

WAVE NEWSLETTER

May 28, 2026

Important Dates:

May

29 ~ Kindergarten Storybook Play and Picnic; 9:45 - 11:20 am

June

03 ~ PTA Meeting, 7 pm

04 ~ Spring Orchestra Concert, 7 pm

05 ~ Movie Night, 6:30 pm

08 ~ Popsicles on the Playground (**For 26-27 incoming Kindergarteners only**), 4 pm

10 ~ Grade 1 Breadmake, 12:30 - 2:45 pm

10 ~ Last Day for Gifts of Gratitude

11 ~ Grade 4 Picnic, 11 am

12 ~ AM RECC Picnic, 10:30 am

12 ~ PM RECC Picnic, 1:45 pm

12 ~ Grade 5 Picnic, 10:30 am

12 ~ Fifth Grade Dance, 6-9 pm

15 ~ Grade 2 Picnic, 9:15 am

15 ~ Grade 3 Picnic, 12:30 pm

16 ~ Grade 1 Picnic, 9:30 am

16 ~ Three-Hour Early Dismissal, DOES dismisses at 12:45 pm

16 ~ Fifth Grade Promotional Ceremony at Glenelg High School, 2:30 pm

17 ~ Three-Hour Early Dismissal, DOES dismisses at 12:45 pm

18 ~ Last Day of School; Three-Hour Early Dismissal, DOES dismisses at 12:45 pm

On Deck With Your Administrators

Dear Dayton Oaks Families:

We are excited to share some wonderful news with our Dayton Oaks community! Dayton Oaks Elementary School has successfully completed the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Prekindergarten Accreditation Process. This rigorous achievement reflects the exceptional work, dedication, and commitment of our Prekindergarten team in building and sustaining a high-quality early childhood program that positively impacts our students, families, and community each and every day.

This accomplishment is a testament to the caring relationships, engaging learning experiences, and strong instructional practices that make our Pre-K program such a special place for young learners to grow and thrive. We are incredibly proud of our staff for serving as a model of excellence in early childhood education and for creating a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

As we celebrate this exciting milestone, we are also looking ahead to the future! The HCPSS Pre-K Program is now accepting applications for the [2026-2027](#) school year. The program is offered at no cost to families who qualify and is available to eligible children across all attendance areas.

Children must be four years old on or before September 1, 2026, to be considered for fall 2026 enrollment and must also meet eligibility requirements.

Families interested in learning more about the program, eligibility criteria, and application process are encouraged to visit the [HCPSS Pre-K Program website](#). Additional questions may be directed to the Office of Early Childhood Programs at 410-313-6836.

We are proud of the incredible work happening at Dayton Oaks and look forward to continuing to partner with families as we inspire, support, and prepare our youngest learners for future success.

Educationally yours,

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

Counselor's Corner

Dear Families:

The final weeks of the school year are officially here! This is an exciting season filled with celebrations, warmer weather, and anticipation for summer. It can also be a challenging time for young minds to stay focused and emotionally regulated as routines begin to shift. To help our students finish the year proud, confident, and strong, we are focusing heavily on our DIVE Expectations. Here is how you can team up with us at home to keep your child riding the wave of success all the way to the last day:

Dependability

At School: We are focusing on being reliable friends and keeping up with daily responsibilities, even when summer feels so close.

How to help at home: Consistency is key right now. Keep a predictable morning and evening routine to help them feel ready to learn each day.

Involved & Organized

At School: Students are staying engaged in final projects and keeping their cubbies, desks, and backpacks organized.

How to help at home: Dedicate five minutes every evening to clear out backpacks together. Sorting through loose papers and checking for returned items helps your child mentally reset and prepare for the day ahead.

Very Respectful

At School: End-of-year energy can bring big emotions. We are practicing listening to teachers, respecting personal space, and using kind words with peers during high-energy activities.

How to help at home: Validate the end-of-year jitters! If your child seems a bit more irritable or overwhelmed, offer a quick mindfulness moment together—like taking a few deep breaths or sharing "three things we are grateful for today"—to help them self-regulate.

Effort

At School: We are celebrating progress made throughout the year and encouraging students to give their best work, even on the tough assignments.

How to help at home: Focus on the process rather than just the outcome. Praise persistence to help them stay focused on the effort!

Thank you for the partnership, support, and dedication all year long. Let's help our students take a strong DIVE into summer!

Stephanie Dix and Alyson Hannan

The 2025-2026 End-of-Year Gifts of Gratitude is Open!

Looking for a fun, easy end-of-year gift to thank the dedicated Dayton Oaks' teachers, staff, and school bus drivers? Show your gratitude for our amazing DOES staff. Gifts of Gratitude is open now through June 10th at 10pm!

<https://app.giftcrowd.com/app/join-event/DBOab4urMS>

Note: this is a completely voluntary program!

Gifts of Gratitude is a PTA-sponsored Teacher & Staff Gifts Program using GiftCrowd. GiftCrowd is an online platform that is free to gift-buyers and gift-receivers. Every dollar contributed will go directly to the recipient! The funds collected for each person allows that recipient to choose how to redeem the collected amount into one or more of the many brands partnered with GiftCrowd. Instead of many people giving \$5 gift cards, for example, the recipients can choose to get one gift card with the group amount.

Staff will see their total amount gifted, but will not see a breakdown of individual contribution amounts. Please include a GiftCrowd note to the teacher or staff member if you want them to see who contributed to their gift!

Questions? Contact: GiftsOfGratitude@DaytonOaksPTA.org

Summer Reading 2026 Information

As part of the A+ Partnership with HCLS, schools are invited to share information and resources about summer reading with all our students and families. [Click here](#) for more information. Direct questions to Melissa Daggett.

PTA NEWSPLASH

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

NEWS WORTH REPEATING

New Start Time Next School Year (2026-2027)

Effective Monday, Aug. 24 for the 2026-2027 school year, our new school hours will be 9:25 a.m. - 3:55 p.m. NOTE: There is no impact/change to this year's schedule.

Across the school district, three elementary schools will have adjusted start times. This is to ensure that all of our buses have sufficient time to complete their routes to school on time in the mornings and arrive at school on time for dismissal.

Changing school times may present an inconvenience to many parents/guardians as they adjust childcare and work schedules. I know all that goes into managing family schedules and appreciate your collaboration. Please know that this adjustment was carefully reviewed and is important to maintaining strong operations and we wanted to provide this information now so you have adequate time to prepare for the change in school hours.

Following the current school year, new times will be reflected on our school website and on any materials. I will continue to remind families about the new times this summer and leading up to the start of the 2026-2027 school year.

A Musical Note from Ms. Sutton

Each month, Ms. Sutton selects one outstanding student from each of her 15 orchestra classes to be recognized as **Musician of the Month**. These students consistently demonstrate dedication to their instrument by practicing regularly, achieving high scores on their playing and performance assessments, and turning in their completed practice charts on time. These important habits contribute greatly to their musical growth and success.

The **Musician of the Month** award certificates are proudly displayed on the bulletin board outside of Ms. Sutton's room. Being selected is a true honor, and students are especially excited to receive a special *musical hole punch* on their certificate. These punches can be collected and redeemed for prizes at **Sutton's Trading Post** at Dayton Oaks. Congratulations to these May Musicians of the Month:

Yash Jain, violin
Skylar Newman, violin
Milli Thatcher, violin
Jakob Hinrichsen, viola
Jacquelyn Reuster, cello
Ben Dodson, cello
Levi Traxler, cello
Ava Allen, violin
James Allen, violin
Hannah Dick, violin
Rooney Gilman, violin
Lilian Tamoama, violin
Ella Jin, viola
Tristan Maliro, viola
Jie Ren, cello

Congratulations again to these awesome orchestra musicians!

Early Childhood Classes

The Dayton Oaks Early Childhood Classes are making preparations for the upcoming 2026-2027 school year. Applications for general education students to participate as peers through the **Learning Together Program (LTP)** are now available. 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, may apply.

In alignment with [Maryland's Blueprint for the Future](#), **new applications for students turning 4 by September 1 are not 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/>



Early Childhood Programs

HCPSS offers a number of early childhood programs!

Learning Together Program (applications are currently open for students who will be 3 years old by 9/1/2026)



The Learning Together Program provides special education services for preschoolers with disabilities in classes that also include children who do not have disabilities. This program enables all young children to play with each other, develop long term friendships, and benefit from a diverse and stimulating environment, housed at various elementary schools across Howard County. Locations of early childhood programs for the upcoming school year are budget-pending and will be confirmed on June 15, 2025 or the last day of the current school year. Locations with available LTP programs will vary each year and are dependent upon space, staffing, and budget approval. Children are selected based upon screening information given on their application form and space availability. If necessary, a lottery process is conducted. Participation in the LTP requires a monthly fee. Families are required to provide their own transportation daily.

Pre-kindergarten (applications are currently open for students who will be 4 years old by 9/1/2026)



HCPSS offers high-quality, half- or full-day pre-k programs at selected sites. Students must be four years old on or before September 1, 2025 to be considered for the program. The HCPSS Pre-K program is made available first to children who will be 4 on or before September 1 and meet first priority criteria: income eligible, homelessness, and foster care. Unlike enrollment for K-12, parents must first apply and be accepted into the program before beginning online registration.

Kindergarten (registration is currently open for students who will be 5 years old by 9/1/2026)



Every child who is 5 years old by September 1 must be enrolled in a kindergarten program this fall or have an approved waiver.

River Hill Boosters Summer Camps

The River Hill High School Boosters are sponsoring summer camps at River Hill High School. The camps are designed to help young athletes improve their fundamental athletic skills. Weekly camps begin on June 8th. Over thirty different camps are offered this summer, including football, tennis, soccer, baseball, softball, lacrosse, field hockey, volleyball, basketball, cheerleading, weight training, cross country, “Hawks” Sports camp, and dance. We also offer an Art camp, Paper Magic book camps, and Video Production camps. Camp schedule and registration can be found at www.riverhill.org.

Health Room Request

The health room is seeking donations of small water bottles.

Make Your Voice Heard! Your Opinion Matters!

Parents and guardians of children receiving special education and related services were mailed the Maryland Special Education Parent Involvement Survey from the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services. Parents are asked to complete the survey and return it in the postage paid envelope by Friday, June 5, 2026. [The survey can also be completed online](#)[Links to an external site](#). Your feedback will help guide efforts to improve special education and related services in HCPSS. Your voice can make a real difference for your child and many other children across the state of Maryland.

Mathematics Policy Family Information Sessions

MSDE will host virtual Math Policy Family Information Sessions in June 2026 to support family understanding of upcoming mathematics initiatives and updates for the 2026–2027 school year. Participants must [register in advance](#) [\(Links to an external site\)](#) to receive session links. [Click here](#) [\(Links to an external site\)](#) for details and dates/times.

HCPSS Summer Meal Program

HCPSS will offer its [free summer meal program](#) weekdays June 24–July 31 (except July 3) from 12:30–2 p.m. at locations across Howard County. Open to all HCPSS students and any children ages 18 and under, there are no applications, enrollment or fees to participate in this program, however children must be present to receive free meals. Free meals also will be provided to all students participating in HCPSS summer programs.

Application Open for HCPSS Prekindergarten

The application is open for HCPSS’ full-day prekindergarten program for the 2026–2027 school year. Families of children who turn 4 on or before September 1, 2026, are eligible to apply. [Additional information](#), including a link to the application, is available online.

Important School Calendar Updates

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) 2025–2026 school year calendar included three inclement weather makeup days, June 16–18. As of Feb. 26, HCPSS has used five inclement weather days and four late openings, resulting in high schools being two hours short of what is required in the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR).

At its February 26 meeting, the Howard County [Board of Education approved calendar adjustments](#) to ensure the school system meets the State’s required days and hours, including:

- Tuesday, March 3: Scheduled as an early dismissal, becomes a full day for students.

- Monday, April 6 (Easter Monday): Scheduled as schools/offices closed, becomes a full day for students. The State Board of Education granted HCPSS a waiver to open school that day.
- Wednesday, April 15: Scheduled to be closed for students and designated as a staff professional learning and work day, becomes a half-day for students with the standard 3-hour early dismissal and half work day for staff.
- Thursday, May 14: Scheduled as an early dismissal, becomes a full day for students.
- Tuesday, June 16–Thursday, June 18: Scheduled as inclement weather makeup days included in the 2025-2026 school year calendar, become half days for students.

Barring any additional inclement weather days, the last day of school will be Thursday, June 18, 2026. Updates to the June calendar include the following:

- Thursday, June 11–Monday, June 15: Scheduled as early dismissals, become full school days
- Monday, June 15: Last day for half day pre-K / RECC .
- Tuesday, June 16–Thursday, June 18 (last day of school): Schools dismiss three hours early with half work days for staff. June 16 will be designated for staff articulation.

Any future disruptions to the calendar due to inclement weather will require additional solutions to be communicated if/when needed.

An updated HCPSS online calendar is available now at www.hcpss.org/calendar.

2026-2027 Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten registration for families of children who will be 5 years old by September 1, 2026, kicked 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.

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.

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.

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.

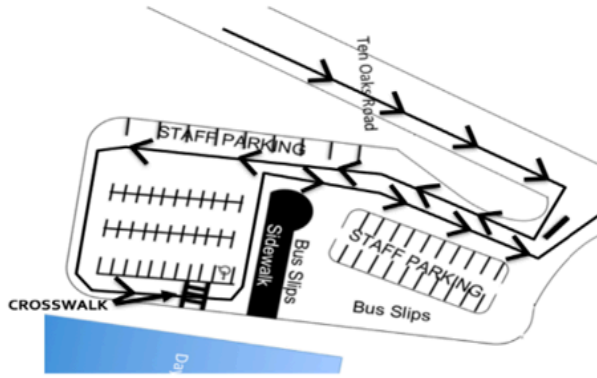
All children who are late must be accompanied by a parent and be signed into school in the front office.

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.