

# WAVE NEWSLETTER

## February 19, 2026

### Important Dates:

#### February

- 20 ~ Author Ada Ari Visits Dayton Oaks
- 27 ~ Fifth Grade Career Day

#### March

- 02 - 06 ~ Kindergarten Registration Kickoff
- 02 - 16 ~ March Madness Read-A-Thon Fundraiser
  - 03 ~ Schools Close Three Hours Early - Professional Learning/Work & Wellness Day
  - 09 ~ PreK Registration Kickoff (More Information to Follow)
  - 12 ~ Vision and Hearing Screening
  - 13 ~ Grade 1 Field Trip to Robinson's Nature Center
  - 19 ~ Spring School Pictures
  - 20 ~ Schools Closed for Students - Professional Work Day

### On Deck With Your Administrators

Dear Dayton Oaks Families:

We are thrilled to announce that on Thursday, February 26, we will officially kick off our March Madness Read-A-Thon Fundraiser, one of the most exciting literacy events of the year.

From March 2–16, 2026, students will have the opportunity to sign up and participate in this engaging fundraiser, which aligns perfectly with Reading Month and our schoolwide March Madness reading celebrations. During this time, we look forward to seeing our students build reading stamina, explore new genres, celebrate favorite authors, and deepen their love of reading while working toward shared goals as a school community.

Please be on the lookout next week for additional details. Informational materials will be sent home in Thursday folders and will include everything families need to register and participate. We are excited to make this process both simple and engaging for our students and families.

Funds raised through the Read-A-Thon will directly benefit our students by supporting the purchase of high quality instructional materials and contributing to select capital improvements within our building. Your generosity plays an important role in helping us continue to create engaging learning environments and provide resources that support student growth and achievement.

Thank you in advance for your enthusiasm, encouragement, and continued partnership. We are deeply grateful for the support of our school community and look forward to a month filled with reading, excitement, and celebration.

Educationally yours,

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

## **Counselor's Corner**

This month, the school counselors are focused on the future! As part of our comprehensive School Counseling program, we are focusing on our standards for career development. Through classroom lessons and school-wide activities, our goal is to help students understand how their strengths and interests can help them think about their future possibilities. Below are details for two school-wide activities to support career exploration.

**Monday, 2/23: Mix-It Up Lunch!** The school counselors plan to mix it up at lunch on Monday by encouraging the students to sit at a different table and with a different group of people while answering career-focused questions to support new conversations and connections!

### **Spirit Week**

- Tuesday, 2/24--Represent a College: Whether it's a local community college, a big university, or a specialized trade school, students and staff are encouraged to wear their favorite collegiate colors!
- Wednesday, 2/25—Personal Hero Day: Dress as the person who inspires you most! It can be a historical icon, community leader, or someone you know personally that you look up to.
- Thursday, 2/26—Career Ambition Day: Dress for a career that you find interesting!
- Friday, 2/27—Dress for Success Day: Wear your best business attire and show DOES you're ready for the future!

Thank you,  
Stephanie Dix and Alyson Hannan

## **2026-2027 Kindergarten Registration Kickoff**

Kindergarten registration for families of children who will be 5 years old by September 1, 2026, kicks off Monday, March 2. Parents/guardians 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 Volunteers Needed**

The health room is in need of volunteers for screenings between 9am and 2pm. 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).

## **March Madness for National Reading Month**

March is National Reading Month, and this year Dayton Oaks will be having a little friendly competition in the world of books! Inspired by NCAA March Madness, get ready for an imaginative tournament where books go head-to-head in a fun, bracket-style battle! This exciting event brings our community together to celebrate reading and creativity. Picture a lively basketball court where books compete for the championship title. Readers cheer for their favorites, turning reading into an unforgettable literary showdown!

Each week in homeroom classes, students will get to read the two books featured in that week's matchup. They will get to cast their vote on their favorite book of the week and their teacher will record their votes. Each Friday during the month of March, the winning book of the week will be announced on the Friday morning announcements. At the end of the month, the overall winning book will be crowned!

The books we will be reading, by week, [can be found here](#). Feel free to also read them at home and have your child count this as reading towards their read-a-thon hours!

Happy Reading Month!  
Mrs. Hipp & The DOES Media Team

### **Save the Date for the DOES Student Showcase**

SAVE THE DATE - The Dayton Oaks Student Showcase, scheduled for May 21, 2026, from 6:30-8pm, is an open house for family and community that spotlights learning at Dayton Oaks Elementary. We will be rolling out the red carpet to view the amazing work from all our star students in RECC to 5th grade! Additionally, we invite students to participate in the showcase by creating a STEAM project. Just follow the directions for creating a STEAM Project in the [packet](#). We hope to see you at our red carpet event!

### **HCPSS Family Empowerment Academy**

The [HCPSS Family Empowerment Academy](#) is designed to equip parents and guardians with practical strategies, resources, and insights to support their children's academic, social, and emotional success. The academy will take place on four consecutive Saturdays - March 7 through March 28, 2026, from 9:00 -10:30 a.m.- and will feature interactive learning experiences, guest speakers, and opportunities to connect with other HCPSS families. Participation is limited to 30 participants, and registration is first-come, first-served. Attendance is encouraged for all four sessions. Language interpretation and childcare will be provided. Please complete the [application form](#) to be considered for participation. For additional information, please contact BSAP Supervisor, Ashley Armstead.

### **Expanded Online Tutoring Help**

Brainfuse HelpNow is now available 24/7 for all library users, expanding access beyond the previous 2 p.m. – midnight live tutoring hours. This means students and caregivers can connect with live online tutoring and academic support anytime that fits their schedule. Brainfuse HelpNow is available on the [HCLS website](#), and video and written instructions on how to use the resource are available [here](#). First-time users will need to create a username and password.

### **Join the Western Howard County Warhawks Football Program**

Calling all young athletes ready to learn, grow, and compete! The Western Howard County Warhawks football program provides a fun, safe, and supportive environment where players of all experience levels can develop their skills and confidence. Our dedicated coaches focus on fundamentals, teamwork, sportsmanship, and leadership—both on and off the field.

Whether your child is new to football or looking to build on their experience, the Warhawks offer an inclusive program that emphasizes player development, physical fitness, and a true love for the game. Most importantly, we pride ourselves on building a strong football family where athletes make lasting friendships and unforgettable

See Howard County Rec and Parks Activity Guide or [www.gowarhawks.com](http://www.gowarhawks.com) for registration and cost. Registration is now open.

## **Clarksville Catholic Youth Camp**

We are excited to offer a Maryland-licensed, faith-based summer program serving children ages 4–12 from June 22 through August 14. Our goal remains to provide a safe, engaging, and community-centered environment where children can grow in confidence, friendship, and joy.

Website: <https://stlouisp Parish.org/camp>

Registration Link: <https://fs11.formsite.com/y13kUO/igycmelq19/index>

# DISCOVER YOUR SUMMER ADVENTURE



JOIN US FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE AT CLARKSVILLE CATHOLIC YOUTH CAMP!

MARYLAND LICENSED SUMMER CAMP LOCATED IN CLARKSVILLE MD



### CREATIVITY

Explore your artistic side through engaging crafts and projects every week! Join artsy craftsy camp, building camp, lego camp and more.



### SPORTS

Enjoy fun and exciting sports activities designed for all skill levels and ages. Join basketball camp, soccer camp, flag football camp, and more.



### ADVENTURE

Join us for theatrical fun with opportunities for performance and expression. Join broadcasting camp, photography camp, combat archery camp, and more.

# REGISTER NOW

## JUNE 22 - AUGUST 14

FOR AGES 4-12

FLEXIBLE HOURS FROM 7:30AM - 5:30PM



## **PTA NEWSPLASH**

To view the latest edition of the PTA NewSplash, please click [HERE](#).

## **NEWS WORTH REPEATING**

### **Winners of the 2025-2026 Young Authors' Contest**

The Howard County Literacy Association has posted the names of all county winners on its [website](#). [Congratulations](#) to all the winners!

The writing contest is open to all students in grades 1 through 12 in public and private schools across Howard County. Participating schools submitted their winning poems and short stories to the county level of the Young Authors' Contest.

The following Dayton Oaks students placed for the Young Author's Contest at the county level:

- **Leamon Cheng** - Grade 4, won 1st place for his short story, *The Shadow that Followed Me*
- **Jasmine Hotrabhavananda** - Grade 5, won 1st place for her poem, "The Forever Lasting Spark of Hope"
- **Allie Moore** - Grade 5, won 2nd place for her short story, *The Golden Journey*

Please join us in congratulating these winners. We'd also like to extend a special thank you to Ms. Hipp for organizing the Young Author's Contest for Dayton Oaks!

### **Vision and Hearing Screening**

The Howard County Health Department will be coming to DOES for our annual vision and hearing screening on Thursday, March 12, 2026. All students in PreK (vision only), kindergarten, first-grade 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 23, 2026. The health room is in need of volunteers for screenings between 8:30 am and 12:30 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).

[Hearing and Vision Information Letter.pdf](#)

### **2026 Family Academy Conference**

HCPSS families are invited to attend the 2026 Family Academy Conference on Wednesday, March 4, 2026, from 5:30–8:30 pm at Long Reach High School. This free, districtwide event brings families, educators, and community partners together for an evening of learning, connection, and support. Families can enjoy a light dinner, a community resource fair, interactive workshops focused on academic achievement and well-being, and free childcare. Workshops will include topics such as college and career readiness, special education supports, curriculum updates, and hands-on learning strategies for use at home. Interpretation services will be available. For additional information, please contact BSAP Supervisor, Nicole Brown.

Register online:

[EnglishLinks to an external site](#)

[EspañolLinks to an external site](#)

[中文Links to an external site](#)

[한국어Links to an external site.](#)

Flyers are available in:

[EnglishLinks to an external site](#)

[EspañolLinks to an external site](#)

[中文Links to an external site](#)

[한국어Links to an external site.](#)

## **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.

## **Health Checks**

As the winter 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.

## **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.

## **2025 - 2026 School Supply List**

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

## **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.

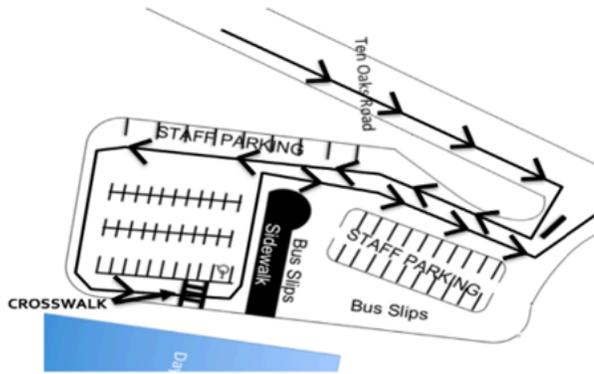
**Students should not be dropped off or let out of your vehicle until 9:00 a.m. Supervision is not available for students before this time.** Before and after care is available through Howard County Parks and Recreation as well as other before and after school providers in the community.

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](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 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](mailto: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.