

# WAVE NEWSLETTER

## February 20, 2025

### Important Dates:

#### February

27 ~ Black History Month Activity Night, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

#### March

03 - 07 ~ Kindergarten and New First Grader Registration Kickoff

13 ~ Belonging Night, 6:00-8:00 pm

14 ~ Professional Work and Wellness Day - Schools Close Three Hours Early

19 ~ Vision and Hearing Testing

21 ~ PTA Family BINGO Night, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

### On Deck With Your Administrators

Dear Dayton Oaks Families:

On January 30, 2025, the Board of Education approved adjustments to *Policy 8080 - Responsible Use of Technology, Digital Tools, and Social Media* that changes the ability for students to use personal devices during the school day. The Board approved the following changes related to the use of personal devices by students at school:

- No students, PreKindergarten-12, will be permitted to use cell phones and other personal technology devices during the student day (first bell to last bell of the day or posted school hours) except for reasons detailed in a student's IEP, 504, or health plan. Under the prior version of the policy, elementary and middle school students were not permitted to use personal devices during the school day at any time. For high school students, this policy removes access to personal devices in between classes and at lunch. For all grade levels, the addition of consequences for violating the policy is new.
- When a personal device is used in violation of the new policy, the device will be confiscated for the remainder of the student day. Following the first violation, the student may retrieve the device at the end of the student day. For all subsequent violations, a parent/guardian must retrieve the device from the school.
- A device that is confiscated during the final period of the student day will be confiscated for the entire next student day. The student may retrieve the device at the end of the day it was originally confiscated to take home but must provide it to the front office upon arrival on the next student day.
- Students may be in possession of personal devices, but they must be "away and silenced," meaning devices are not able to be seen by either the student or staff member and are set to make no noise. Additionally, devices may not be a distraction.
- Smart watches will be permitted to be worn to check time but may not be a distraction.
- Personal laptops may be used for instructional activities in high school when permitted by the teacher.
- A staff member on a school-sponsored field trip may permit the use of a personal technology device by a student in limited situations where capturing a picture or video may be appropriate or contacting a parent/guardian is necessary.

- School administrators and school administrators' designees may authorize use of a personal device in rare instances such as an emergency for communication purposes.

These new expectations will take effect on Monday, March 3, 2025. The [complete changes and expectations](#)[Links to an external site.](#) may be found online. Please take time to review these new expectations with your student to ensure they do not violate the new policy. Our school will adhere strictly to the policy with hopes that the elimination of the distractions that personal devices cause use will result in healthier and more productive learning and social environments during the school day. More information will be shared before the implementation date.

Thank you for your collaboration in the successful implementation of these changes.

Educationally yours,

Ms. Williams-McKinney, Principal  
Ms. Lorch, Assistant Principal

### **2025-2026 Kindergarten Registration Kickoff**

Kindergarten [registration](#) for families of children who will be 5 years old by September 1, 2025, kicks off Monday, March 3. Parents can begin the enrollment process online, after which your child's school will contact you to complete the registration process. Current HCPSS prekindergarten students do not need to be re-registered for kindergarten because they are already enrolled as an HCPSS student.

### **Vision and Hearing Screening**

The Howard County Health Department will be coming to DOES for our annual vision and hearing screening on Wednesday, March 19, 2025. All kindergarten and first-grade students and those new to Maryland Public Schools will be screened. If your child wears glasses, please make sure they bring their glasses to school on screening day. If your child is absent, the rescreening date is March 27, 2025. The health room is in need of volunteers for screenings between 9:00 am and 1:00 p.m. If you are available to volunteer, or if you have any questions, please contact our school nurse, Rachel Tulis, at: [rachel\\_tulis@hcpss.org](mailto:rachel_tulis@hcpss.org).

### **Save the Date - DOES Second Annual Belonging Night**

Save the date for Thursday, March 13th! Dayton Oaks will be hosting their second annual Belonging Night which is led by our 5th Grade Belonging Group! Many activities are planned that promote a sense of Belonging! This is a great opportunity for families to connect and get to know new families! This fabulous event begins at 6:00 and ends at 8:00. This is NOT a drop off event. Parents will need to stay with their child. For any questions, please feel free to reach out to Mrs. Urban at [amy\\_urban@hcpss.org](mailto:amy_urban@hcpss.org). We look forward to seeing you!

### **Ramadan (February 28 - March 29, 2025)**

Ramadan begins the evening of Friday, February 28 and ends on Saturday, March 29, 2025. Recognizing that students who observe Ramadan may be fasting during the school day, we are offering an alternative location for any child who would prefer not to be in the cafeteria during the lunch block. Students may choose to spend the lunch shift in the media center engaged in a book or other quiet activity. If you have any questions, please reach out to the School Counselor, [Stephanie Dix@hcpss.org](mailto:Stephanie_Dix@hcpss.org).

## **Glenelg High School Presents *Cinderella***

Come see the magical musical Cinderella at Glenelg High School! Performances are:

March 6 at 7pm

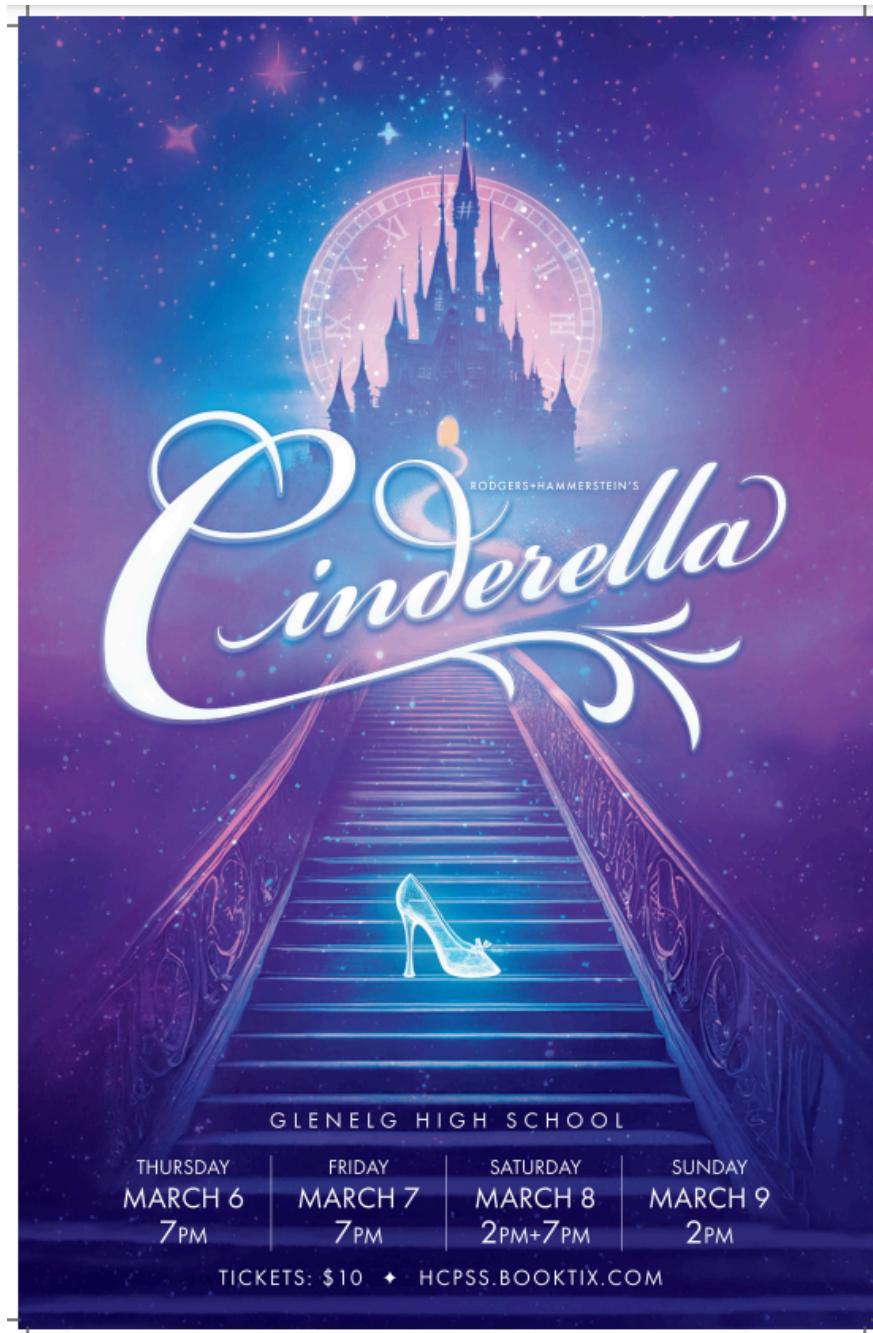
March 7 at 7pm

March 8 at 2pm & 7pm

March 9 at 2pm

All tickets are \$10 and can be purchased online, in the GHS front office, or at the door. We are anticipating sell-out shows. So, get your tickets in advance! Online ticket purchase link:

<https://tinyurl.com/2neerbzs>



## **Family Supports and Resources**

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) provides countless supports for students and families, and recognizes there are times when additional help is needed. Various reputable county, state and national organizations can provide assistance every day and during times of crisis. For a list of resources/organizations, please click [HERE](#).

## **NEWS WORTH REPEATING**

### **Learning Together Program**

The Dayton Oaks Early Childhood Classes are making preparations for the upcoming 2025-2026 School Year and are accepting applications for general education students to participate as peers through the **Learning Together Program (LTP)**. These classes include general education and special education students. The program's focus is helping all children develop communication, literacy, math, problem solving, motor, and social skills. Parents of children who will be 3 by September 1st, applications will be available and accepted in **mid February**.

In alignment with [Maryland's Blueprint for the Future](#), ***new LTP applications for students turning 4 by September 1 will not be available.*** The Howard County Public School System continues to offer Prekindergarten for income eligible children who will be 4 years old by September 1. For additional information contact the school or visit: <https://www.hcpss.org/schools/pre-k-programs/>

**HCPSS is committed to providing instruction based on the statewide Early Learning Standards which are in alignment with Kindergarten Readiness. The fees listed in the application will be collected monthly regardless of the learning model determined by HCPSS throughout the upcoming school year (virtual, hybrid, in person, or class quarantine). If you have any additional questions, please contact Christina Borgfeld at 410-313-1571 or [christina\\_borgfeld@hcpss.org](mailto:christina_borgfeld@hcpss.org).**

### **Maryland Accreditation Standards**

Our Pre-K program has recently completed its self-appraisal using the [Maryland Accreditation Standards](#). Participating in Maryland Accreditation is a way for our Pre-K program to demonstrate its commitment to providing high-quality learning environments and continually making improvements to benefit children, families, and staff. Our self-appraisal team comprised teachers, administrators, family, and community members. As a result of our initial self-appraisal, we have developed a Program Improvement Plan that will address the following goals:

- Increase the presence of authentic child-generated art and language through displays and written dictation.
- Provide opportunities to write at each learning center with various materials and tools.
- Provide additional opportunities on the playground for students to engage with prop boxes and materials for building
- Add labels to tubs, trays, bins and baskets.
- Support diversity within the classroom with instructional materials that are authentic and accurate and reflect the students.
- Add a variety of books and text materials in multiple places in the rooms

Over the next few months, we will collect documentation and artifacts to verify the quality of our program. We're eager to make program improvements and achieve Maryland Accreditation! Please contact your child's teacher with questions about Accreditation or our Accreditation Program Improvement Plan.

### **Howard County Office of Children and Families**

The Howard County Office of Children and Families is offering several parent workshops this month. These programs are free and geared for families with children ages Birth - 5. To view the full schedule of February's Parent Workshops, please click on this month's publication of [Parent Pages](#).

### **Volunteer in the Media Center!**

The Media Center is looking for volunteers to help with shelving and other small projects. Please consider signing up to volunteer by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0E4AAEAE29A0FE3-51264532-media/73721223#/>

### **Early Admissions to Kindergarten, First Grade and Pre-K**

[Early Admission to Kindergarten](#) and [Early Admission to First Grade](#) open on March 1, 2025. [Early Admission to Pre-K](#) opens on April 1, 2025.

### **Reminders About Arrival and Dismissal Procedures**

To ensure a smooth and safe arrival and dismissal for our students, please read the information below.

**SCHOOL HOURS:** 9:15 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

#### **ARRIVAL TIMES:**

9:00 a.m. First bell rings/students may enter the building.

9:15 a.m. Second/late bell rings/students should be in the classroom.

**Students should not be dropped off or let out of your vehicle until 9:00 a.m. Supervision is not available for students before this time.** Before and after care is available through Howard County Parks and Recreation as well as other before and after school providers in the community.

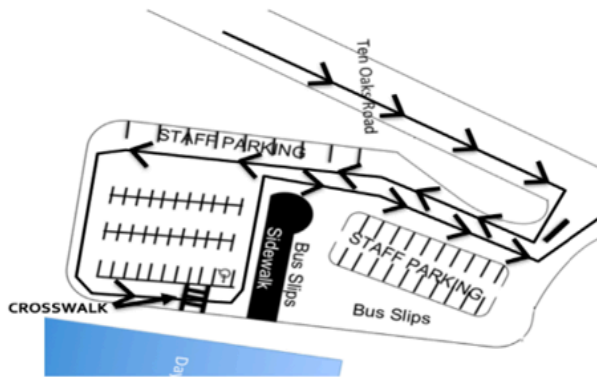
All children who are late must be accompanied by a parent and be signed into school in the front office.

**DISMISSAL TIMES:** Dismissal begins at 3:45 pm.

If you have to make a change to your student's dismissal, please send a note and/or email to their teacher, and notify the front office. If you have to make a change during the day, after your student has arrived at school, please email your child's teacher AND email the front office staff at: [doesfrontoffice@hcpss.org](mailto:doesfrontoffice@hcpss.org). **No students will be released from the front office for early dismissal after 3:30pm.** This will help to ensure the safety of our students and cut down on confusion at the end of the day as afternoon dismissal begins.

**Arrival and Dismissal Procedures and Expectations:** Please see the visual below for the

flow of our car loop. Below the visual are the expectations and instructions for making arrival and dismissal of your student(s) as efficient and safe as possible.



### Reminders for arrival and dismissal:

Use the car loop to drop off students. When you enter the parking lot, you must make the full loop around.

- There is NO PASSING in the carpool loop, unless directed by a DOES staff member.
- Never leave a car unattended in the carpool loop/line.
- Pull up as far as possible (to the peninsula sidewalk) before letting your child exit the vehicle. Please make sure there are no spaces between cars.
- Children will be let out of the passenger side of the vehicle only. Staff will assist children with getting in and out of the car. Parents should NOT get out of the car.
- Do not turn left to enter the bus loop area between 8:45 a.m. and 9:15 a.m. or between 3:15 p.m. and 3:45 p.m.
- It is extremely unsafe to walk behind or between buses in the bus loop. Take the extra minute in line to ensure everyone's safety.
- Parents should avoid parking and walking in unless they have an appointment within the building. The car loop area is safer with less pedestrian traffic and fewer cars moving within the parking lot.
- If you need to park, you must park in the larger lot by the carpool loop. This is the only area with a crosswalk to ensure safety when walking toward the building.
- The parking spots parallel to Ten Oaks Road are designated as Staff Parking during arrival and dismissal. Entering or exiting your vehicle is unsafe from these parking spaces while traffic from the car loop is flowing.
- All traffic must flow in one direction.
- If you are leaving a parking spot during arrival or dismissal, follow the directions of

school staff. You may need to wait for cars to continue through the car loop before you are directed to pull out of the lot. The priority is to keep the car loop flowing.

- Please be courteous and respectful to both staff and other families.

## **Health Room Reminders**

Any medications required during school hours including prescription, “over-the-counter” (OTC) and homeopathic/herbal medications require a medication order signed by an approved health care provider and are subject to the HCPSS medication policy and procedure.

### Medication form

- Have a student with allergies? Learn more about [ordering an epipen and our allergic reaction protocols](#).

School health room staff administer medications, store medications in the school’s health room and keep records of when medications are taken by the student.

### **Approved Non-Medications:**

The items below are not considered medications. Students may bring the items to school without a medical prescription. Health Services requests that a parent/guardian note accompany the item to serve as permission to bring to school.

- Sunscreen
- Chapstick
- Hand lotion
- Non-medicated cough drops
- Saline contact solution

Sunscreen must be supplied by an individual student and is not to be shared with other students due to potential allergens and skin reactions.

Please contact the health room at 410 313-1575 if you have any questions.

### **Immunization Clinics:**

The Howard County Health Department is hosting clinics for students that are in need of immunizations for the start of the school year.

[Childhood Immunization | Howard County \(howardcountymd.gov\)](#)

## **Attendance/Reporting Absences**

Parents can email [DOESabsence@hcpss.org](mailto:DOESabsence@hcpss.org) to report a student’s absence. Please include your child(ren)’s full name, parent’s/guardian’s full name and phone number, the date your child(ren) was absent and the reason. Parents may instead choose to send in a paper excuse note to their child’s teacher with the same information when the student returns to school.

For families requesting local discretionary absences, please complete a [Local Discretionary Absence Request Form](#) and submit it to the front office at least one week in advance.

## **Volunteer Training Required for Volunteers and Visitors**

Anyone volunteering at school in any capacity, including parents joining their children for lunch, are required to complete volunteer training prior to their first visit. Please visit [HERE](#) for more information. Thank you in advance for your willingness to support our staff and students at DOES.

## **2024-2025 School Meals Information**

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about HCPSS meal information.

Pricing for school meals for 2024-25:

- Breakfast - \$2.00
- Lunch - \$2.80

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 including free or discounted college tuition, testing and application fees, academic and athletic program fees and many others in addition to free or discounted meals. Families are urged to check their eligibility and complete a [FARMs application](#) as soon as possible. Families must submit a new application every school year.

## **Community News**

Please visit the HCPSS website [Community News and Programs site](#) for upcoming events and programs sponsored by non-profit organizations.