
Important Dates

November 24 - 3-hour Early Dismissal; Annual Turkey Trot
Parent Teacher Conferences (in-person)

November 25 - 3-hour Early Dismissal
Parent Teacher Conferences (virtual)

November 26 - Schools Closed for Students
Parent Teacher Conferences (virtual)

November 27 & 28 - Schools & Offices Closed

December 1 - Patapsco PTA Night at Ledo Pizza Ellicott City

December 3 - Parent ACCESS Night for Student Receiving ELD
Services

December 8 - Chorus Concert 7pm at Mt. Hebron HS

December 10 - Band Concert 7pm at Mt. Hebron HS

December 11 - Orchestra & General Music Concert 7pm at Mt.
Hebron HS

December 8-12 - Scholastic Book Fair

December 12 - Book Fair Family Fun Knight

December 16 - Scheduling Night at Mt. Hebron HS for Rising 9th
Grade Students

Annual Turkey Trot

The Annual Patapsco Middle School Turkey Trot will be held on Monday, November 24. All students will participate during their designated grade level time. Students should wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes for the race. Students should also bring a water bottle and a positive attitude for fun. Students can run, jog or walk the course. Thank you to all of our volunteers and physical education team for sponsoring this event. We look forward to seeing all of our Knights at the Turkey Trot!

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled for November 24-26, 2025 and will be held in-person on Monday, November 24 and virtually on Tuesday, November 25 & Wednesday, November 26. If you were unable to schedule a conference with a teacher during the conference window, please contact the teacher via email. Please be advised that teachers may not be available for a conference until after December 8.

If you are having any issues with your virtual conference, please use [this Google Form](#) to request help. A staff member will contact you as soon as possible to assist you.

Mt. Hebron High School Parent Night

Rising 9th-12th grade families are invited to attend Mount Hebron High School's Scheduling Parent Night on Tuesday, December 16 (snow date 12/18). This event will be held in the MHHS auditorium starting at 6:00. Families will hear a presentation from 6:00-6:30. They will then be invited to visit with staff members from a variety of content areas from 6:30-8:00pm in breakout sessions. Contact Andy "AJ" Johnson, School Counselor, Andrew.Johnson@hcpss.org, with any questions.

Patapsco Rising 6th Grade Parent Night

Click [here](#) to view a flyer for the Rising 6th Grade Parent Night (Current 5th Grade Students)

Date: 1/13/26

Time: 6pm

Location: Patapsco Middle School 8885 Old Frederick Rd., Ellicott City, MD 21043

Come and learn about:

- 6th grade courses
- Creating balance for your student
- Middle school schedule
- GT, extracurriculars, and seminar offerings

From the PTA

PIZZA Monday!

You've heard of Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, Slow Traffic Sunday - how about we add Pizza Monday to the mix!

The PTA's restaurant night is Monday December 1 at Ledo Pizza in Ellicott City from 4-8pm. If dining in or purchasing a pizza to go at the restaurant, mention the PTA fundraiser to your wait staff. If ordering online, use the code **Fundraiser**. Click [here](#) to view the flyer.

Register for the BSAP Saturday Math Academy Spring 2026 Program

[Registration](#) for the HCPSS Black Student Achievement Program (BSAP) Saturday Math Academy will open on Saturday, January 10, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. until capacity is reached. The program offers an in-person enrichment program for HCPSS students in all levels of math for grades 3 through 12.

Emergency Food & Support Resources for Howard County Residents

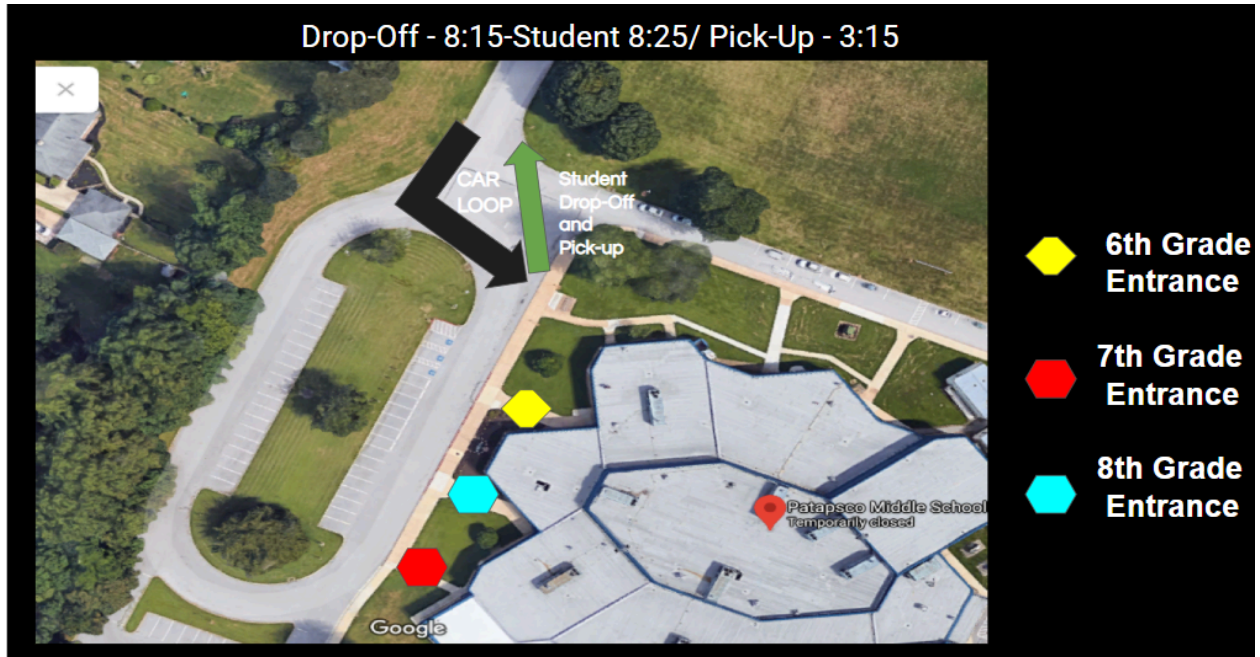
The MultiService Center and DCRS will, once again, be holding a Holiday Food Distribution for Howard County families. If a household could use a little extra support heading into the holidays, you are welcome. No registration required. Monday, November 24, at the North Laurel Community Center, from 4:30–6 p.m., while supplies last. [9411 Whiskey Bottom Road, Laurel, MD 20723](#) See [Flyer](#) for details.

An extensive list of resources available to families in need can be found [here](#). Resources include emergency food assistance distributions as well as websites to visit and numbers to call for help with credit cards, car payments, mobile phone bills, insurance, and rental and housing assistance.

PREVIOUSLY SHARED

Car Line Reminders

For the safety of our students and staff, please take a moment to review the car line procedures. These procedures are in place to ensure that our car riders can safely exit their vehicles and access the crosswalk.



Drop-off by car:

- Enter school property free of distractions and follow all instructions provided by school staff directing traffic.
- As you enter the campus, wait along the driveway entrance; please do not park or block any lanes of traffic that we need open for buses and emergency vehicles.
- When buses arrive, car traffic will be stopped to allow the buses to enter the bus loop. Please pay close attention so that we can keep everyone safe.
- Follow to the right of the traffic arrows at the entrance to the parking lot and make a loop into the car drop off area. The first car should pull all the way up to the curb at the corner of the exit. Staff will be there directing you to this point.
- Students should exit their car quickly on the right with all of their belongings and follow the arrival path to the school. Staff will be there to direct students.
- Cars should exit in a single line; **do not** pass any cars in the loop. We ask that everyone is patient so that all students and staff are safe.

Pick-up by car:

- The same traffic pattern for drop-off will be used.
- Follow all directions by staff members so that we can keep everyone safe.
- Please do not ask your child to cross the street or go to the grass to be picked up. For the safety of all, students must be picked up from the designated pick up zone.

During drop-off and pick-up, only buses, staff, and county vehicles will be permitted to enter the parking area. We ask for everyone's patience and grace as we normalize our drop-off and pick-up procedures. Please ask for assistance from a staff member if you have any questions.

Lost and Found

We are accumulating a large collection of jackets, lunch boxes, water bottles, pencil cases, and more in our lost and found. Please encourage your student to look for their missing items on the tables in the cafeteria and the lost and found outside of the media center entrance across from the F Hallway. Lost and found items will also be displayed during in-person parent teacher conferences on Monday, November 24. Any unclaimed items remaining after that date will be donated or discarded.

On a related note, please make sure all of your student's belongings are labeled with their name, so that they can be returned to the student in the event that they go missing.

ARL Career Academy Info Session:

December 10 from 6:15-7:30

Current 8-11 grade students and their parents/guardians are invited to check out ARL's Career Academies at our in-person Information Session.

Are you interested in an immersive, hands-on, and project-based learning experience?
Are you looking for real-world experience and credentials in a career field?

Schedule:

6:15-6:30 pm Walk around to explore academies and find first session

6:40-7:00 pm Session I

7:05-7:25 pm Session II

From Biotech to Health Professions, Heating, Ventillation, and Air Conditioning, Cybersecurity, Graphic Design, Animation, Automotive Technology, Agricultural Science, Construction, Finance, Aerospace and Civil Engineering and Architectural Design, our programs are designed to provide high school students with opportunities to earn college credit, scholarships, and industry-recognized credentials, participate in worksite and mentorship experiences, and become creative problem solvers by participating in hands-on project-based learning.

Come see what we offer! More information about ARL and the Career Academies offered can be found on the [ARL website](#).

Carson Scholarship

The Carson Scholars Fund awards \$1,000 college scholarships to students in grades 4-11 who excel academically and are dedicated to serving their communities. An interested student must be nominated by the principal at his/her/their school to be able to compete for a Carson Scholarship. Only one student from each school is able to apply, ensuring that each nominee epitomizes academic excellence. Carson Scholars must have a GPA of 3.75 and display humanitarian qualities through community service. Scholarships are awarded solely on the basis of academic achievement and humanitarian qualities, without regard to financial need, ethnicity, creed or religion. More information can be found on: <https://carsonscholars.org/scholarships/>

If you are interested in being considered for nomination, please complete the [Carson Scholarship Form](#) and send it to Mrs. Shurtleff at erin_shurtleff@hcpss.org.

All nomination forms will be due to Mrs. Shurtleff no later than Wednesday, December 3, 2024.

2025-2026 Student Service Learning Credit Hours:

The state of Maryland requires that 75 hours of Student Service Learning (SSL) be completed, as a requirement to obtain a high school diploma. Service Learning is a teaching method that combines meaningful service to the community within curriculum-based learning. Through SSL students apply specific academic skills to “real world” problems to gain a greater understanding of community needs. Additionally, students reflect upon how their service directly impacts others. Student Service Learning is not group organized volunteerism, independent volunteerism, or internships. It is a curriculum presented within the student’s school day. All service learning hours are completed as course work offered through projects developed for each grade level. Each year, 25 service learning hours will be offered to students and awarded by participation in meeting course objectives and completion of the grade level project. In this way, students will obtain their required 75 hours of service at the end of their 8th grade year. Please look for SSL updates in the Knightly News to be informed about special achievements, deadlines and activities. If you have questions about this program, contact our school SSL Coordinator, Sherri Ross: sherri_ross@hcpss.org.

'Tis the Season!

Cold and flu season is fast approaching, and fall allergies are here. How can you help?

-Donate tissues! Please consider dropping off a box of tissues in the front office.

-Practice healthy habits - get plenty of sleep, be physically active, drink plenty of fluids, wash your hands often, and eat nutritious foods.

-If you have cold and flu symptoms, stay at home and rest!

Yearbook Intramural

Are you interested in helping create this year's Patapsco Middle Yearbook? If so, join the Yearbook Team! We meet in Trailer 4 (Ms. Salsman's room) on Thursdays from 3:15-4:15 PM starting on 10/23. Please [complete a permission slip](#) and return to Ms. Salsman or the Front Office as soon as possible. You MUST bring a chromebook and charger to meetings!

HC DrugFree Updates

Parenting Classes: Free! On Zoom and open to parents, guardians and grandparents residing in HoCo or with school-age children/grandchildren residing in HoCo.

Evidence-based, interactive prevention program that provides families with the skills and knowledge to reduce the risk that their children will use drugs and alcohol or engage in other dangerous behaviors. The curriculum was written for families with children 9-14 years old, but it is appropriate for K-12 families. Final class date:

December 2 from **Noon to 1:30 p.m.** on Zoom. Visit HC DrugFree's website for more information and register at <https://tinyurl.com/GGC-Fall2025>

Teen Advisory Council: Open to Howard County students in grades 8-12. Earn Community Service Hours and make meaningful contributions to the community. Next meeting: **Monday December 8, 2025** from **5:30-7:00pm on Zoom**. **Earn Community Service Hours.** Register to receive the meeting link:

<https://forms.gle/SgMrjdeo11JpNuuV8> For more information, visit HC DrugFree's website: <https://hcdrugfree.org/teen-advisory-council/>

Free Newsletter: Stay up to date with HC DrugFree's free events offering Community Service Hours to HoCo students, resources, and a variety of substance use and behavioral health information! Sign up for HC DrugFree's free digital newsletter:

<https://hcdrugfree.org/enews-signup/>

Recreational Sports Resources

Do you have an interest in participating in recreational sports or instructional leagues outside of school? Please click on the link below for some local opportunities. If you have questions, please use the contact information listed on the website:

[Howard County community organizations available for recreational sports](#)

¿Tienes interés en participar en deportes recreativos o ligas formativas fuera de la escuela? Haz clic en el enlace a continuación para ver algunas oportunidades locales. Si tienes preguntas, utiliza la información de contacto que se encuentra en el sitio web.

[Organizaciones comunitarias del Condado de Howard disponibles para deportes recreativos](#)

Note from the Nurse

As we enter flu season, this is a reminder that good hand washing and covering sneezes and coughs with tissues and sleeves are essential steps to preventing the spread of "germs." Also, remember that despite concerns about school attendance, your children's health (and the health of all others at school) is MOST important. For this reason, we ask you to please:

- Inform the school to let us know if your child is absent with a contagious illness such as strep throat, the flu, COVID, etc. Please provide any documentation from your physician about the diagnosis and release to return to school. (Ear and sinus infections, while often a reason for keeping a child home, are usually NOT contagious.)
 - Keep your child home if he/she has a fever OF 100 OR HIGHER. A fever indicates that your child has an infection that could be passed to other students. If you give your child Motrin or Tylenol, the fever will, of course, disappear, but he/she will still be contagious to others. Children must be fever-free for 24 hours (WITHOUT MEDICATION) before returning to school!
 - Encourage your children to wash their hands properly, with soap and water, frequently throughout the day, especially after using the restroom, being in public places, and before eating. Handwashing is one of the easiest ways to keep germs at bay!
 - If the doctor prescribes medication for your child, please make sure he/she takes it as directed-which means the right amount at the right time and without missing doses.
- Thank you very much for helping keep all our students healthy!

PTA and Music Boosters

Please consider joining our PTA and Music Boosters. Each parent-led organization does so much for our school. We appreciate your membership and donations as they directly support the students and staff at Patapsco Middle School. Please consider joining the [PTA](#) and/or [Music Boosters](#) as we could not do a lot of the exciting initiatives for our kids without these organizations!

Update Your Family File

Thank you to families of 664 students who have already completed your Family File. If you have not already done so, please assist us by completing your Family File ASAP at hcpss.org/connect. Parents/guardians must verify and/or update emergency information for each child every school year. This is completed online in Family File, which has several new updates. Full [details on updating your Family File](#) are available online.

One exciting new feature is that families now can submit a change of address via

Family File, rather than completing a separate form and sending to their school. Full [directions and information for families](#) on this new process can be found online.

MHCAC Back-to-School Newsletter

The Mental Health Advisory Council (MHCAC) is a group of community members who seek to remove barriers and build awareness for behavioral health support in Howard County for our children and families. HCPSS is an active member of MHCAC. Please click the link below to access their fall newsletter.

[MHCAC Fall Newsletter 2025](#)

Career Cafe

Patapsco is excited to host a monthly Career Cafe this year during grade level lunch shifts for our 7th-8th graders to expose students to a variety of careers.

Once a month, an adult from our community is invited to speak with interested students about the responsibilities, rewards/challenges, required skills, and pathway(s) to their job.

[Sign-up here](#) to be part of our directory of parents, guardians, family friends, and/or community members that would be willing to volunteer time once this school year to speak with a group of students while they eat lunch and engage. The speaker would need to be available from 12:00pm - 1:30pm to meet with students.

Feel free to reach out to Patapsco's Career Readiness Advisor with any questions:

Brett_Moore@hcpss.org

Thank you for your consideration!

Meals

Lunch and breakfast are available for all students to purchase. Information about menus, prices, online payment and Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS) can be found on the [HCPSS Food & Nutrition](#) website. Please note that LINQ Connect is now used for meal payments. You can find more information [here](#).

Cell Phones

Cell phones should not be seen or heard during the school day. Reminders about the [HCPSS Policy 8080-Student Personal Device Use in Schools](#) were shared with students on the first day of school.

Safety Protocols for Visitors

Please be aware of the following procedures for any visitor to a school/office:

- The front door is the only entrance point for all visitors.

- Please ring the bell and look into the camera.
- Be prepared to state your name and purpose for visiting.
- All visitors must walk directly into the front office with a **valid photo I.D.** and sign in using our LobbyGuard system.
- A visitor's sticker will be given to visitors following the above procedures and must be worn and prominently visible.
- Any visitor in the school without a visitor sticker will be escorted directly to the front office by a staff member.

The [Secondary Student & Parent Handbook](#) includes the HCPSS [Student Code of Conduct](#)

Forgotten Items

We are happy to accept lunches, instruments, homework, school projects, keys, or other items as long as they are brought to school before 10:30. All items can be put on the table in the foyer and labeled with student's name and grade. Lunches that are brought in late are taken to the cafeteria and a general announcement is made.

We cannot accept items for delivery to students after this time period, with the exception of emergency situations, as we are committed to minimizing classroom interruptions throughout the school day. We know homework, projects and instruments are important to our students, so we ask for your help in assisting students prepare for the day the night before, or the morning of, to ensure they have everything they need.

Student Absences

If your student has to be absent from school, please submit a note to pmsabsence@hcpss.org or send a note in with your child to submit to the Attendance Secretary in the front office.

If your child has been lawfully absent from school and a note has been submitted, they will have the opportunity to make up missed work.

When emailing a note, you will receive an automated message to verify that your email was received.

If you have any questions about your child's attendance, please email pmsabsence@hcpss.org.

If you would like to submit a [Discretionary Absence Form FILLABLE.pdf](#) form, please fill it out and email it to pmsabsence@hcpss.org.

Please review the [HCPSS Attendance Policy](#) for further information.

Late Arrivals

Students will report to the Attendance Kiosk to sign in and receive a pass when arriving late to school. Parents may send students in with a note. Students who arrive late due

to lawful reasons (i.e. doctor's appointment, etc.) will be considered Tardy Excused.

Early Dismissals

Parents/ Guardians will sign students out from the front office for early dismissals.

Parents/Guardians are to show their **photo ID** upon arrival to confirm their eligibility to pick up the student in the family file.

If you know that your student will have an early dismissal ahead of time, you may send in a note with your child or call the front office to let them know when you will be picking them up and who will be picking them up.

2025-2026 HCPSS School Calendar

For your planning needs, please see the link below to access the HCPSS School Calendar which details dates/holidays for this coming school year, including Winter break, Spring break, and professional learning days.

[2025-2026 HCPSS School Calendar](#)