March 24, 2023

Upcoming Dates

Monday, March 27
PTA Restaurant Event at Walker’s Tap and Table

Friday, March 31
Schools Close 3-Hours Early (12:45pm) – End of 3rd Marking Period

Mon., Apr. 3 – Mon., Apr. 10
Schools Closed – Spring Break

Tuesday, April 11
Schools Reopen

Friday, April 14
Gr. 4 Field Trip, 9:30am to 3:00p

Tuesday, April 18
Reports Available Via Synergy

Friday, April 21
Professional Learning Day – Schools Closed for Students

Friday, April 28
Battle of the Books at Merriweather Post Pavilion

From Our Administrators

Dear WFES Families,

A BIG THANK YOU to the WFES PTA for sponsoring today’s assembly, *Mad Science of Washington - Spectacular Science*. The students loved every minute of the program! It was an extremely entertaining, as well as educational program that everyone enjoyed!

Thank you to the many parents/guardians who shared their time with us this week as we continued to celebrate National Reading Month. We appreciate the volunteers who came visited school to be Mystery Readers in our classrooms. The students enjoyed having you spend this special time with them!

As part of our school improvement process, we are asking families to provide input about their equity priorities at our school. Please use the link below to complete the HCPSS Indicators of Educational Equity Survey by May 5, 2023. Your voice is important for the process of school improvement, and we truly hope every family will complete this survey. We will use your input, along with other school data, to refine our school improvement plan for next year.

This survey is anonymous and available in multiple languages. If you have children at more than one school, please complete one survey per school.

- [English survey](#)
- [Spanish survey](#)
- [Chinese survey](#)
- [Chin survey](#)
- [Korean survey](#)

Your input is extremely important to us, and we appreciate you taking your time to assist us. If you have any questions, please contact WFES Principal, Ms. Kaye Breon at kaye_breon@hcpss.org.

Sincerely,

Kaye Breon, Principal
Brian Vanisko, Assistant Principal
March is Women’s History Month

Please visit the following link for more interesting facts and details about women who have made valuable contributions to our Nation:
https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/history/topic/women-heroes

School News

Report Bullying
Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation specifically establishes expectations for maintaining a safe and respectful school climate and workplace, where bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and intimidation are not tolerated. This policy also provides standards for identifying and preventing bullying, cyberbullying, harassing, or intimidating behavior. Additionally, the policy outlines measures to support students and employees who are either engaging in or are victims of bullying behavior.

The HCPSS Student Code of Conduct, by which all HCPSS students are expected to abide, also specifically addresses bullying.

The HCPSS Bullying Reporting Form – which can be completed online or on paper (available in the main school office, school counseling office, and media center) – allows students, staff, and family members to easily and confidentially report incidents of bullying to their school administrators.

Kindergarten and New HCPSS Student Registration

Registration for 2023-2024 Kindergarten kicked off last week. Parents/Guardians of children who will be five years old as of September 1, 2023, must enroll their children in kindergarten for the 2023-2024 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.

Early Admission for Kindergarten and First Grade
Applications for early admission to kindergarten and first grade are now being accepted. Applicants must submit all application materials for early admission to kindergarten and first grade by April 30 and May 31, 2023, respectively.

2022-23 Yearbooks Are Now on Sale
It is not too early to order your 2022–2023 West Friendship Elementary School yearbook! The deadline for ordering is April 14th. To make sure your child will have a yearbook when books 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 14th. Do not 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 next week). Click HERE to begin your order. Please reach out to Penny Smith@hcpss.org with any questions.
HCPSS Rainbow Conference - Register Now!
The HCPSS Rainbow Conference will be held on Saturday, May 6th from 9am - 5pm. The conference will be hybrid with opportunities for both virtual and in-person participation. For more information scan the QR code on the Rainbow Conference Flier or access this link.

Student Drug Use: A Crisis We Can’t Ignore
HCPSS will host a community event on March 28 titled Student Drug Use: A Crisis We Can’t Ignore to engage students, parents/guardians, staff and community members regarding the substance abuse crisis that is impacting schools and communities in Howard County and nationwide. An email template was created for principals to use to inform families about the event. Here is a flyer you may also use to promote the event which is also translated in Spanish, Korean and Chinese. Direct questions to Kami Wagner, James LeMon, or Caroline Walker.

Spring Before/After School Classes
Attached is our Spring 2023 Before/After School Classes flier for West Friendship ES, which markets our Spring 2023 Howard County Recreation & Parks Before/After School classes for students at WFES. These classes provide fun, structured, educational, and enriching activities for West Friendship ES students, benefitting both the child(ren) and parents!

* Chaperones * Visitors * Volunteers (Must complete if you have not already done so this year!)
If you plan to visit school for any events between now and the end of the year, please give this your attention. According to Howard County Board of Education Policy, all volunteers must complete two required volunteer trainings. Please take time to complete the required trainings now so you will be ready when these opportunities present themselves. You must review the trainings, print the documentation for each training, and send them to school at least 5 days prior to volunteering or chaperoning a trip. You may email them directly to Penny Smith at penny_smith@hcpss.org.
   Child Abuse Training please review then complete the Child Abuse Certificate
   Confidentiality Training please review then complete the Confidentiality Certificate

Pre-Kindergarten Programs
The Bushy Park Regional Early Childhood Center (RECC) prekindergarten programs are preparing for classes for the upcoming 2023-24 school year. These classes include children with and without disabilities. The program’s focus is helping all children develop communication, literacy, math, problem solving, motor, and social skills. Parents of children who will be 3-years old by September 1st may apply. Applications will be available and accepted in mid-February.

In alignment with Maryland’s Blueprint for the Future, new applications for students turning 4 by September 1 will not be available or accepted. The Howard County Public School System continues to offer a prekindergarten program for income eligible children who will be four years old by September 1. For additional information contact the school or visit: https://www.hcps.org/schools/pre-k-programs/

HCPSS is committed to providing instruction based on the statewide Early Learning Standards which are in alignment with Kindergarten Readiness. The fees listed in the application will be collected monthly, regardless of the learning model determined by HCPSS throughout the upcoming school year (virtual, hybrid, in person, or class quarantine). If you have additional questions, please contact Roseann Kleinschmidt at (410) 313-5500.

Important Notice for Those with Medical Assistance:
Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, Medical Assistance has been automatically renewed since March 2020. AUTOMATIC RENEWALS WILL STOP AS OF APRIL 30, 2023. Please call the Health Dept Insurance Line at 410-313-5845 to check your status. They will set up an appointment for you if needed.
HCPSS Student & Parent Handbook
Click HERE for the county's 2022-23 handbook

Howard County Family Resources
Please consider signing up to receive monthly newsletters from the Howard County Office of Children and Families. Attached you will find the March issue of Parent Pages.

Summer Activities for Children
These summer programs offer children a variety of educational and recreational opportunities during the summer to learn, meet new friends and have fun:
HCPSS BSAP Summer Institute
HCPSS GT Summer Institute
Howard County Public Library System
Howard County Recreation and Parks
Howard Community College Kids on Campus

Important Health & Safety Message
All HCPSS students and staff must stay home if they are experiencing symptom(s) associated with any communicable disease. Families, students, and staff should perform daily health checks and stay home if they have symptoms of a communicable disease, including the seasonal flu, COVID-19, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). Families are encouraged to take advantage of flu and COVID vaccines and boosters. Always feel free to email our School Nurse, Elizabeth_Collora@hcpss.org with any questions.

When Your Child is Absent from School
Now that our year is well underway, we would like to remind our families about our attendance procedures. If your child is going to be absent from school, or if you need to provide a note to excuse your child’s absence from a previous day, please use our school absence inbox by emailing wfesabsence@hcpss.org. You may also send in a note the day your child returns to school. Your message must include your child’s first and last name, the date of absence, and the reason for absence. Please do not email CANVAS or the teacher regarding absences. We are required to have a reason for the absence in order to code absences as excused in alignment with HCPSS Policy 9010: Attendance.

PTA News & Events
West Friendship Elementary PTA Read-a-thon
WFES students read a grand total of 82,823 minutes by the end of the read-a-thon! That means Mr. Vanisko will wear a MYSTERY COSTUME to school! Congratulations to Mrs. Peterman’s second grade class for being the class with the most minutes read, 10,794 minutes! Coming in at a very close 2nd Place is Mr. Wright’s second grade class that read a total of 10,291 minutes. Keep an eye out for the top readers in each grade as well as for the top fundraiser. Students who read at least 200 minutes will be entered into a raffle. Students who raise at least $25 will also be entered into a raffle. Thank you to EVERYONE who participated.

Now the PTA needs your help to reach our fundraising goal. The money we raise will help pay for events such as Spring Fest, the upcoming school assembly, and staff appreciation gifts on behalf of all the families.

Fundraising continues on the Read-A-Thon site until Thursday, March 30. Please consider donating to help create memories for our school community.
WFES PTA Restaurant Fundraisers

Walker's Tap and Table Fundraiser

Walker's Tap & Table is located at 2465 MD-Route 97, Glenwood, MD

Have a delicious meal at Walker's Tap and Table on Monday, March 27th and support the WFES PTA!

SPRING PLANT SALE HAPPENING NOW!

The WFES PTA is proudly announcing the return of an old favorite: the Spring Plant Sale! Please consider doing your spring plant and landscaping through us to support the PTA! We are offering an array of high-quality plants, herbs and hanging baskets in partnership with the locally owned, Walnut Springs Nursery. Check your students’ backpack mail for an order form and visit the PTA’s website to see product photos. We need all order forms to be submitted in hard copy to your students’ homeroom teacher by April 3. Order pick-up will be at WFES on May 6 – just in time for Mother’s Day! Email Kathryn Calton with any questions: Kathryn.calton@gmail.com.

SPRING FEST – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Save the Date! This year’s WFES PTA Spring Fest will be held on Saturday, April 15, from 3 PM to 6 PM. Don’t miss this family-friendly event that includes inflatables, carnival games and prizes, popcorn, cotton candy, and much more! This event requires lots of manpower. Please consider volunteering for one or two 1.5-hour shifts (or split one with a friend!) to help make this year’s Spring Fest a reality. Click here to volunteer: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508084AAFAA29ABFB6-wfes1

Are you a business owner? Would you like to sponsor an inflatable at this year's Spring Fest? Email Jaime Lennon for details: jaime.lennon@yahoo.com.

Community News and Events

HCPSS Community News and Programs Site

The 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.hcps.org for more information. Questions should be directed to the Public Information Office at publicinfo@hcpss.org.

Embrace, Encourage, and Engage: Family and Caregiver Access to Child and Youth Mental Health Resources

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) presentations change attitudes, assumptions, and ideas about people with mental health conditions. In Our Own Voice provides a personal perspective, as leaders with lived experience talk openly about what it is like to have a mental health condition. The United Way Family Center in Columbia will join NAMI Howard County to co-host the program during Mindful March. Please register now as space is limited.

Know What’s Happening in Howard County

Sign up for HC DrugFree’s newsletter at https://hcdrugfree.org/enews-signup/ or follow us on social media to get updates on events as well as information to keep your family safe and informed: Facebook Twitter Instagram LinkedIn
Medication & Sharps Disposal Event
Free. The next safe and convenient drive-thru medication & sharps disposal event will be held on Saturday, April 22 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Wilde Lake Village Center Parking lot near the Swim Center. HC DrugFree is accepting prescription and over-the-counter medications, sharps (needles, syringes, EpiPens, etc.), vapes, inhalers, veterinary medication and more. Medication will be guarded/transported by Howard County Police. We are in need of Teen and Adult, and medically trained adult volunteers! Groups encouraged to volunteer. Learn more or sign up to volunteer at https://hcdrugfree.org/drug-take-back-day-1/ Members of HC DrugFree’s Teen Advisory Council (TAC) can earn community service hours for volunteering. If your student is interested in joining TAC, please visit https://hcdrugfree.org/teen-advisory-council/ to learn more and download an application.

Free Parenting Classes (open to grandparents too)
Free. Guiding Good Choices is an 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. Howard County parents, guardians and grandparents will learn how to encourage your child to adopt healthy attitudes and behaviors, how to communicate more effectively, how to build a relationship of trust, and much more! Classes will be held Tuesdays, May 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. via Zoom. Learn more or register: https://hcdrugfree.org/2023/02/guiding-good-choices-free-classes-for-parents-2/

8th–12th Grade Teen Advisory Council
Free. HC DrugFree's Teen Advisory Council is open to all Howard County students in grades 8 through 12. This is a great opportunity to help prepare younger students for success in high school while allowing older students to develop their leadership and mentoring skills. The registration form is available at https://hcdrugfree.org/teen-advisory-council/ and community service hours are available. Email your registration form to admin@hcdrugfree.org or mail a hard copy to the office. Meetings are on Zoom from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. To register for the Monday, April 17 meeting or any upcoming meeting, click on the TAC registration link next to the meeting date https://hcdrugfree.org/teen-advisory-council/

Be Kind to Your Mind  💙  Be Kind to Others
Kindness Grows Here is a Maryland non-profit with a mission of cultivating kindness in communities starting with kids. Kindness Grows Here is holding its first ever Howard County event and we're hoping for a great turnout. Please see this link for details. (FREE: Be Kind to Your Mind...Be Kind to Others Tickets, Sat, May 20, 2023 at 12:00 PM | Eventbrite)