

WAVE NEWSLETTER

October 2, 2025

Important Dates:

October

- 02 ~ School and Offices Closed
- 10 ~ DolFun Run (Raindate: 10/15)
- 16 ~ Kindergarten Field Trip to Gaver Farm
- 17 ~ Schools Closed for Students - MSEA Convention/Professional Work Day
- 20 ~ Schools and Offices Closed - Diwali
- 26 ~ Fall Festival; 3-5pm
- 27 ~ Grade 3 Field Trip to Baltimore Museum of Industry (Kidwell, Slattery, Urban)
- 28 ~ Grade 3 Field Trip to Baltimore Museum of Industry (Ludwig, Terreri)
- 29 ~ Grade 1 Field Trip to Green Meadows
- 30 ~ Grade 2 Field Trip to Toby's Dinner Theatre
- 31 ~ End of First Quarter - Schools Dismiss Three Hours Early

On Deck With Your Administrators

Dear Dayton Oaks Families,

Research is clear that showing up for school has a huge impact on a student's academic and social success, starting from kindergarten and continuing through high school. Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with school, or even facing social challenges.

- Missing 10% (or about 18 days of a school year) can drastically affect a student's academic success.
- By the 6th grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that can indicate if a student is at risk for dropping out of high school.
- In the 9th grade, regular and high attendance predicts graduation rates better than 8th grade test scores.

Student attendance is a major point of focus for the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Starting in the 2023-2024 school year, MSDE lowered the chronic absenteeism rate from 20% to 10%, meaning that at 10%, a student should receive support and interventions to improve their absenteeism.

Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) believes that attendance is key to student success. Maryland's attendance rate represents the average daily attendance rate of students in grades 1-12, including special education students. The state's proficient standard for attendance rate is 94%, and the advanced standard is 96%."

In support of achieving Exemplary Attendance for all students, we are sharing with you a comprehensive approach to attendance supports and interventions.

- If a student has missed 5% of their monthly attendance days (as few as 1-2 days a month), parents/guardians will receive a Care and Concern Phone Call and letter from

their school. This step will allow staff members to coordinate with families to determine how the student can be supported for better attendance.

- If a student has missed 10% of their monthly attendance days (this is defined as chronic absenteeism by MSDE), parents/guardians will receive a 10% Chronic Absenteeism Attendance Letter. Parents/guardians and students may be scheduled for an attendance conference. Other interventions and supports may also be used in an effort to assist the student.
- If a student has missed 15% of their monthly attendance days, in addition to the interventions and supports at 5% and 10%, these students may require an attendance support plan. Students may also be referred to the Central Attendance Team.
- If a student has missed 20% of their monthly attendance days, parents/guardians will receive a 20% Emergency Chronic Absenteeism Letter or Habitual Truancy Letter. Students may be referred to Project Attend and/or the State's Attorney's Office for habitual truancy.

With the collaborative effort of HCPSS parents/guardians, staff, and students, we are confident that all students can have successful attendance. This will improve student success in school and future life.

Educationally yours,

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

Counselor's Corner

Dear Dayton Oaks Families,

Last Friday, the school counselors hosted the first Mix-It-Up Recess of the school year for grades K-5! This event encourages students to step outside their usual recess routines by trying new activities and playing with different peers. This month, Mrs. Dix and Mrs. Hannan will continue the fun with a Mix-It-Up Lunch being held on Friday, October 24th! During this special lunch, students will be invited to sit in freestyle seating instead of their usual homerooms. The school counselors have conversation prompts ready to spark connections and help students make new friends in their grade.

On October 22nd, DOES will also participate in Unity Day, a national event that promotes kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. Through SEL lessons, students will explore the meaning of unity and how it strengthens our sense of belonging at school. The Mix It Up Lunch is scheduled for the Friday following Unity Day, giving students another opportunity to practice these important skills in a fun and supportive way.

If you have any questions or would like to talk with the counselors about your child's sense of belonging at school, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Stephanie Dix & Alyson Hannan

Reminders About Handicapped Parking Spaces

As our school days become busier, we want to extend a friendly reminder regarding arrival and dismissal procedures, in particular, the importance of respecting designated handicapped parking spaces.

Handicapped parking spaces are not just about convenience—they are a lifeline for students, staff, and families who need safe and accessible entry to our school.

Even a quick stop in one of these spots can create real challenges. A child with limited mobility may not be able to get out safely, or a community member with a chronic health condition may find it difficult to make it safely to the building.

We know drop-off and pick-up can be hectic, and we truly appreciate everyone's patience during those times. Choosing to leave these spaces available is not only the law, but also a thoughtful way to care for and support one another in our community. *This also means avoiding stopping behind the spaces in a way that blocks them.*

Thank you for helping us keep Dayton Oaks a safe, inclusive, and welcoming place for all. Please also share this reminder with any family members or friends who may be dropping off or picking up students.

Young Author's Contest 2025-2026

The Howard County Literacy Association invites students in grades 1-5 to submit their original poems and/or short stories to the annual writing contest called **The Young Authors' Contest**. Please see the attached Young Authors' Contest Guidelines ([Guidelines](#)) for information about the rules and guidelines. All entries must have a completed YAC Cover Sheet ([cover sheet PDF](#)) sent as a PDF. Submissions may be emailed to Mrs. Hipp (jenifer_hipp@hcpss.org) by December 15, 2025. Contact Mrs. Hipp with any questions. All Young Authors' Contest information can be found on the [HCLA website](#). Howard County Literacy Association welcomes parents as members. Visit the [HCLA Welcome Page](#) for information about joining.

Save the Date - Family Academic Night: Game On!

Get ready to play, learn, and cheer—because it's **Game On** at our **Family Academic Night!** Please save the date for **Tuesday, November 18, 2025, from 6:30–7:30 p.m.**

This year's event is **sports-themed** and packed with **family-friendly, hands-on activities** that bring our community together for a night of learning and fun. Students and families will have the chance to move through engaging stations, tackle academic challenges, and celebrate teamwork on and off the "field."

To get into the spirit, we encourage everyone to **wear their favorite jersey or sports shirt**—let's fill the school with team pride!

Mark your calendars now and stay tuned for more details. We can't wait to see you there for a winning night of learning and laughter! Game On!

Flu Clinics



No Cost Flu Shots!



Available through the Howard County Health Department at the following events:

Thurs, Oct 2 2:30pm-4:30pm

Owen Brown Place 7080 Cradlerock Way, Columbia

Sat, Oct 4 11am-2pm

Hope Bible Church Harvest Fest 9112 Guilford Rd, Columbia

Sat, Oct 4 12pm-4pm

North Laurel Community Center Fall Festival
9411 Whiskey Bottom Rd, Laurel

Wed, Oct 8 3pm-6pm

Miller Branch Library 9421 Frederick Rd, Ellicott City

Wed, Oct 8 5:30pm-8:30pm

Deep Run ES Hispanic Heritage Fair 6925 Old Waterloo Rd,
Elkridge

Sat, Oct 11 11am-2pm

Elkridge Volunteer Fire Dept. 5700 Rowanberry Dr, Elkridge

Fri, Oct 17 12pm-4pm

Dar Al-Taqwa Mosque 10740 Route 108, Columbia

Wed, Oct 22 4pm-7pm

Elkridge Branch Library 6540 Washington Blvd, Elkridge

Wed, Oct 29 6pm-7:30pm

Homewood Center Resource Fair 10914 Route 108, Ellicott City

Sun, Nov 2 12pm-1:30pm

Chin Bethel Church 6801 Douglas Legum Dr, Elkridge

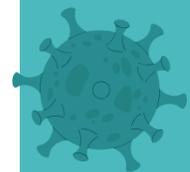
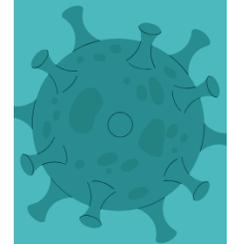
Sat, Nov 15 and Sun, Nov 16 8am-4pm

Howard County Health Dept. 8930 Stanford Blvd, Columbia



Scan for most updated information before attending a clinic, as there may be changes or additions

Walk-Ins accepted
No registration necessary



Orchestra Notes

Last week, 16 of our talented 4th and 5th graders auditioned for the Howard County Public School System's Gifted and Talented Orchestra. We are so proud of each student for the hard work, courage, and dedication it took to prepare for such a competitive audition experience alongside over 400 students from across the county.

We are thrilled to share that six Dayton Oaks students were accepted into the HCPSS GT Orchestra this year! This is an outstanding accomplishment, and we couldn't be prouder of the commitment and musicianship these students have demonstrated.

Congratulations to our honorees:

1.	Juniper	Fulton	Violin
2.	Aiden	Weng	Violin
3.	Isla	Flack	Viola
4.	Ella	Jin	Viola
5.	Anayah	Mathieu	Viola
6.	Noah	Yoo	Viola

We celebrate every student who auditioned and extend a special bravo to those who will represent Dayton Oaks in these prestigious ensembles. Way to go, Dolphins! 🐬 ✨

Free and Reduced Meals - Deadline to Apply is October 31st

Many 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, program fees and many others. Families are urged to check their eligibility and complete a FARMs application as soon as possible. **The deadline to apply is Friday, October 31st.** Families must submit a new application every school year. Details on the [Free and Reduced Meals Program](#), including a link to apply, are available online.

NEWS WORTH REPEATING

Hispanic Heritage Month

Each year, from September 15 through October 15, we proudly celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. This is a special time to honor the rich histories, cultures, and contributions of individuals and families whose roots come from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

In addition to engaging in activities and classroom learning that highlight the traditions, stories, music, art, and achievements of Hispanic and Latino Americans, families are also encouraged to continue the celebration at home by reading books, listening to music, or sharing family traditions that connect to Hispanic culture. Together, we can nurture respect, collaboration, and belonging for all. Please find additional information regarding Hispanic Heritage Month [here](#).

Registration for BSAP Saturday Math Academy

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. Registration will take place online Saturday, September 20, 2025 from 9:00 am until capacity is reached. Class space is limited. Families can register by accessing the [HCPSS Connect Website](#)[Links to an external site.](#) on the registration date. 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/Links to an external site.](https://news.hcpss.org/news-posts/2025/09/black-student-achievement-program-bsap-saturday-math-academy-fall-2025-program/Links%20to%20an%20external%20site.)

Health Checks

As the fall season gets underway and many activities move indoors, we often experience an increase in the spread of the flu, colds, COVID-19 and other communicable diseases.

All families, students, staff and visitors should conduct daily health checks prior to entering any HCPSS building and/or school bus, and are reminded to ***stay home if they are experiencing symptom(s) associated with any communicable disease.***

Infection control prevents or stops the spread of infections, and may include standard precaution methods. [Learn more about HCPSS protocols](#), how these conditions are managed at school, and how they can be handled at home. Additional [information on keeping students healthy](#) is available online.

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.

Health Room Request

The health room is seeking donations of small water bottles, individual packages of Goldfish crackers, and Clorox wipes.

Change of Address

Please note that any change of residency must be reported through the Family File within 10 school days of the move. Current residency documentation must be provided to the school each time residency changes. Please reach out to the front office team with questions or if you need assistance with updating your Family File.

Rodent Control in Schools

Food is one of the main reasons rodents try to get inside buildings. As such, HCPSS is asking families to [take several steps](#) to help decrease the likelihood of rodent infestations. Thanks for your help to ensure our schools are safe and healthy.

Fall 2025 After-School Classes at Dayton Oaks

Howard County Recreation & Parks before/after-school classes provide fun, structured, educational, and enriching activities for students on site at Dayton Oaks, benefitting both the child(ren) and parents!

 [Dayton Oaks ES Fall Before & After School Flier \(1\).pdf](#)

[Dayton Oaks ES Registration Page](#)

2025 - 2026 School Supply List

Click [HERE](#) to view the school supply list for the 25-26 school year.

The Mental Health Community Action Council

The Mental Health Community Action Council, a group that works to remove barriers and build awareness for mental health support in Howard County has created a back-to-school newsletter. It contains mental health resources, tips to address anxiety and friendship skills, information about community events, and more.

MHCAC Fall Newsletter 2025.pdf - 10.7 MB

<https://hcpss.instructure.com/courses/9435/files/77206873/download>

Student Personal Device Policy

This summer, the Board of Education agreed to continue with the policy that implements strict limitations on the personal use of devices by students during the student day. Per the policy, 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. More information about the [policy](#) may be found on the HCPSS website.

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.
- 9:10 a.m. Second/late bell rings/students should be in the classroom.

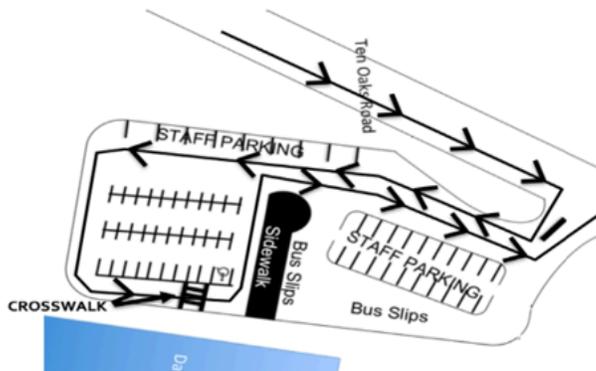
Students should not be dropped off or let out of your vehicle until 9:00 a.m. Supervision is not available for students before this time. Before and after care is available through Howard County Parks and Recreation as well as other before and after school providers in the community.

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. **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 Student Absences

Students who are sick and need to stay home will be given an excused absence providing a note from the parent/guardian is submitted to the school after the student’s return, indicating the date and reason for tardiness or absence from a regular school session. A doctor’s note is required in cases of long-term absence or excessive absenteeism due to illness. Please email doesabsence@hcpss.org to report your child’s absence.

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.

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.

Community News

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

PTA NEWSPLASH

To view this week's edition of the PTA NewSplash, please click [HERE](#).