

KNIGHTLY NEWS - 10/11/2024

UPCOMING EVENTS

10/15	Picture Day
10/16	Unity Day - Students and Staff Wear Orange
10/18	Schools Closed for Students
10/21	Bus Evacuation Drill
10/25	PTA Fun Knight
10/30	End of 1st Quarter Flu Clinic
10/31	Schools Closed for Students

Resources

[Patapsco Calendar](#)

[Quick Guide to Online Resources](#)

[Secondary Student & Parent Handbook](#)

[Student Code of Conduct](#)

Stay Connected

School Office: 410-313-2848

Student Services: 410-313-2850

Health Room: 410-313-2574

Follow us on X: **@hcpss_PMS** and Instagram: **PatapscoMS**

[Patapsco Middle School Website](#)

Dear Patapsco Community,

I want to thank the greater Patapsco community for taking good care of each other during my leave of absence. I received a warm welcome on my return to the building on Monday, October 7. A huge thank you to Ms. Motsco and Ms. Reid for managing the daily instructional and operational program while I was away. It was a great week getting reacquainted with our scholars.

I want to send a huge shout out to our 6th Grade Team for leading an amazing Mash

Up for our newest Knights. The students had a great time building community with their classmates and we could not have asked for better weather. Thank you to all of the parent volunteers who donated their time to help make this event a success.

Please note that the end of the first marking period is October 30. Students should be checking Canvas daily to ensure that they are completing and submitting their assignments in a timely manner. If a student is experiencing difficulty with a subject or needs assistance navigating Canvas, please do not hesitate to reach out to our staff. We are looking forward to another great sunny week at Patapsco!
Kelly Hearn, Principal

Picture Day

Lifetouch Photography will be at Patapsco to photograph students on Tuesday, October 15. Packages can be ordered [online](#). Picture Day ID: **EVT4HJ24Q**

All students will be photographed for yearbook and administrative purposes, but only those submitting a completed order form or online order will receive a portrait package.

Patapsco Players (Drama)



It's official! The Patapsco Players, led by Ms. Wardlaw, Mrs. Bressler, and Mr. White, will be performing The Little Mermaid Jr. in spring 2025.

The show is not until early May 2025 and rehearsals will not begin until January of 2025. However, this fall we are holding auditions. Please review the following chart for the upcoming events associated with auditions. All events are after school and students must have transportation home.

Audition Workshop 10/29 3:15-4:30	Auditions 11/18-11/20 Times Vary
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<p>Workshop where you learn to audition like a pro. We also help with song selection.</p> <p><i>Not required but also HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. Especially for 1st timers.</i></p>	<p>Vocal Auditions: 11/18 & 11/19 (Sign up sheet will be posted the morning of 11/12. Only sign up for one time slot on ONE of the days)</p> <p>Dance Audition and Callbacks: 11/20 3:30-5:30 (ish) pm</p>
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All of this information plus more can be found in [THIS SLIDESHOW](#). Feel free to review when you can and email Ms. Wardlaw at april_wardlaw@hcpss.org with any questions.

Free Chromebooks for Eligible HCPSS Parents or Guardians

Through a grant from the State of Maryland's Connected Devices Program, Bright Minds Foundation, the Education Foundation for Howard County Public Schools, was awarded more than 6,000 Chromebooks to distribute to HCPSS families who meet qualifications to participate in the program.

Complete the Application Below to see if you qualify for a free new HP Chromebook that can be used by your family to connect with our schools, access community services, or for any other purpose that would be of benefit to you.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfw1ju2bPcVHEg6qYQFary1IxW-xyfK64LtD431AnwKQdGenA/viewform?usp=sf_link

NOTE: This program will provide one (1) device per household while supplies last. If you have already received a Chromebook through another Howard County community organization (Community Action Council, Office of Children and Family, MakingChange, etc.), you would not be eligible to receive another Chromebook.

Adults eligible to receive a Chromebook must be: 1) a parent or legal guardian of an HCPSS student and 2) meet one of the income qualifications below. If you meet these qualifications, please fill out this form and you will be contacted by a our administrator, Ms. Taylor, when the chromebook is available for pick up. We look forward to partnering with the Bright Minds Foundations, Howard County Government, and you for this incredible opportunity!

Martin Luther King, Jr, Holiday Commission Contests

The Howard County Office of Human Rights and Equity, Martin Luther King, Jr, Holiday Commission has several exciting opportunities for students to engage with Dr. King's vision of equality, justice, and community service. Additionally, all the awards come with cash prizes.

The contests include:

Oratory Contest: Open to Middle and High School students, this contest challenges

participants to express their understanding of Dr. King's message through the art of speech.

Essay Contest: Also, for Middle and High School students, this competition invites students to articulate their thoughts and reflections on Dr. King's impact and teachings in essay form.

Poster Contest: Open to Elementary, Middle, and High School students, participants can visually express their interpretation of Dr. King's dream through creative poster designs.

Additionally, they are hosting a Living the Dream Award Contest for individuals and organizations that have significantly contributed to making Howard County a better place, embodying the principles that Dr. King championed. For more information, including deadlines and submission guidelines, visit <https://bit.ly/2025MLKContests>

Lost and Found

Please ask your Knights to check the lost and found, located near the Media Center entrance, if they are missing items. We have accumulated water bottles, jackets, lunchboxes, umbrellas, and more. Any unclaimed items will be donated at the end of the week (10/18). Thank you!

PTA NEWS

October Fun kNight - **October 25 7-9 pm** at the Patapsco MS! We're still in need of a few volunteers - there's a variety of ways to help - from minding the kids to calling out BINGO! [Check out the opportunities and volunteer by clicking here!](#)

Membership - It's not too late to join the PTA and/or make a donation to our grant program! Find out how by accessing our website - <https://patapscomiddle.givebacks.com/>

NEWS WORTH REPEATING

2025 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.

Free Parenting Support for Parents/Caregivers!

Learn tools to help your children handle stress and setbacks. Join the nonprofit Parent Encouragement Program's free 8-week online program for parents/caregivers of children preK to 12th grade, in English or Spanish. Learn to support your children's mental wellness and

resiliency and connect with other parents. Complete at least 5 sessions and the evaluation to receive a \$50 gift card. Classes start the week of October 14, register today: tinyurl.com/2w4k2sxp

Bus Evacuation Drill

On October 21, bus riders will participate in a Bus Evacuation Drill upon arrival to school. Bus evacuation is important for students to practice in order to be prepared for an emergency. See below for the instructions that will be shared with students:

1. To begin the drill, the driver will give the command "EVACUATE BY THE REAR DOOR".
2. Students should leave all loose belongings such as books, backpacks, etc., on the bus.
3. A word of caution: When leaving through the rear door, students should step down from the bus to the pavement. Jumping could cause a fall, resulting in serious injury. Students may sit on the floor at the rear exit and scoot out the door if they prefer.
4. Upon leaving the bus, students will form a line at the front door or a compact group to await further instructions.

Please contact Shannon Motsco (shannon_motsco@hcpss.org) with any questions.

Intramural/Co-Curricular Programs

Intramurals are incredible extracurricular opportunities to extend knowledge, exercise the mind and body, and develop social skills. Please browse the following intramural offerings and know there may be more coming especially in the second semester.

* As part of our Three R's, we encourage interested students to take the **Responsibility** and contact the program sponsor themselves.*

Please email sponsors with any questions.

See below the exciting Intramurals Patapsco will be offering this school year.

Opportunity X

Attention Students and Families: Do you like science experiments? What about doing cool projects with your friends? Join [Opportunity X!](#) This Intramural will meet every Wednesday from 3:15-4:15 starting on Wednesday 10/16. If you are interested, please complete [this survey](#) and follow the directions there to sign up!

WEngineer

Are you interested in science, math, and engineering? Does designing, prototyping, and building projects fascinate you? If so, WEngineer, a community-based nonprofit, is offering an engaging eight-week engineering academy for aspiring members of the STEM field. The program, Flood Fighters: Fight or Flight?, will cover a wide range of topics, including transportation engineering, weather adaptation, and structural integrity. Students will learn to use the engineering design process and participate in hands-on challenges that will put their knowledge and mechanical skills to the test. Sign up here: tinyurl.com/PMS-Flood

In addition, WEngineer is offering the Flood Fighters: Fight or Flight? academy for no cost. We repeat, it is completely FREE.

So what are you waiting for? Sign up today using the following SignUp Genius:

tinyurl.com/PMS-Flood

Best Regards,

The WEngineer Team

Young Authors' Contest

The Howard County Literacy Association invites students in grades 6-8 to submit their original poems and/or short stories to the annual writing contest called **The Young Authors' Contest**. Please see the linked [Young Authors' Contest Guidelines](#) for information about the rules and guidelines and the [student presentation](#) for a more detailed explanation. All entries must have a completed [YAC Cover Sheet](#) saved as a PDF. Email/share submissions and cover sheets to elizabeth_shaw@hcpss.org by December 20, 2024. Contact Mrs. Shaw with any questions. All Young Authors' Contest information can be found on the [HCLA website](#).

Howard County Literacy Association welcomes parents as members. Visit the [HCLA Welcome Page](#) for information about joining.

Flu Prevention

The Health Department encourages people of all ages to get a seasonal flu shot from a healthcare provider, local pharmacy, retailer or big box store. Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, and missed work and school (even virtual school) due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations and deaths. The Howard County Health Department provides a [list](#) of community immunization clinics.

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.

Update Your 2024-2025 Family File

Family File is now available in [HCPSS Connect](#) for the 2024-25 school year. Parents must complete the Family File every year to ensure HCPSS has the most current information for each child. Updating your information--including email addresses and contact information--and clicking the submit button will ensure that you are receiving the most recent news from Patapsco Middle School. If you've forgotten how to access your Connect account or are new to the system, you can find all the information here including instructions in English, Chinese,

Korean & Spanish as well as a video. Please have this back-to-school necessity completed by the first day of school. Click [here](#) to complete and submit your Family File.

Cell Phone Policy

Under the current HCPSS Policy 8080 middle school “students will not use personal technology devices during non-instructional time, to include but not limited to transition between classes, lunch, recess, or in bathrooms.”

Expectations will be shared with students during the first week of school. If you need to reach your child, please contact our school and we will connect you with them.

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 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. Please do not send attendance notes to your child's teachers. If you have any questions about your child's attendance, please email pmsabsence@hcpss.org.

If you would like to submit a [Local Discretionary Absence Request 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 Front Office to sign in and receive a pass when arriving late to school. 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 email pmsabsences@hcpss.org, send in a note with your child or call the Front Office to let them know your child will have an early dismissal and provide the name of the authorized adult picking them up.

Donate Clothes

Drop off clothes to our donation bin anytime! This is a great time to clean out the closets before the start of the year. [Here is the information](#) on the donation program.

Community Notices

HCPSS' [Community News and Programs](#) website makes it easy for families to find educational and recreational resources, events and after-school programs beyond the school day by non-profit organizations.”

Community organizations requesting their announcements be shared in school newsletters should visit community-programs.hcpss.org for more information. Questions should be directed to the Public Information Office at publicinfo@hcpss.org