<https://forms.gle/NXiD5fJcJmtLrW9aA>

## **Transportation**

Student bus stop locations and pickup/dropoff times will be available on Wednesday, Aug. 21.

## **Walkers and Bike Riders**

The student walk zone maps are available on each [school's website](#). Scroll to the bottom of the site and select the 2023-2024 Walk Area Map in the footer.

- Students who ride a bike to school, are encouraged to lock their bike at the bike rack.
- I encourage you to take time now to familiarize your child with their route to and from school.
- Map out and walk the route between your home and school to ensure all roads, sidewalks, and pathways are familiar to your child. In addition, review crosswalks and intersections that are safe for crossing the road if required and review [safe pedestrian tips links to an external site](#) with your student. If you encounter any issues regarding safety as you walk these routes with your student, please contact the [HCPSS Office of Student TransportationLinks to an external site](#) to make HCPSS staff aware.

## **Lockers and Backpacks**

Each student will have access to their assigned locker on the first day of school. Students will also be allowed to carry their backpacks with them throughout the day. Students may not bring their backpacks and Chromebook to lunch and they will need to utilize their locker before and after lunch. We encourage our students to utilize their lockers throughout the day and only carry necessary items to class.

We know lockers are a big deal and also can be scary for students; we will be here ready to show patience and care as your child works on remembering their combination and how to open their locker.

## **Chromebooks**

Each student will utilize their county-provided Chromebook. Our rising 6th-grade students and new HCPSS students will receive their Chromebooks soon. Information about Chromebooks, repair costs, and more are available [here](#).

## **Cell Phones**

Upon arrival at school, student's cell phones must be off and away all day. Per [HCPSS Policy 8080](#), student use of cell phones is not permitted in Howard County middle schools during the school day. Families are reminded that students must abide by Board of Education Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology, Digital Tools, and Social Media, specifically Standard E. Student Use-Technology, which states that “HCPSS permits students to bring personal technology devices to school, according to the following rules:

- Middle Schools – Students:

- **Students will not use personal technology devices during non-instructional time**, including but not limited to transition between classes, lunch, recess, or in bathrooms.

A student phone is located in the front office for students to use to call home if needed. Students can access this phone whenever needed.

## **School Meals and Free and Reduced Meals**

For the 2024-2025 school year, the meal prices are as follows: breakfast \$2.00, lunch \$3.30, and milk \$.50. You can access your student's lunch account [here](#).

Many HCPSS families are eligible to participate in the Free and Reduced Price Meals (FARMS) program, which provides children with a wide range of benefits. Families are urged to check their eligibility and complete the [FARMS application](#) as soon as possible. Families must submit a new application every school year.

## **Apply for Free and Reduced Meals**

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](mailto:foodsvc@hcpss.org).

## **School Supplies**

This is the suggested list for grades 6-8. The list can be found here [School Supply List](#). On the first day of school, teachers will identify which supplies are needed for their class. Students will only need a few items on the first day such as a pen/pencil, folder, and notebook/paper. It is recommended that families wait to purchase items until students receive specific information from their student's teacher. Students may bring a water bottle. As a reminder, students are only permitted to have water in their water bottles; soda, coffee, juice, and other drinks are not permitted in the hallways or classrooms but can be saved for lunch.

## **Update Your Family File - by August 26th**

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. We want DMS to be the first middle school to have 100% of its families complete this important task, so visit [HCPSS Connect](#) today and click submit on the final screen!

Once logged in, you will be asked to update or provide the following information:

- Student Information
- Parent/Guardian Contact
- Emergency Contacts
- Medical Information
- Arrival/Dismissal Procedures and Transportation Options
- Photo Approval
- Data Confidentiality
- Student Creative Work Approval
- PTA/PTSA Directory

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

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

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

## **Student Absences**

If your student has to be absent from school, please submit a note to [hmsabsence@hcpss.org](mailto:hmsabsence@hcpss.org) or send a note in with your child to submit to the front office.. Absence notes must be received within 5 days of your student's return to school or the absence will remain unlawful.

- Students who are absent due to lawful reasons per HCPSS Policy 9010 will be considered Absent excused.

When emailing a note, you will receive an automated message to verify that your email was received.

Please do not send attendance notes to your child's teachers. If you have any questions about your child's attendance, please email [hmsabsence@hcpss.org](mailto:hmsabsence@hcpss.org)

If you would like to request a discretionary absence, please complete the form found here: [Discretionary Absence Request](#) and email it to [hmsabsence@hcpss.org](mailto:hmsabsence@hcpss.org).

Please review the [HCPSS Attendance Policy](#) for further information.

### **Late Arrivals:**

- Students will report to the front office to sign in and receive a pass when arriving late to school.
- Parents must send students in with a note or provide an email explaining the reason for the late arrival. Students who arrive late due to lawful reasons per HCPSS Policy 9010 will be considered Tardy excused.



### **Early Dismissals:**

- Parents/ Guardians will sign students out from the front office for early dismissals.
- Parents/Guardians are to show their photo ID upon arrival to confirm their eligibility to pick up the student in the family file.
- If you know that your student will have an early dismissal ahead of time, please send in a note or an email letting us know the time of the dismissal and the name of the person picking the student up. All attendance communications/questions should be sent to [hmsabsence@hcpss.org](mailto:hmsabsence@hcpss.org)

### **Important News from the Nurse**

HCPSS requires a new medication order form each school year dated on or after July 1<sup>st</sup> for all medications, including both prescription and over-the-counter medications (over-the-counter medications must be received by the health room in new, unopened containers and be clearly labeled with the student's name). The links to the order forms are below.

- <http://www.hcpss.org/f/aboutus/physician-medication-form.pdf>
- <https://www.hcpss.org/f/schools/health/epipenorder-careplan.pdf>

### **Important Immunization Requirements for 7th-Grade Students:**

Effective the first day of school for the 2024-2025 school year, all students entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade are required by the state of Maryland to have one dose of the Tdap vaccine AND one dose of the Meningococcal vaccine (MCV4). Many students may have already received these immunizations, but the Health Room may not have the updated immunization record. Please contact your student's healthcare provider and email or fax (240-456-0391) an updated copy of your student's immunizations to the Health Room. You can

also schedule an appointment to have your student receive these immunizations at the Health Department. They provide immunization opportunities for kids who are not up to date on school-required vaccinations. Call the Health Department at 410-313-7500 for more information and to schedule a vaccination appointment for your child.

[Medication Drop off reminder:](#)

If your child will need medication during the school year, the attached [medication form](#) must be completed by your doctor or nurse practitioner. Additional forms can be found on the HCPSS website. *If your child will be in band, orchestra, or chorus next year, consider requesting the doctor to include a "self-carry/self-administer" [order](#) for your child's emergency medications (epipens, inhalers) for extended day and weekend field trips.* Orders for each new school year must be dated on or after July 1. All medications must be in containers properly labeled with the following information:

- Student Name
- Medication name
- Dosage to be given
- Time and frequency of medication
- Date of medication order
- Prescriber's name
- Expiration date of medication

Over-the-counter medications such as cold, allergy, and headache medications should be brought to the health room in new, unopened containers.

**\*Medications should be delivered to school by a parent/guardian to ensure safe arrival. Students should not transport medications.**

If you have any questions, please contact the HMS health room (410-880-5836) or email the school health team ([christina\\_toler@hcpss.org](mailto:christina_toler@hcpss.org) ; [karisma\\_rencher@hcpss.org](mailto:karisma_rencher@hcpss.org) ).

## **Academic Dishonesty**

Please refer to the [Academic Dishonesty Guidance](#) document that has been created to ensure all students and families are aware of the possible consequences of Academic Dishonesty. Students at the secondary level will receive this information in the Student Code of Conduct presentation shared at the start of the school year.

## **Community Notices**

HCPSS' [Community News and Programs](#) website makes it easy for families to find educational and recreational resources, events and after-school programs beyond the school day by non-profit organizations.”

Community organizations requesting their announcements be shared in school newsletters should visit [community-programs.hcpss.org](http://community-programs.hcpss.org) for more information. Questions should be directed to the Public Information Office at [publicinfo@hcpss.org](mailto:publicinfo@hcpss.org).

# SCHOOL BASED MENTAL HEALTH (SBMH) DOES YOUR STUDENT NEED MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT?



School-Based Mental Health Services (SBMH) are therapy services provided at school buildings during the instructional day. Eligibility for SBMHS is determined by Student Support Teams (SST), which exist at each school and may consist of a school administrator, Pupil Personnel Worker (PPW), school counselor, school psychologist, school nurse, achievement liaisons, teachers, school social worker and other student services personnel. For more information about mental health warning signs visit:  
<https://www.hcpss.org/supports/mental-health-wellness/warning-signs/>

Some of the reasons students are referred to SBMH include, if the student is currently experiencing or has experienced:

- Barriers to accessing care outside of school
- Trauma
- Behavioral challenges
- Emotional challenges, including anxiety or more worries than other students
- Decline in school performance or grades

If SBMH is something you are interested in for your student, please complete the link to the interest form. If your student does not meet eligibility requirements, Mrs. Ganoë can help connect to other supports.



**For in School services, the minimum requirement is having state insurance, however, please still reach out to Mrs. Ganoë/complete the interest form below if you do not meet this requirement for alternative supports.**

## QUESTIONS?



443-774-87603



[amanda\\_ganoë@hcpss.org](mailto:amanda_ganoë@hcpss.org)

For more information, SCAN QR code or complete google form in the link below  
<https://forms.gle/DVQLJrC5C5XpGoi88>





### Happy Summer!

I hope Summer has been relaxing and recharging! In preparation for our first day of the 2024-2025 school year, please review some helpful tips on successful school attendance. We want to ensure the 2024-2025 school year is great. Please reach out to Mrs. Ganoe if you have any questions or concerns about school attendance.

-Mrs. Ganoe  
HMS School Social Worker

### TIPS & TRICKS

#### The Night before:

- Put out clothes the night before (check the weather)
- Prepare lunch the night before (if bringing lunch)
- Have all school items ready to go, in backpack, by the front door
- Set an alarm (or two)
- Shut down electronics 30 minutes before bedtime

#### The morning of:

- Don't snooze alarm
- Have a morning routine (get dressed, eat breakfast, brush teeth, and out the door)
- Know your daily schedule
- Partner with someone for success (someone in your home, another student in your neighborhood)
- Know your supports at school. Not sure who? Connect with someone in student services!



### ATTENDANCE POLICY



### 24-25 CALENDAR



### REMINDERS

If your student will be absent, let us know by emailing:

[hmsabsence@hcpss.org](mailto:hmsabsence@hcpss.org)

### SAVE THE DATES

**1st day of school:** Monday, 8/26

from 8:30AM-3:15PM

**Back to school open house:** 8/22

6th grade: 1:00-2:30PM

7th & 8th grade 3:00-4:00pm

**Back to School night:** 9/5 at

6:00PM



### CONTACT

[amanda\\_ganoe@hcpss.org](mailto:amanda_ganoe@hcpss.org)  
443-774-8760

