

WAVE NEWSLETTER

August 20, 2026

Important Dates:

August

- 21** ~ Kindergarten Orientation, ECSE/PreK Orientation, New Student Orientation/Open House (Details Below)
- 24** ~ First Day of School
- 27** ~ First Day of School for ECSE/PreK

September

- 07** ~ Labor Day - Schools and Offices Closed
- 08** ~ Back-to-School Night for Grades 1 and 2, ESCE/PK and GT (See Details Below)
- 09** ~ Back-to-School Night for Kindergarten and Grades 3, 4 and 5 (See Details Below)
- 21** ~ Schools and Offices Closed
- 25** ~ Ice Cream Social, 6 - 8 pm (Raindate: Oct. 2)
- 29** ~ School Picture Day
- 30** ~ Schools Close 3 Hours Early - Staff Professional Learning Workday

On Deck With Your Administrators

Dear Dayton Oaks Families:

As we embark on a new school year, Dayton Oaks is bustling with excitement! Our teachers are eagerly preparing for the arrival of students and looking forward to welcoming the smiling faces of our dolphins next week. We hope your family can join us for our orientations and open house on Friday, August 21, 2026:

- **AM RECC/Full Day PreK Orientation:** 11:00 - 11:45 a.m.
- **PM RECC Orientation:** 1:00 - 1:45 p.m.
- **New Student/Kindergarten Orientation:** 1:00 - 1:45 p.m.
- **Open House for Grades 1-5:** 2:00 - 2:45 p.m.

To help everyone prepare for the first day of school on August 24, here are some tips to get the whole family ready:

1. **Re-establish a consistent sleep schedule:** Gradually adjust bedtime and wake-up times before school starts to help your child transition back to a school-friendly routine.
2. **Practice the morning routine:** Walk through typical activities like getting dressed, eating breakfast, and gathering materials. This helps children feel more confident and independent, reducing morning stress.
3. **Establish a designated homework/reading area:** Create a quiet, distraction-free space for your child to complete homework or read each evening. Let them help design or decorate the area to make it their own.
4. **Review what D.I.V.E. stands for:** Dependable, Involved and Organized, Very Respectful, Effortful. Discuss how your child can DIVE into a successful school year and acknowledge when they demonstrate these traits at home or in the community.

5. **Talk with your child about their feelings:** Acknowledge that all emotions are normal—whether they feel excited, nervous, sad that summer is ending, or a mix of emotions. Sharing your own feelings can help start the conversation.

On behalf of the entire Dayton Oaks staff, we welcome you and look forward to a very positive and productive year together!

Educationally yours,

Ms. Williams-Kennard, Principal

Mr. Scobie, Assistant Principal

A Note About Parent Lunch Visits

As we excitedly begin a new school year, we want to take a moment to welcome our families back and share a message about our strong Dayton Oaks community and the importance of our partnership with you.

As you may have heard, parent lunch visits are no longer permitted at HCPSS schools. This information was shared yesterday in the [Howard County Public School System News](#) report. While we understand that some families may be disappointed by this change, the decision is intended to help keep our students and school community safe, secure, and focused on learning. Limiting access to the building during the school day also helps minimize disruptions and support consistent routines for students.

Most importantly, please know that our families are always welcome, valued, and an important part of the Dayton Oaks community. We never want this change to feel like a barrier between our school and the families we serve. Our children thrive when families and schools work together, and we deeply value your partnership.

There are many meaningful ways to stay connected to your child's school experience. Please continue to communicate with your child's teacher and our staff, attend school and community events, and look for opportunities to volunteer and participate in an official capacity. We will share those opportunities with you as they become available very soon.

Thank you for your understanding, partnership, and continued support. Dayton Oaks is a stronger community because of our families, and we look forward to working together to make this a wonderful year for all of our students.

Counselor's Corner

Dear Dayton Oaks Families,

Welcome to a brand-new school year! At Dayton Oaks Elementary, we are incredibly fortunate to have a dedicated, two-person school counseling team to support your child's growth and ensure your family starts the year off strong.

Meet Your Counseling Team:

- **Mrs. Stephanie Dix** is at DOES every day, serving all grade levels. This will be her 9th year supporting our community! She connects with students through school-wide activities, classroom lessons (K–5), small group instruction, and individual counseling.

- **Mrs. Alyson Hannan** joins us two days a week this year facilitating school-wide activities, classroom lessons, small group instruction, and individual counseling. While she will primarily focus her work on 3rd grade, she is available to support all students and families across the building as needed.

Mrs. Dix and Mrs. Hannan follow national school counseling standards to support your child's academic, social-emotional, and foundational life skills. If you would ever like to consult with one of the school counselors regarding your child's well-being or future success, please feel free to reach out. The quickest way to connect or schedule an appointment is to email directly: Stephanie_Dix@hcpss.org and Alyson_Hannan@hcpss.org.

During August, the school counselors will be focusing on helping our students transition smoothly back to school by:

- Visiting classrooms to reintroduce ourselves and explain how we can help students.
- Hosting welcome "Lunch Bunches" for our new DOES Dolphins.
- Supporting K–5 Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) lessons centered around our school-wide **DIVE Expectations**.
- Helping all students build meaningful connections within their classrooms and grade levels.

We are so excited to partner with you this year!

Warmly,

Mrs. Dix & Mrs. Hannan
Dayton Oaks Elementary School Counseling Team

Family File

Please assist us by completing your Family File ASAP.

Every year HCPSS parents must complete a Family File for each child. HCPSS utilizes Family File for parents/guardians to complete emergency information. Parents/guardians must verify and/or update information for each child, and can do so by logging into their [HCPSS Connect PARENT ACCOUNT](#) and selecting the ONLINE REGISTRATION/FAMILY FILE tab in the upper-right corner and then clicking on FAMILY FILE VERIFICATION.

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
- Photo Approval Data Confidentiality
- PTA/PTSA Directory

Again, it is important that you complete the Family File in order to receive the name of your child's teacher for the upcoming school year.

FAMILY FILE USER GUIDE (ENGLISH) - [Family File Quick Reference English.pdf](#)

Please assist us by completing your Family File ASAP.

Transportation Information

The online HCPSS bus locator application on the [transportation web page](#) is scheduled to be available August 19, 2026. At that time, eligible families can access bus stop locations and pickup/dropoff times.

2026 - 2027 Open House and Back-to-School Dates/Times

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location(s)</u>
AM ECSE & Full-Day PK Orientation	Friday, August 21, 2026	11:00-11:45 a.m.	ECSE Classrooms
PM ECSE Orientation	Friday, August 21, 2026	1:00-1:45 p.m.	ECSE Classrooms
New Student/ Kindergarten Orientation	Friday, August 21, 2026	1:00-1:45 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions Kindergarten - Cafeteria New Student - Media Center
Open House (Grades 1-5)	Friday, August 21, 2026	2:00-2:45 p.m.	Grade Level Classrooms
Back to School Night (ECSE/Pre-K, GT, Grades 1 and 2)	Tuesday, September 8, 2026	6:00-7:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m. Grade 1 - Media Ctr 6:00 p.m. Grade 2 - Cafeteria 7:00 p.m. ECSE/PK - Media Ctr 7:00 p.m. GT - Cafeteria
Back to School Night (Kindergarten, Grades 3, 4, 5)	Wednesday, September 9, 2026	6:00-7:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m. Grade 4 - Media 6:00 p.m. Grade 5 - Classrooms 7:00 p.m. Grade K - Media 7:00 p.m. Grade 3 - Cafeteria

2026 - 2027 School Supply List

Click [HERE](#) to view the school supply list for the 26-27 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.

Free and Reduced Meals

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. 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.

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: 9:25 a.m. – 3:55 p.m.

ARRIVAL TIMES:

9:10 a.m. First bell rings/students may enter the building.

9:20 a.m. Second/late bell rings/students should be in the classroom.

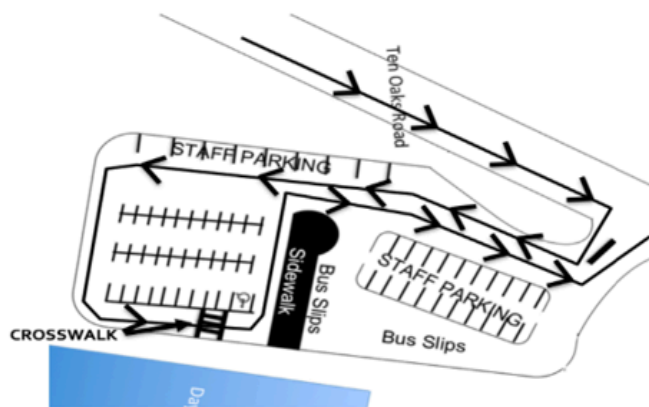
Students should not be dropped off or let out of your vehicle until 9:10 a.m. Supervision is not available for students before this time. Before and after care is available through Howard County Parks and Recreation as well as other before and after school providers in the community.

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 3:55 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 3:40pm.** 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 8:55 a.m. and 9:25 a.m. or between 3:25 p.m. and 3:55 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 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.

Community News

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