

Kaye M. Breon
Principal



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School Hours: 9:15 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

February 18, 2022

Mark Your Calendars

Continues – Feb. 22	Rising 6 th Grade Middle School Fine Arts Course Selection Window
Mon., February 21	Calendar Change: SCHOOLS ARE OPEN – Related Arts RED Day0
Tues., February 22	NEW DATE: Class/Group Picture Day
Tues., February 22	5 th Graders - Registration Deadline for Middle School Courses through HCPSS Connect
February 23 & 24	4 th Grade Unheard Perspectives Virtual Showcase – 7:00 to 8:00pm
Feb. 28 – Mar. 4	Employee Appreciation Week
March 7 – 11	Kindergarten Registration Week
Mon., March 14	Individual Spring Portraits
Wed., March 16	Schools Close 3-Hours Early, 12:45 pm

School News

Classroom Group Photos

Classroom Group Photos will be taken on **Tuesday, February 22nd**. If you would like a class photo these must be purchased in advance; cost is \$10 and exact payment must be sent in with order envelopes that were sent home, or you can order online ([see attached flier](#)).

Celebrating Black History Month

Come celebrate Black History Month with 4th grade Unheard Perspectives participants. These G/T Instructional Seminar students have researched African American innovators whose accomplishments have gone unheard of or have been underrepresented. Join us in celebrating the students' hard work on **February 23 and 24 at 7:00**. Presentations will be shared via Google Meet at: <https://meet.google.com/jmy-azob-zbb>

Kindergarten and New HCPSS Student Registration

Registration for 2022-2023 Kindergarten begins on March 7th – 11th. Parents/Guardians of children who will be five years old as of September 1, 2022, must enroll their children in kindergarten for the 2022-2023 school year. Registering for school is an online process.

- [Road to Kindergarten Workshop Slideshow](#)
- [Getting Ready for Kindergarten](#)
- [Gather Documentation](#)
- [Begin Registration](#)

Parents/Guardians without access to a computer should contact Teachers' Secretary, Mrs. Colleen Green at 410-313-5512 for assistance in completing the registration process.

From the HCPSS Physical Education Office

All students must wear the proper shoes to participate in PE class. This follows the proper PE dress code set forth by the county PE office. Please remind your child(ren) that if it is a PE day, then tennis shoes/sneakers are to be worn. If your child wants to wear their boots, Uggs, sandals etc..., then please have them carry their tennis shoes in their backpack to change into for PE class. Thank you for helping us keep your children safe.

Field Day News ** Volunteers Needed

HCPSS has advised Field Day planning and events for the 2021-2022 school year may return to normal. As with all HCPSS volunteers, Field Day volunteers must adhere to HCPSS guidelines regarding [masks](#), [vaccine requirements](#), and other [Volunteer Training](#). In order for Field Day to run smoothly and be a fun event for our student, we will need the assistance of many parent volunteers. If you have not already done so, please complete all of the required volunteer trainings and vaccine requirements as soon as possible. It is a three step process.

1. Complete the [Confidentiality Training](#), download and print the certificate
2. Review the [Child Abuse Training PowerPoint](#), download and print the certificate
3. Use the [PinPoint Vaccine Check Platform](#) to verify your vaccination status

2021-22 Yearbooks Are Now on Sale

It's not too early to order your 2021–2022 West Friendship Elementary School yearbook! The **deadline for ordering is April 15th**. To make sure your child will have a yearbook when they are delivered at the end of the school year, you must order through our school photographer. Books will NOT be available for purchase after the deadline of April 15th. Don't delay, order today! Books are \$20.00.

Please view this [flyer](#) for directions to order online (your student should be bringing home a paper copy later this week). Click [HERE](#) to begin your order.

Please reach out to [Penny Smith@hcpss.org](mailto:Penny.Smith@hcpss.org) with any questions. Thank you!

HCPSS Elementary School Counseling Connection Newsletter

The HCPSS Elementary School Counseling Connection Newsletter is a great resource for students and parents to read together. February may be the shortest month of the year but it is also one of the busiest! Did you know that International Boost Your Self-Esteem Month, Black History Month, Valentine's Day and National School Counselor Week are all in February? Read this issue to find out more about these fun topics!

[February ES Newsletter](#)

Important Messages for 5th Grade Families

This year, the Howard County Public School System will be administering the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) to any 5th grade student who does not have a prior CogAT score as well as all students in 5th grade GT Math. The data will assist with identification for Accelerated GT Math and provide an aptitude measure for students who had no previous CogAT test. The CogAT is a group-administered abilities test that measures students' reasoning abilities, which they develop through in-school and out-of-school experiences. It is not designed to test a student's academic achievement, but their potential.

The test is made of three batteries – Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal. Each battery takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. The CogAT helps educators understand a student's cognitive strengths and weaknesses and assists with adapting instruction to meet the needs and abilities of each student.

The CogAT will be administered to the students mentioned above on February 22, 23, and 24. No special preparation is required. Just send your child to school ready to learn as you do daily with a fully charged Chromebook.

If you have any questions about GT placement, please contact our school's GT Resource Teacher, Mr. Haskins at nathan_haskins@hcpss.org

Important Message for 3rd Grade Families

This year, the Howard County Public School System will be administering the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) to all students in grades 3. The CogAT is a group-administered abilities test that measures students' reasoning abilities, which they develop through in-school and out-of-school experiences. It is not designed to test a student's academic achievement, but their potential.

The test is made of three batteries – Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal. Each battery takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. The CogAT helps educators understand a student's cognitive strengths and weaknesses and assists with adapting instruction to meet the needs and abilities of each student.

All students in Grades 3 will participate in the testing. The CogAT will be administered on February 22, 23, and 24. No special preparation is required. Just send your child to school ready to learn as you do daily with a fully charged Chromebook.

Placements for 4th grade GT Math will be made following the CogAT administration and will include all available performance and assessment data in accordance with Maryland COMAR for Gifted and Talented Education.

4th Grade GT Math Placements

Placements for 4th grade GT Math will be made following the CogAT administration and will include all available performance and assessment data in accordance with Maryland COMAR for Gifted and Talented Education.

If you have any questions about GT placement, please contact our school's GT Resource Teacher, Mr. Haskins at nathan_haskins@hcpss.org

WFES COVID-19 Absence Reporting

We are asking families to follow the guidelines below to report any student absence(s):

- COVID Related Absences - report here: [WFES COVID-19 Absence Reporting](#)
 - Students displaying symptoms of COVID (a COVID Like Illness)
 - Students who are in Quarantine as a Close Contact to a known Positive case of COVID
 - Students who are Positive for COVID (with or without symptoms)
- All Other Absences - report here: WFESAbsence@hcpss.org
 - Illness not related to any COVID like symptoms (sprained/broken wrist, dental, lice, etc.)
 - Travel, Family Events, Family Emergencies
 - Other

2022 Academic Calendar Updates

In order to provide school-based staff with additional time to address their increased workload and to support employee well-being, the Board of Education approved updates to the current [academic year calendar](#). Three-hour early dismissals now will take place on the following dates:

- March 16, 2022
- April 27, 2022
- May 18, 2022

Update Your Family File

Please make certain your Family File is up-to-date. We will be using these to dismiss your student(s) on **unexpected closing days**. Do not wait until that day to make changes. We may have already printed information prior to you making changes. In addition, HCPSS utilizes Family File for parents/guardians to supply emergency information. If you haven't done so already, [please verify and/or update information for your child\(ren\)](#) for the 2021-22 school year.

2022 Summer Programs Preview Available Online

Parents/guardians and students can now view/download the [2022 Summer Programs Preview](#), which includes descriptions of HCPSS' four summer programs and enrollment information. Online enrollment requests for current HCPSS students opened on Tuesday, February 1st.

Outdoor Dining and Outdoor Recess

When we are able, we will offer outdoor dining during the winter months. We will also have outdoor recess whenever we can. Please have your students wear proper winter weather attire (coats, hat, gloves, etc.) so they are prepared for outdoors. The following factors are considered in determining if recess is to be held outside:

- Temperature and humidity
- Wind chill
- Heat index and air quality
- Age of students
- Length of time outdoors
- Adequacy of the children's clothing
- Condition of the playground
- Falling precipitation (more than a sprinkle or mist)
- Thunder and lightning

Generally, it is assumed that students will be outside for recess when the temperature combined with the wind chill is not less than 20 degrees Fahrenheit or the heat index reading is less than 95. Children with certain health conditions may need special accommodations during extremely hot or cold weather. Parents of those children should provide medical documentation and may be consulted to determine if other arrangements are necessary.

Mask Policy

We continue to remind our students, regularly, about wearing their masks properly. We are reminding them that their mask should cover their nose and mouth. In addition, students must wear their mask on the school bus. Please check to be sure your child has a mask each day before leaving home. It is a good idea to place an extra mask in their backpack. We just want to keep everyone safe.

Early Dismissal Procedures

If you need to pick up your child early for an appointment that is close to the end of the school day, **please do so before 3:30pm**. After 3:30 pm, it is very difficult for our front office staff to get students while assisting with dismissal procedures. We appreciate your assistance with this! Thank you!

HCPSS Emergency Closing Notifications

In times of emergency/weather closings or delays, information is shared through our website, email, and text, Twitter and the HCPSS weather hotline. The school system's operating status can always be found on the [HCPSS Status website](#). [More information about Emergency closings and information sources](#) is provided online.

From our Health Room - Daily COVID-19 Self-Screenings

All parents/guardians are to perform a [COVID-19 health check](#) every day before your student leaves home. Students are not to come to school if they are experiencing any [symptom\(s\) associated with COVID-19 or other communicable disease](#).

We thank you for keeping your children home when they are experiencing various illnesses. If you are unsure, please do not hesitate to contact the health room, by calling 410-313-5515 or email school nurse at Elizabeth_Collora@hcpss.org. If you want to test your child, please don't go to the ER unless the child is having difficulty breathing. [mobile covid testing sites](#)

PTA News

Read-a-thon Begins Sunday, February 27, continues through Sunday, March 13

Readers: We are so excited for our upcoming Read-a-Thon! We encourage you to activate your reader's account today at <https://www.read-a-thon.com/readers/r/SrKuMR/1>. The Read-a-Thon platform is for donations AND tracking minutes each student reads. We do encourage everyone to sign their child up via the platform, then share with your student a visual of their progress and how many minutes of reading they are able to log in just two weeks! Donations are NOT required to participate in this school-wide event. To ensure an equitable experience, there are a variety of incentives students can earn, in a variety of ways!

Business Supporters

Building community is so important to us! We'd like to take a moment to thank our Read-a-thon local business supporters: Tony's Pizzeria West Friendship, Breezy Willow Farm Country Market, and Time Warp Media! (Fun fact: the owner of Time Warp Media is a WFES alum!) For a donation in the amount of your choosing, if you, or someone you know, is interested in being a business supporter, you'll be supporting our school and young readers while also getting some ad space for your business on our Read-a-thon platform! The business ad will show on everyone's page as well as the main fundraiser page now through March 23rd.

<http://www.read-a-thon.com/donate/> CODE: 46269

Community News

In response to community requests for resources, HCPSS' new [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.

Stay up-to-date on vaccine clinics, Covid testing, and more.

[Link to the Howard County Health Department](#)

Vaccination Clinics

Upcoming Vaccination Clinics:

- Swansfield Elementary School, Friday, February 25, from 4:00 to 6:00pm

Stay up-to-date on vaccine clinics, COVID testing and more.

[Link to the Howard County Health Department](#)

Sensory-Friendly Sundays at Robinson Nature Center

Join Robinson Nature Center, Therapeutic Recreation, and Park Ranger staff in enjoying outdoor, self-paced activities designed for families with kids, teens, and adults with sensory-processing differences, autism spectrum disorder, or developmental disabilities. Activities include sensory bins and pathways, scavenger hunts, and crafts or games. The center opens early, allowing visitors to enjoy a calm environment. Sensory alert maps, quiet areas, and sensory backpacks, which include headphones and various fidgets, are available. Be sure

to preregister to receive additional information prior to the event. Please see the [Sensory-Friendly Sundays flyer](#) for further information.

- Time: 11am - 12:30pm
 - General operating hours begin at noon and guests of this program are welcome to stay after 12:30pm
- Cost: \$5, adult; \$3, child;
 - Free, members & children under 3-years
- Programs
 - Spring in Here - March 27
 - Natural Art - May 29
 - River Romp - July 24
 - Fantastic Fall - September 11
 - Nature's Harvest - November 13

Mental Health Resources

- [Foreign-Born Support Services/Bilingual Support Services](#) - Updated Resources
 - Bilingual Mental Health Professionals
 - [Asian American Health Initiative \(AAHI\) Mental Health Providers Youth](#)
 - [Chinese](#)
- [Grief & Loss](#) - New Resource

HCPSS/TCOE Virtual Community Academy: Substance Abuse Prevention

Saturday, March 12, 9:00-10:30am, Online

Participants in this virtual community academy will receive information regarding substance abuse prevention and behavioral health within the Howard County community. Representatives from [HC DrugFree](#) will provide resources and education on prevention, risk factors, warning signs, and treatment. This session is open to parents/guardians of students at all levels, and is free to attend.

[Register](#) online. After registering, participants will receive an email with a link to the session. This program is part of a series of workshops sponsored by HCPSS and The Council of Elders.

Mustang Flea Market

The Marriotts Ridge High School Music Foundation Flea Market is looking for donations to be sold at their annual flea market to be held on Saturday, March 19th. Please see below for complete details!

Donations Needed

Gently used items can be dropped off at the storage units in the parking lot at the following times:

Sunday, February 20 th	1pm – 3pm
Saturday, February 26 th	10am – 12pm
Saturday, March 5 th	11am – 1pm
Friday, March 11 th	3pm – 5pm
Saturday, March 12 th	1:30pm – 4:30pm
Sunday, March 13 th	12pm – 2pm

MRHS Commons drop-off: Friday, March 18th 4pm - 8pm
Please hold all large items until Commons drop-off date.

Mustang Flea Market

Sponsored by MRHS Music Department

Saturday, March 19th 8am – 1pm

Marriotts Ridge High School Cafeteria
12100 Woodford Drive, Marriottsville, MD 21104

\$1 Cash Donation per Person
to the MRHS Music Department Upon Entry

Refreshments Available

