
Important Dates

February 28 - Orchestra Adjudication
March 3 - Full Day of School for Students
March 13 - 6th Grade Field Trip; Wind Ensemble Adjudication
March 18 - 8th Grade Field Trip
March 20 - Schools Closed for Students
March 27 - U-Knighted Day and Night
March 30 - April 3 - Spring Break
April 6 - Full Day of School for Students
April 15 - 3-Hour Early Dismissal

Conversation with the Principal

Thank you to the families who attended our second “Conversation with the Principal” this school year. We are grateful for the feedback received during the Glows and Grows session. We look forward to future opportunities to converse and collaborate as we continue to serve our Patapsco community.

MCAP Testing

We are approaching our state testing season which will kick off with our 8th graders on March 5th.

Our students have been working hard all year and this will be their opportunity to show what they know in regards to the standards they have been taught. Please see the testing dates below for grades 6-8.

Science 8th grade ONLY	4 sessions	40 minutes each	<i>Testing Days</i> <i>March 5, 6, 10, 11</i>
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ELA	4 sessions	70 minutes each	April 28, 30
Social Studies 8th grade ONLY	4 sessions	40 minutes each	May 7, 8, 11 & 12
Math	4 sessions	40 minutes each	May 19, 21

**In the event that testing dates need to be changed, we will communicate that information to families.*

**Testing for Science, Social Studies and Math will take place in student's general class*

Just a few reminders:

- Please try to have students here and on time on testing days so they do not need to be pulled out of class instruction for make-up sessions.
- Please avoid coming to sign students out early during testing sessions. Once a student leaves, they are not able to restart that test session.
- Personal electronic devices (cell phones, ipads, smart watches, etc.) are not permitted in the testing areas.
- Routine is important when calming any nerves when it comes to testing. Keeping to normal routines both at home and at school will help students to do their best.
- Students need plenty of sleep in order to maintain the stamina needed to do their best.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Mrs. Barber-Wehrman.

[U-Knighted Night](#)

As an extension of our U-Knighted Day, Patapsco Middle School will be hosting **U-Knighted Night** from **5:30pm to 7:00pm** on **Friday, March 27th**. Our community is a mosaic of unique identities, cultures, stories, and traditions—and it's time to bring them all together under one roof. We are thrilled to announce our upcoming **U-Knighted Night**, and we need **your** unique voice to make it a success!

Whether you have a family recipe that deserves a spotlight, a traditional dance to share, or an interest in helping to support the event, there is a place for you here.

How You Can Get Involved

We are looking for volunteers to help in the following areas:

- **Food & Flavors:** Host a table to share bite-sized samplers of traditional dishes from your heritage.
 - **If bringing in food samplers, please provide a complete list of ingredients.**
- **Performance & Art:** Share a song, dance, poem, or musical instrument performance.
- **Fashion Show:** Wear clothing that represents your cultural background or identity.
- **Cultural Display:** Set up a booth with photos, clothing, maps, or artifacts that tell the story of your culture or identity.
- **Games & Crafts:** Lead a game and/or activity [Ex. Gonggi, Origami, Henna, etc.]. Please supply your own materials.

Event Details

- **Date:** Friday, March 27th
- **Time:** 5:30pm - 7:00pm
- **Location:** Patapsco Middle School

Ready to join the team?

You don't need to be a professional chef or performer to participate—just a passion for sharing what makes you unique!

Sign up here: [Parent/Guardian Sign Up Link](#)

Deadline to volunteer: Friday, March 20th

Contact Email: jae_lee@hcpss.org / maria_mastrogianis@hcpss.org

Let's celebrate the diversity that makes our community so unique and vibrant. We can't wait to see what you bring to the table!

[Spanish, Korean, Mandarin, Arabic, Russian, Nepali, Urdu, Azerbaijani, Telugu, Turkish, Japanese, Pashto, Punjabi, Amharic, and Tigrinya](#)

Gifted and Talented (G/T) Summer Institutes for Talent Development

The Gifted and Talented (G/T) Summer Institutes for Talent Development offers additional advanced-level instruction and enrichment experiences not regularly available during the academic school year for students entering grades 1-8. Rigorous instruction focusing on talent development is offered in mathematics, science, social studies, language arts, technology and fine arts.

No testing nor prior G/T coursework is required for enrollment in these enrichment offerings.

Location: Burleigh Manor Middle School

Session 1: June 29 - July 10 (no class July 3)

NOTE: The G/T Summer Institutes will offer one 2-week session for Summer 2026.

Hours: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Cost: \$470 per session (Financial assistance is available for students participating in the Free and Reduced Meal Program.)

While the program is half-day, after care is available on site via Howard County Recreation and Parks. Snack is provided.

A few highlights ---

- Bus transportation to area collector stops!
- Exciting courses in Humanities, STEM, and the Arts!

Registration is now open for families of HCPSS students through HCPSS Connect. The first registration request window will close on February 27 at 12 p.m.

For more information on how to register, please see [this registration guide](#).

- [G/T Course Listing](#)

Contact: GTSummer@hcpss.org or 410-313-6671.

Congratulations to HCYP Patapsco JV Boys Basketball

The HCYP Patapsco JV Boys Basketball team had a dominating year, finishing undefeated with a 12- 0 record and winning the Howard County Tournament Championship with a 51 to 34 victory over Lime Kiln this past Saturday. Please congratulate them! The roster was comprised of:

Jack Kelley

Brayden Dunne

Jameson Simmering

Bryce Whiting

Leo Chirchella

TJ Lewis

Ismail Sanni

Robbie Ruo

Ryan Stepanek

Roman Pipkin

Bradley Jefferson

Head Coach: Brendan Dunne

Assistant Coaches: Tim Kelley; Jason Simmering

Howard High School Food Pantry

The Howard High School Food Pantry will be open March 12th from 4:00 PM-6:00 PM. See the attached [flyer](#) for details.

Biz Kidz Academy *Celebrate Your Talents!* Competition

The Biz Kidz Academy *Celebrate Your Talents!* competition is an engaging opportunity that invites students ages 8–14 to submit a short essay or video showcasing a creative talent or business idea, or to participate as vendor exhibitors to pitch and sell their products and services. Participants can win prizes such as laptops, gift cards, art supplies, and trophies; entries and registrations are due by March 31, with an awards ceremony on April 25. See [this flyer](#) for details.

HCPSS HBCU College and Career Fair

HCPSS will host its second annual **HBCU College and Career Fair** on **March 7, 2026, from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM at Guilford Park High School**. Over 20 HBCU representatives will be in attendance to provide students and families with information on admissions, scholarships, and pathways to higher education. Many HBCUs offer rolling admission, making this event especially beneficial for students who have not yet applied to college.

We are expanding this event to include Careers and Trades! We have over 10 businesses registered to attend and several organizations will be on hand to share information to support students and families with their college and/or career pathway.

Students and families will have access to workshops on financing HBCU education, campus life, athletic scholarships, Career Preparation, and the application process, and can receive support on essay writing, resume and cover letters and even interview prep. Click [here](#) to visit our website and keep up with what colleges/universities, businesses and organizations will be in attendance.

For additional information, Contact Kareem Penn at kareem_penn@hcpss.org or Monica Stevens at monica_stevens@hcpss.org with any questions.

Fliers [HCPSS HBCU College & Career Fair English](#) & [HCPSS HBCU College & Career Fair Spanish](#),

PREVIOUSLY SHARED

Quarter 2 Report Cards

Quarter 2 [report cards are now available](#) in HCPSS Connect Synergy.

Ramadan

Happy Ramadan to our families that celebrate! If you have a student that will be fasting and/or praying during the school day, please reach out to your student's counselor so that arrangements can be made for them to engage in an alternative activity and/or an alternative location.

Help Keep Our School Community Healthy This Norovirus Season

Dear Families and Community Members,

Norovirus season is here, and we want to work together to keep everyone in our school community healthy. Norovirus is a common stomach bug that can spread quickly, especially in group settings like schools.

The best way to prevent norovirus is through proper handwashing with soap and water. Please note that hand sanitizer does not kill norovirus, so regular handwashing is essential, especially after using the restroom, before eating, and after helping a sick child.

Here's what good handwashing looks like:

- Wet hands with clean, running water.
- Apply soap and lather well—don't forget the backs of hands, between fingers, and under nails.
- Scrub for at least 20 seconds (about the time to sing "Happy Birthday" twice).
- Rinse thoroughly under running water.
- Dry with a clean towel or air dry.

By practicing and teaching good hand hygiene at home, you help protect your family, your children's classmates, and our staff. Together, we can reduce illnesses in our community and keep everyone learning and thriving.

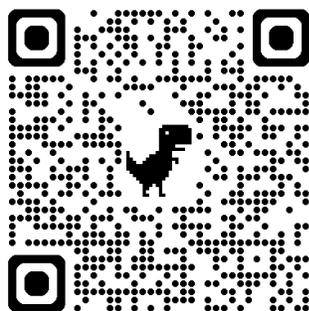
Thank you for your partnership and care!

Warm regards, Tiffany Ailstock, RN, HCPSS School Nurse, Patapsco Middle School

Mt. Hebron High School Mulch Sale

Each year, the Mt Hebron HS PTSA runs a mulch sale to raise money for our After-Prom Program. After Prom is a fun, alcohol-free/chemical-free party held at the YMCA. **Mulch Day is March 7, 2026 from 7:00AM to 1:00PM.** Please help us reach our goal of 7,000. Don't wait to order your mulch.

Orders are due by March 2nd. Don't forget that if you pick up your mulch you will save 10% off your order. Use the code PICKUP during checkout! Use the QR code below or click [here](#) to access our online store.



For a discount on laying your mulch, contact Mt. Hebron alums Ashton D'Alonzo and Jackson Williams, proud owners of [AJ's Lawn & Landscape](#), at 443-520-5258.

We are also looking for more Parent volunteers to help with delivery (sign up here: [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050D4FACAD2DAA8-61732375-mulch#/?](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050D4FACAD2DAA8-61732375-mulch#/)) and Student volunteers if anyone is looking for service hours (sign up here: [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050D4FACAD2DAA8-61732368-mulch#/?](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050D4FACAD2DAA8-61732368-mulch#/)).

Don't need Mulch? Consider making a [monetary donation](#) instead. Every dollar donated helps to reduce out-of-pocket cost to attend, and allows us to gift tickets to students who might otherwise not be able to attend.

Morning Drop-off

Parents of car riders are reminded that students should not be dropped off before 8:15am which is the same time that students exit the buses. This gives our staff time to post at their morning duty station and be ready to receive and supervise our students.

Cold Weather Attire

With the cold weather settling in, please remind your students to dress appropriately for their time outside (waiting at the bus stop, recess, etc). If they are missing a coat, jacket or hoodie, please encourage them to check the lost and found.

Yearbook Orders

Have you ordered your Patapsco 2025-2026 yearbook?! It's not too late! To guarantee your yearbook, order soon at jostensyearbooks.com. Yearbooks will be distributed during the last week of school. If you would like to check if you have already ordered, please look in your email for a receipt from Jostens, or email kalina_salsman@hcpss.org.

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.

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 AM**- 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.

'Tis the Season!

Cold and flu season is here! How can you help?

-Donate tissues! Please consider dropping off a box of tissues in the front office. Our supply is already running low.

-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!

2026 Family Academy Conference

2026 HCPSS Family Academy Conference: HCPSS families are invited to save the date for the **2026 Family Academy Conference** on **Wednesday, March 4, 2026**, from **6:00–8:30 pm** at **Long Reach High School**. Families can look forward to a **light dinner**, a **community resource fair**, and **interactive workshops** focused on academic achievement, well-being, and family engagement. Workshop topics will include college and career readiness, special education supports, curriculum updates, hands-on learning strategies for use at home, and more. For more information, visit [HCPSS News](#).

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!

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.

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.